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Chairman: Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary)
Vice-Chairman

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 37, 50 AND 127 (continued)

CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
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DEEPENING AND CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL DÉTENTE AND PREVENTION OF THE
DANGER OF NUCLEAR WAR (A/32/242: A/C.1/32/L.1, L.2)

Mr. MAKOBERO (Burundi) (interpretation from French): In speaking at this stage of our debate I cannot fail to express the deep satisfaction of my delegation at the manner in which the work entrusted to the Committee has been developing. The most important question of disarmament, encompassing nine tenths of the items on our agenda and the question relating to international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space, have already been concluded following the adoption of an impressive number of resolutions, 27 in all, half of which were adopted unanimously.

It is thanks to the competence and skill of the Chairman as well as the excellent co-operation on the part of the other officers of the Committee that we have been able to arrive at such specific results in our work in accordance with our schedule. There is no doubt that the three remaining items which we are now considering will also be completed with positive results.

The problems of détente, peace and security are of concern to the international community because, in our time, the outbreak of any war on any part of our planet would affect all of us in one way or another. That is why Burundi, a country which supports peace and justice, has been following with interest the efforts made by all countries to prevent a disaster unprecedented in the history of mankind and to arrive at peaceful coexistence, to which we all should aspire.

(Mr. Makobero, Burundi)

In recent years the cold war, which for some time had almost frozen relations between countries of the two blocs, that is, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, seems to be giving way to dialogue. The first steps towards détente and the first stage necessary to arrive at peace and security among nations have thus been taken.

The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which was held at Helsinki in July 1975 with the participation of 35 countries, many of which even recently maintained only formal diplomatic relations, is a tangible result of this new and very hopeful era. My Government hopes that the participating countries will move along the path towards reconciliation leading to real co-operation in a large number of areas, including that of security. It is also the wish of my Government that other countries in other continents may benefit from the positive results of that Conference and of those that will follow it.

The Paris, London, Washington, SALT, Moscow and Vladivostok meetings between the great military Powers in an attempt to curb the arms race, an essential condition before peace and security for all the nations of the world can be secured, are efforts to be encouraged because they are precursors of a new trend in international relations, one which mankind awaits impatiently in order to escape the sombre fate which previous speakers have so earnestly deplored in their statements.

If there are grounds for satisfaction at the efforts undertaken in the area of détente, as I have just stated, it would be self-deceiving to lose sight of the serious obstacles that remain and prevent us from attaining in the near future the final goal we are all seeking.

The total commitment of the great military Powers to the search for détente, peace and international security leaves much to be desired. On the one hand, those powerful countries sign an agreement on détente, and, on the other, they prepare plans and budgets for the development of a new and more lethal weapon. A genuine, general and complete end to the arms race must become a reality.

(Mr. Makobero, Burundi)

The racist usurpers of African lands vie with each other in boldness in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia in their design to subjugate forever the black man on the soil of his ancestors. These accursed of the earth are determined to perpetuate slavery and colonialism and to use the illegally occupied lands to undermine the independence of Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Lesotho, countries which have recently thrown off the yoke of colonialism and acceded to independence and national sovereignty. As long as the international community does not act together to combat and defeat those unrepentant colonialists, it would be illusory to speak of détente, peace and security on the African continent, because whatever affects us will have repercussions throughout the world.

Just and equitable solutions must be found for other hotbeds of tension, especially those in the Middle East, Cyprus and territories still under the colonial yoke if we wish to achieve harmony in international relations.

The gap between the rich countries and the poor countries widens more than ever. The former become richer and the latter become poorer. That is a very grave threat to international peace and security.

Thus far no valid solution has been found for the problems of commodities, debt, exorbitant interest rates, the balance-of-payments, the protection of the purchasing power of developing countries, balance in trade relations, the transfer of technology and so forth. However, the developing countries are prepared to co-operate in setting up a new international economic order. The developed countries, however, do not seem to be ready to help their trading partners to emerge from economic stagnation.

(Mr. Makobero, Burundi)

The Ministerial meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New Delhi last April, has been very clear about this state of affairs in its final communiqué, a passage of which I shall quote:

"Most developed countries ... had not so far shown the necessary political will to co-operate with developing countries in exploiting the full potential of international economic co-operation. In fact, they had not assisted or contributed to the improvement of the situation faced by developing countries, by their refusal to implement the measures contained in the International Development Strategy, the resolutions adopted by the United Nations, in particular at the sixth and seventh Special Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and at UNCTAD IV."

(A/32/74, para. 80)

If a new economic order of true benefit to all is not set up, it will be difficult for the developing countries to grasp the scope and the true significance of the appeals made for the establishment of peace and security among nations. Today, the theatre of armed conflicts is no longer confined to the territories of rival Powers. It has erupted in Africa, in the Indian Ocean, in Latin America, in South Asia and in South East Asia, in the Mediterranean, in the Red Sea and in the Middle East.

This state of affairs is a grave threat to international peace and security. Instead of being dismantled, the military bases in foreign countries grow in number and are equipped with the most modern weapons that the mind of man has yet been able to invent. Peace-loving countries, including mine, find that the withdrawal of foreign troops and the establishment of zones of peace and security, weapon-free and in particular nuclear-weapon-free, are conditions sine qua non for bringing about peace and security on this earth.

My country rests great hopes in the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament which will be held in the spring of 1978. It hopes that the debate that will be held then will shed light that will guide mankind in its search for peace, security and co-operation among nations.

Mr. SHEVEL (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The First Committee has resumed discussion of an important and urgent item submitted by the Soviet Union, on the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war. The events which have occurred in the world and in the course of this session of the General Assembly have amply proved the timeliness and the appropriateness of the Soviet proposal that the United Nations should make a new substantial contribution to the cause of international détente and the prevention of nuclear war.

Indeed, international relations are, as it were, now at a crossroads, leading either to a growth of trust and co-operation or to a growth of mutual suspicion and the stock-piling of arms - roads leading, in the final analysis, either to a state of peace or, at the very best, to the brink of war.

Détente makes it possible to choose the path of peace, and we take great satisfaction in pointing out that it is continuing, to an increasing extent, to determine the nature of international relations. Events in the world which have occurred even since this item was included on the agenda, and even since it was discussed in a preliminary fashion in the Committee, have confirmed this. We can point to a definite change for the better which has occurred in relations between the USSR and the United States in recent times.

In this regard I should like to stress particularly the timeliness of work to complete a new agreement on limitation of offensive weapons on the basis of the agreements in principle which have been achieved as a result of recent negotiations. The benign influence of détente is not confined, of course, to the sphere of Soviet-American relations. Important proposals for the organizing of broadly based and comprehensive co-operation and the easing of military confrontation have been discussed, for example, in Belgrade by the participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

(Mr. Shevel, Ukrainian SSR)

The just struggle of the Panamanian people for the recognition of the right of Panama to full sovereignty over its waters and territory has come closer to a successful conclusion. In the Middle East the idea of the early convening of the Geneva Conference is winning ever-broader support, although there are forces at work attempting to rob it of its significance.

In this regard we should also refer to the recent unanimous decision of the Security Council prohibiting the delivery of arms to the racists of South Africa. This is something we see as a result of the fact that the Western Powers have had to give way, because in circumstances of détente it is no longer possible to interfere with the adoption of decisive measures against the apartheid régime by references to an alleged Soviet threat in southern Africa.

In the First Committee, the discussion of the problems of disarmament was recently concluded. Many delegations quite rightly pointed out that what we need are new initiatives in order to provide momentum for the talks on disarmament and to accelerate work on agreements. I believe that this kind of momentum - and we are convinced of this - was provided on 2 November of this year by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Brezhnev, when he proposed that we come to an agreement on the simultaneous cessation by all States of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and that, along with the prohibition for a certain period of time of all nuclear-weapons tests, a moratorium should be declared on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

These initiatives were met with sympathy and approval by world public opinion, and they were very properly assessed and appreciated here in the Assembly and were reflected in resolutions of the Committee. I should like to point out that in the First Committee, in the course of the discussion of a number of problems which at past sessions have given rise to dissent, this time a spirit of constructive co-operation was displayed, and that this led to the adoption of agreed resolutions which took into account the views of the different sides.

(Mr. Shevel, Ukrainian SSR)

In this, too, we see the beneficent effect of détente. In this way, wherever we look at the processes occurring in the world and the course of the discussion of important problems at this session of the General Assembly we find confirmation of the idea that détente, even now, is universal in character and that its deepening and consolidation will help to solve so many problems on our agenda. How can we possibly agree that its development is something for which the United Nations should bear no responsibility and that it depends only on two Powers?

The Ukrainian SSR delegation does not agree with this view, which means that the United Nations would simply be on the sidelines of contemporary processes. But this is precisely and virtually what one speaker in this Committee, at the beginning of the discussion was in effect recommending.

We share the view expressed on this by the representative of Nigeria, Mr. Harriman, who said, "... the deepening of détente would help solve the numerous problems we now have in Africa and other regions of the world ... ".(A/C.1/32/PV.6, p.41)

With regard to the content of the process of détente there are many views, of course, and there are varying interpretations of its purposes and the conditions of its attainment. It is precisely within the United Nations, therefore, that we should seek agreement on these matters and provide a common denominator for the various characteristics of the process of détente.

(Mr. Shevel, Ukrainian SSR)

But this is not all. When we stress the importance of adopting a United Nations document which would, in a universally acceptable fashion, determine the content of the process of international détente and the fundamental areas for its further development, we are not just talking about dispelling possible misunderstandings and eliminating differing interpretations of the sense of the process. No, the issue is much larger.

In a speech at a ceremonial meeting in Kiev on 5 November, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Mr. Sheherbitsky, said:

"We are witnessing attempts by imperialist circles to exacerbate the international situation, slow down the process of détente and intensify the arms race."

We realize that certain circles continue to count on the policy of confrontation and the stepping up of tension. Some of the opponents of détente are openly nostalgic for those times when the world tottered on the brink of nuclear war and want to bring them back. Others again predict the inevitability of such a war and encourage it by even listing the advantages which supposedly would be derived by mankind from the death of hundreds of millions of people. A United Nations declaration in favour of détente would constitute an authoritative rebuff to all those forces which have no interest in seeing mankind make progress towards peace and development. This does not mean obliviousness or a repetition of the United Nations Charter; it would be an action wholly consistent with the Charter; it would develop the principles of the Charter in new international circumstances.

In the history of the United Nations there are quite a number of precedents for this kind of development of Charter principles. Suffice it to recall a few documents based upon the Charter adopted by the United Nations: for example, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and many others.

(Mr. Shevel, Ukrainian SSR)

In the draft declaration submitted to this Committee by the Soviet Union it is proposed, among other things, to call upon States to promote actively the implementation of multilateral treaties and agreements which serve the interests of the strengthening of international security and the development of peaceful relations, as well as of the declarations and resolutions of the United Nations aimed at achieving these objectives. The General Assembly cannot fail to be interested in such an appeal. Indeed, a solid juridical base has already been built to underlie détente in the form of a number of agreements, treaties and other documents. To stress the importance of strict observance of those treaties means at the same time to encourage the search for new agreements which would promote the strengthening of peace and the development of international co-operation.

We should like also to draw the Committee's attention to the importance of the appeal, in the document devoted to the strengthening of détente, to develop in every way equitable and mutually beneficial economic relations among all States on a fair basis, with due regard for the interests of developing countries which have embarked upon the course of establishing their own economies, free from the pernicious consequences of colonialism. Indeed, without equality there can be no co-operation among sovereign States of a kind that would be entirely in keeping with their interests. In our view, this idea should be reflected in the United Nations document on this subject.

The Ukrainian delegation would like to see, as one of the areas for the consolidation of détente, a reference to promoting the development of contacts among peoples and broadening familiarity with culture and life in the different countries. The Ukrainian people takes part in this process and is interested in expanding it, as are all peoples which have a very intensive cultural life and have achieved new heights of intellectual and cultural development. Our delegation calls upon all participants in the discussion to make their contribution to the production of such a document, thus demonstrating their understanding of the importance of the continuance of the process of détente.

The Ukrainian delegation supports the proposal that within the framework of the item under discussion a resolution should be adopted on the prevention of the danger of nuclear war. This, after all, is one of the essential points in the

(Mr. Shevel, Ukrainian SSR)

strengthening of détente and its major goal, the attainment of which, more than anything else, is a matter of concern to all peace-loving peoples and the Governments which express their will.

What is the important thing in this proposed draft resolution? In our view, it is the appeal to States to avert situations which in the final analysis could lead to military confrontations with the use of nuclear weapons and to support measures already adopted by a number of States to prevent the accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons; the appeal for the improvement and development of such measures. And of course we must stress the very close link between progress in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and the lessening of the threat of nuclear war.

This year we have been discussing the question of a declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente, together with such important problems as the strengthening of international security and the conclusion of a world-wide treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. The deepening and consolidation of détente in relations among States and its extension to all parts of the world will determine the solution to many essential problems, both those discussed in the First Committee and those discussed in other Committees of the General Assembly. We believe that the initiative of the Soviet Union, which is already supported by a large group of States which have shown an interest in producing mutually acceptable drafts of a declaration and a resolution, will make it possible for the United Nations to achieve its aspirations to restructure international relations on the principle of the peaceful coexistence of States.

These are the views of our delegation on the question of the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war. On 25 December this year the Ukrainian SSR will be celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in the Ukraine, which has always been faithful to the Leninist policy of the strengthening of international peace and security and the peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems. We support the proposals before the Committee because we are convinced of the need to create one more legal, moral and political barrier to the various amateurs of military adventure who want to push us towards confrontation, and a continuance of the arms race. The world can only benefit from the adoption of these proposals.

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

In past years, during the debate on the agenda item "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", this Committee considered problems of the maintenance and strengthening of peace in their various aspects. The resolutions adopted in that connexion reflected the increasing will of most States to develop international relations on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter. They have had a favourable impact on the international climate and have thereby encouraged a turning away from the cold war towards peaceful co-operation among States. My delegation considers that the thirty-second session also should enshrine in an appropriate document the problems that are being solved.

Each year shows more and more clearly that the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war are the main link in all efforts designed to achieve durable guarantees for universal peace. Thus resolution 31/92, adopted by the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, most resolutely called upon all States to extend the process of détente to all regions in the world. The process of political détente includes all the crucial problems of our time, in their interrelationship. The fate of mankind truly hinges on détente in relations among States. There is no reasonable alternative to that.

We resolutely reject the monstrous assertion of the representative of one State to the effect that, allegedly, world war is inevitable regardless of the will of people. Such an assertion reveals a truly heedless approach to the interests of peoples and can be qualified only as an absolutely destructive approach on the part of that State to questions of international security and disarmament. We cannot and will not accept such a notion. Although the leadership of that State in the Far East attempts, under the sign of the so-called struggle against hegemony, to nullify the efforts made by socialist States in the area of international détente, it would be best for the cause of peace if the delegation of that State would make a constructive contribution to the proposals on the agenda.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

It is generally recognized today that political détente can be made durable only if it is complemented by measures in the area of disarmament and extended to cover the whole world. The United Nations would then face new, greater tasks.

If the United Nations in the past mainly confined itself to ascertaining and approving bilateral or regional efforts in the area of détente, now direct action is expected from it. As problems have become universal, the world Organization should mobilize its entire political and moral prestige.

The initiative of the Soviet Union concerning the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war is very timely. My delegation has already had occasion to set forth the reasons leading us to support the Soviet Union proposal. The proposed course, if we may so call it, becomes increasingly clear, thanks to 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, whose appeal of 2 November of this year met with a broad positive response. I am thinking of the proposal regarding the agreement by all States on the cessation of production of nuclear weapons, the prohibition for a given period of all nuclear-weapon tests and the declaration of a moratorium on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

As for the force acquired by the idea of the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war, that can be judged also from bilateral relations among States. I should, for instance, like to refer to the following statement by the Foreign Minister of Iran in connexion with a visit paid to his country by the Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic:

"We believe that peace and security are genuinely indivisible, and that peaceful coexistence and détente should hold sway throughout the world. Both our States believe themselves to be truly devoted to these lofty and vital goals, as well as to the observance of the United Nations Charter."

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

There were other events demonstrating the need for the deepening and expansion of the process of détente. The draft declaration before us calls for the liberation of all colonial countries and peoples and the elimination of racist régimes. Nothing shows more clearly the justice of that requirement than the recent acts of aggression of the Southern Rhodesian racist régime against Mozambique. We most resolutely condemn that aggression, and we assure the people of Mozambique of our unswerving solidarity.

We note with satisfaction that, in the discussion of the questions of disarmament and international détente, a businesslike and constructive climate prevails in this Committee. We hope that in the same spirit it will be possible to agree on the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union. The initiative of the Soviet Union, in conformity with decisions adopted by the non-aligned States at Colombo, provides for the priority of the question of preventing nuclear war and, consequently, of nuclear disarmament. Indeed, nuclear armament leads to a very grave threat to the existence of mankind. The ultimate goal remains unchanged - once and for all to eradicate war among States and from the lives of people and to achieve general and complete disarmament.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

Speaking on 6 November 1977, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party of Germany, Chairman of the State Council of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker, declared in this connexion:

"Peace should not be, as it was before, a brief interval between wars, but rather it should become a natural form in the life of mankind."

It is in the name of that goal that Socialist countries and all progressive forces in the world speak, despite the fact that certain imperialist forces in the world still approach the arms race and war as an opportunity for profiteering.

The struggle for peace should be conducted on a broad front in all spheres of inter-State relations. It is essential to use all the available opportunities in order to move forward the cause of détente as a whole. This also includes guaranteeing the non-use of force in relations among States, as required also by the draft declaration before us.

The German Democratic Republic has repeatedly referred to the conclusion of a world agreement on the non-use of force in international relations. Suffice it simply to refer to the written communication of our Government in document A/32/112, and to our statement in the First Committee during the thirty-first session, document A/C.1/31/PV.14.

The debates during the thirty-first and thirty-second sessions of the General Assembly, as well as most of the statements by Governments contained in the Secretary-General's report, show the vital interest in the conclusion of such an agreement which can work more effectively if it becomes universal. We believe that such an agreement will be in keeping with the interests of all States and will probably be acceptable to all who are interested in the peaceful development of international relations. Such a treaty would be based on the declared recognition of the principles of the Charter and the obligations and duties stemming therefrom, in particular the prohibition of the use of force, under paragraph 4 of Article 2. Any doubt as to the general and binding nature

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

of those norms should be totally excluded. But more should be achieved. It is a question of treaties and agreements regarding measures guaranteeing the observance of that principle.

The draft agreement submitted in this connexion responds to the immediate requirement to codify the implementation of one of the basic principles of the United Nations Charter. No one can deny that, despite paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, more than 100 armed conflicts among States have taken place. Consequently, we should do everything in our power to guarantee the observance of the prohibition of the use of force. These considerations of principle lead to full harmony between the treaty on the non-use of force and the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

May I draw attention to yet another crucial aspect which stresses the immediate urgency of our requirement. The question of the rejection of the use of force in international relations is inextricably linked to the question of disarmament. The cessation of the arms race and the movement towards the reduction of stockpiles of weapons is the most effective path towards curtailing the threat of a new war and the elimination of reasons for the use of force or the threat of force. This mutual dependence on the non-use of force in disarmament is taken into account in article IV of the proposed draft Treaty. Under that article, States should

"... make all possible efforts to implement effective measures for lessening military confrontation and for disarmament which would constitute steps towards the achievement of the ultimate goal - general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control." (A/31/243, annex, p. 2)

The prohibition of the use of all types of weapons and the use of armed forces for the purposes of implementing political and economic interests in relations among States would be a considerable achievement in itself. We should add to this its favourable impact on disarmament negotiations, the positive results of which would sustain the non-use of force. International disputes would no longer be able to lead to the eruption of new hotbeds of tension and situations of military conflict.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

We do not harbour any illusions and we are accustomed to viewing things realistically. The obstacles which have to be overcome to achieve this goal are truly great and momentous, but this goal can be achieved and, with reason and good will, success is possible. The process of political détente, expanding despite the plans hatched by the enemies of détente, will have a favourable impact on the consolidation and further development of relations among States on the basis of mutual respect and co-operation. This process has led to a deeper understanding of the fact that relations among States with different social systems should be based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, as there is no reasonable alternative. These favourable conditions should be used to make further progress and to strengthen the improvement in the international climate. The drawing up and conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force would to a large extent serve this cause.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic
Republic)

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic considers that, on the basis, and in strict observance of its Charter, the United Nations is called upon to adopt specific measures so that the non-use of force in international relations may become a reality.

We have carefully considered the statements of various States, and we note with satisfaction that this proposal has met with broad response among the non-aligned States. Moreover, we are under the impression that most of the States that did not vote for resolution 31/9 of the last session of the General Assembly are now ready to participate in a business-like discussion of the questions that have been raised.

We should, without further unnecessary delay, set about the task of establishing the necessary organizational conditions for drawing up the text of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

On the basis of the foregoing, I wish to point out that the delegation of the German Democratic Republic supports the adoption of a solemn declaration on the deepening and consolidation of the process of international détente. We also support the draft resolution on the prevention of nuclear war, being firmly convinced that such a step could help to curtail the nuclear arms race.

Moreover, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic supports the view that we should promptly proceed to the drawing up of a world agreement on the prohibition of the use of force in international relations.

Finally, we support the adoption of a draft resolution on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

Mr. HOQUE (Bangladesh): The adoption of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security seven years ago constituted a basic reaffirmation by the world community, and its rededication to, the fundamental principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and the felt need to intensify efforts towards a more durable structure of world peace and the evolution of a stable and equitable international economic and political order - an order which would conform and be more responsive to the present-day composition and structure of world society.

To some observers and political realists the Declaration has remained yet another series of norms and words to add to the plethora of ineffectual ideals that reflect the aspirations of mankind but are not to be put into effect. Nevertheless, the annual consideration of the progress of the implementation of the Declaration does serve as a useful gauge for measuring the achievements and failure of the world community in its search for fulfilment of the paramount objective of the United Nations - the maintenance of international peace and security.

While the validity of the Charter's principles and purposes remains enduring, their practical manifestation as seen in the conduct of Member States and the institutional working of the United Nations has left much to be desired. The ideal of collective security through strengthening the collective responsibility and capacity of Member States working in unison has never been translated into anything approaching a meaningful reality. The Security Council for much of this period has remained muscle-bound and hamstrung by the veto. The General Assembly, asserting its secondary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, momentarily thrust itself into prominence, only to relapse into ineptitude as the changing composition of its membership conformed to the shifting pattern of alliances in an essentially bi-polar world. The role of the Secretary-General and his quiet personalized diplomacy assumed a particular relevance and led to the first glimmering of what has today become the peace-making and peace-keeping potential of the United Nations.

However, in the past three decades of its existence, the thrust towards strengthening security through the collective will of Member States - the mainstay of the United Nations Charter - has never generated that momentum necessary to make its provisions a reality.

(Mr. Hoque, Bangladesh)

Meanwhile, a second and parallel priority to international security had assumed a particular new focus inherent in the recognition that peace and prosperity are indivisible. The course of economic development, the link between under-development and political insecurity, between poverty and violence, began increasingly to be recognized, and the role of the United Nations assumed a striking new validity and potential.

Then again, there was growing cognizance of the bridge between disarmament and security and the conviction that lack of progress in reversing, controlling and halting the arms race, whether nuclear or conventional, was directly proportionate to the feeling of insecurity among States. Many States, including our own, have categorically stated that considerations of national security are incompatible with disarmament so long as there exists no viable world security system based on law and order and the collective responsibility of all nations for maintaining peace, settling disputes and thereby guaranteeing disarmament.

These, in essence, were among the compulsions that led the General Assembly at its historic twenty-fifth session to adopt, in addition to resolution 2734 (XXV), two other important instruments: the Declaration on the Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Decade. In its Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security the General Assembly was to affirm that there was indeed a close link between security, disarmament and the economic development of countries.

A gradual diffusion of the world power structure, the growing disinclination of the great Powers to engage in direct confrontation, and their general attitude of restraint and co-operation are some tentative indicators of a certain plateau of stability which would positively influence the affairs of the international community as a whole. Recent pronouncements regarding the curtailment of vertical proliferation of arms and on other disarmament issues have also been welcomed, though they are yet in the nature of

(Mr. Hogue, Bangladesh)

declarations of intent, rather than any concrete manifestation of will. The process of détente in Europe, as motivated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation, has also been hailed as a major milestone towards relaxation of tensions, and the hope has been expressed that this could spread universally.

In other regions of the world, there are also more positive indicators of a shift away from confrontation to mutual accommodation. A particularly important example of international amity is the recent Bangladesh-India Agreement on the sharing of the Ganges Waters at Farakka which, due to the statesmanship of the leaders of the two countries and the positive encouragement of the United Nations, its Secretary-General, and particularly the Non-Aligned Group, was successfully negotiated and signed on 5 November this year.

(Mr. Hoque, Bangladesh)

The role of the United Nations in creating the necessary impetus and environment for a peaceful initiative needs particularly to be underscored.

However, the current debates in the Assembly have also highlighted the continued failure of the United Nations to muster the necessary collective will to deal with some of the most vital and crucial issues affecting peace and security and the economic and social well-being of mankind. The crises in the Middle East, the continuing hold of racism and colonialism in southern Africa and the impasse in Cyprus are too well-known to bear repetition. The Secretary-General, in his report, has pointedly referred to other recent manifestations, mentioning in particular the growing tensions in parts of northern and eastern Africa. Moreover, for the great majority of developing countries, particularly the poorer nations, the deadlock in the North-South negotiations on economic progress bear incalculable adverse consequences.

It is now generally recognized that among the most important qualitative changes affecting the future potential of the United Nations is that of the swelling of the ranks of its membership by some 100 or so countries liberated from colonialism. The importance of this historic evolution cannot be underestimated. Their struggle to consolidate their freedom as sovereign equals and their meaningful integration into the global decision-making process constitutes a new and vital dimension affecting the ability of the United Nations to implement the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, for it is these States, collectively constituting the third world, which today pose the greatest challenge and provide a positive momentum towards the creation of a stable and equitable world order. It is in their territories that all the regulatory principles underlined in the Declaration are apparent more in their breach than in the fulfilment of their obligations - the injunction against the non-use or threat of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State, the non-acquisition of territories by force, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, equality of rights, and self-determination of peoples. It is these States which have become the principal victims of

(Mr. Hoque, Bangladesh)

aggression and the threat of the use of force, both overt and covert, as well as the use of other means - economic and political - to coerce them into a subordination of the exercise of their sovereign rights.

In this changing context of international relations and the diffusion of bloc polarity, the most striking and disturbing phenomenon in contemporary international relations is the problem of unequal relations between States that often amounts to one State dominating another. In the constant flux of States' preserving and consolidating their hard-won independence, threats to their sovereignty through open and covert means carry the potential of friction and confrontation with inevitable global repercussions.

The current global society therefore reflects a very different picture than it did 32 years ago. Today we have a world of independent, sovereign States representing near-universality in the United Nations, in which the classic relationship of the domination of the many by the few is greatly diffused. Today the interrelationship among nations and the growing recognition of their interdependence has evoked a closer sense of community. While crucial issues affecting peace and security still remain dominant on our agenda, and while oppression, exploitation and aggression continue to prevail in the world, there are also important positive indications that the move towards collective responsibility can be sustained for the strengthening and maintenance of international security.

It is obvious that there are no quick and easy solutions towards this ideal, but there are certain priority areas for gathering momentum in the collective will to meet these challenges. Bangladesh has repeatedly stressed these areas, and we reiterate our position as follows.

First and foremost, the move towards détente among the major Powers logically points to the assumption by the Security Council of greater responsibility in keeping with its fundamental role.

Secondly, it is vital to seek the integration of the third world into the true decision-making process, and thus give meaningful effect to the Charter's fundamental principle, namely, the sovereign equality of all States.

(Mr. Hoque, Bangladesh)

Thirdly, the role of the Secretary-General in the peace-keeping and peace-making functions of the United Nations must be encouraged and strengthened. The prophylactic functions of conciliation, mediation, good offices and so forth must be developed along with the preventive functions of containing conflicts and reducing tensions and policing cease-fires and explosive situations. The stalemate over the question of the control and financing of such operations must be overcome in the larger interests of the world community.

Fourthly, a vital adjunct to the renunciation of the use or threat of force is the concomitantly greater need for reliance on the pacific settlement of disputes, the elaboration of specific procedures and the evolution of clear-cut means and measures towards this end.

Fifthly, progress towards ameliorating the economic and social well-being of States has now become a necessity, without which security will remain ephemeral. The new international economic order must be given substance and effect.

Sixthly, there can be no international security without an international legal order. The need for fostering the progressive development and codification of international law has become an urgent priority and, indeed, an essential prerequisite for the strengthening of coexistence.

Seventhly, institutional arrangements of the United Nations must be progressively and urgently strengthened, particularly in order to give effect to the moribund provisions of Articles 28, 29 and 43 of the Charter.

This review touches on some of the concerns contained in the two important initiatives of the Soviet Union relating to the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations and to the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war, questions that are also the subject of our debate. There can be no doubt that the principles contained in those proposals are laudable and widely recognised. They are, indeed, already reflected in some form or other in the United Nations Charter and in a series of instruments adopted by the Assembly.

(Mr. Hoque, Bangladesh)

Nevertheless, it seems to us that the crucial issue today is not that of a mere restatement or elaboration of well-recognized norms but essentially that of an increase in the will of the international community to give them concrete and effective expression. An important concern is that the elaboration of existing Charter principles should not lead to the creation of any uncertainty or ambiguity in the interpretation of the Charter. On the issue of the deepening and consolidation of détente and the prevention of the dangers of nuclear war, it is our view that momentum can be generated through the manifestation of actual accomplishments and not only through declarations of intent. The onus falls clearly on the major Powers to demonstrate their bona fides with regard not only to their own regions but also to the rest of the world.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have all witnessed the fact that international life is every year becoming ever more complex and multifaceted. International relations are today, as it were, at a crossroads leading either to a growth of trust and co-operation or to the growth of mutual fear, suspicion and the stockpiling of weapons. These are roads which lead in the final analysis either to lasting peace or at the very best to a situation of teetering on the brink of war.

In recent years important changes have occurred in the world for the better. There has been a beginning of the process of international détente, and the principles of peaceful co-existence have put down deep roots in international affairs. But there is one more fact we have to face. There is still a failure to apply these principles in the policies of individual States, with all the dangerous consequences that implies for world peace.

In spite of the fact that the fundamental principle of the non-use of force or the threat of force has been enshrined in a number of very important international documents, including the Charter of the United Nations itself, there are still in the world a number of hotbeds of tension and from time to time new ones appear. There are still serious hotbeds of international conflict in the Middle East, in the south of Africa and in Cyprus which continue to threaten international peace and security.

The consequences of Israeli aggression in the Middle East have not yet been cleared away. In defiance of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international law, the Arab lands seized by Israel continue to be held by force. The Arab people of Palestine still find themselves in the situation of an exiled people and their inalienable national rights are still being denied by force.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In southern Africa the racist régimes of Pretoria and Salisbury, in disregard of the will of the United Nations and the whole international community, are continuing to subject the indigenous African population to violent oppression and are continuing their illegal occupation of Namibia by force, thus creating a serious threat to international peace and security not only in Africa but throughout the world. New hotbeds of conflict have appeared caused by the ambitions of certain Governments to satisfy their territorial claims against neighbouring States by means of force and fratricidal war.

These situations are fraught with serious danger for the fate of the whole of mankind. In the circumstances we must take additional measures to ensure that mankind firmly chooses the path of the strengthening of peace, détente, and broad and equal international co-operation. In this regard the first priority, we are firmly convinced, is to ensure strict application of the principle of the non-use of force and converting that principle into an immutable law of international relations.

Guided by these considerations, the Soviet Union has submitted for the consideration of the thirty-first session of the General Assembly the question of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. This proposal has won a broad and favourable response on the part of world public opinion. About 100 States took part in the discussion of this item at the last session, and more than 40 countries have set forth their positions in answers to the Secretary-General's questionnaire sent to Member States of the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution 31/9. We should like to express our gratitude to all those States which have made their contribution to a broad discussion of this question and to the search for mutually acceptable solutions.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The position of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on this question is well known; it has been set forth on many occasions both in the First and Sixth Committees as well as in the plenary General Assembly. And it was fully and cogently stated in a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. Gromyko, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 27 May 1977, which was circulated as an official document of the General Assembly (A/32/94). In this regard permit me to confine myself to just a few explanatory remarks.

In the view of the Soviet Union the last year amply confirmed the timeliness and importance of concluding a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, which would be in keeping with the vital interests of all States, large and small, and the interests of the strengthening of international peace and security. This principle has already been enshrined in a number of bilateral and multilateral international treaties which have recently been concluded, including, as the Committee will recall, the Final Act of the Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In the time which has elapsed since the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have striven consistently to make this principle an ever more immutable norm of international life. In particular, it was enshrined in the new fundamental law - the Constitution of the Soviet Union - adopted on 7 October 1977, article 29 of which clearly states that relations between the USSR and other countries are based, inter alia, on the basis of observance of the principle of mutual renunciation of the use of force or the threat of the use of force. As was stressed by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Brezhnev:

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

"By including in the new Constitution a particular chapter which enshrines the peace-loving nature of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, our people has stressed its determination to follow the Leninist policy of banishing from the life of mankind the horrors of war and material privation - mortal dangers which are concomitant with the arms race."

In many bilateral documents of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other countries the significance is also stressed of the principle of the non-use of force in international relations. The Soviet-Indian Declaration of 26 October of this year, inter alia, states:

"Believing that all States should refrain from the use of force or the threat of force, the Soviet Union and India support the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations."

The Soviet-Afghanistan communiqué of 15 April 1977 states:

"In the view of both sides, additional measures must be taken which, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, would promote the confirmation of the principle of the renunciation of the use of force or the threat of the use of force as an immutable law of international relations. In this regard stress was laid on the importance of the swift conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations."

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We cannot fail to point out the important provision in the joint declaration of the Soviet Union and France on détente, which stresses that:

"States should renounce the use of force, the threat or the use of force and the stockpiling of arms as a means of influencing the policy of other States. They should resolve any disputes arising between them by peaceful means."

As was shown by the statements of representatives and the replies of States to the questionnaire sent by the Secretary-General on the question of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, in spite of certain differences in approach on the part of States to the solution of this problem, what was characteristic of them, in our view, was the general concern they expressed to make the principle of the non-use of force in international relations an enshrined principle.

We also note with satisfaction that a majority of the States support the proposal to conclude such a treaty. The Socialist countries, the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America and certain countries of Western Europe have unequivocally expressed their support for the conclusion of such a treaty. The statements and the replies quite rightly stress that the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would promote the creation of more favourable conditions for the further reduction of the threat of a global or a localized war, the strengthening of international détente and peace throughout the world, restraining the arms race, making progress towards disarmament and promoting the strengthening of mutual trust.

It was pointed out that the purpose of prohibiting the use of force in international relations was to base the security of all States not on a balance of terror but on an expansion and increase of mutual trust and the encouraging of broad co-operation as a material basis for peaceful coexistence.

Consistent observance of the principle of the non-use of force should be viewed as an important instrument in eliminating the possibility of wars and armed conflicts. We cannot but share the view expressed, for example, in the letter of the Government of Spain to the effect that the:

"... conclusion of a world treaty on the prohibition of the use of force would be able to contribute to détente in the international sphere, to create conditions more conducive to a limitation of the arms race, including nuclear weapons and to facilitate progress towards general and complete disarmament."

(A/32/181, page 28)

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In their replies States expressed their conviction that the conclusion of such a treaty would promote the strengthening and reinforcing of the provisions of the United Nations Charter which prohibit the use of force in international relations and provide for the right to individual and collective self-defence. Thus, in the view of Senegal:

"... a treaty on the non-use of force would constitute a new commitment to respect the provisions of the Charter." (Ibid., page 27)

The same idea is reflected in the replies from the Governments of Thailand, Finland, Greece, Trinidad and Tobago and others. It was also pointed out that the adoption by States of treaty obligations on the renunciation of the use of force or the threat of force would be of historic significance in terms of ensuring full security for all peoples and all States, large and small.

How can we fail to agree with those important points? The Soviet delegation would like to stress once again that the Soviet Union is striving to make the principle of the non-use of force a clear-cut and concrete treaty obligation so as to make States parties to such a treaty more responsible for the strict observance of that principle, and thus strengthen the effectiveness of its application in the actual practice of international relations.

The conclusion of a world treaty would mean an important step forward in contemporary international relations. It would also have a profound and beneficent influence on the solution of fundamental international problems and, primarily, it would create favourable conditions for the cessation of the arms race and the implementation of effective measures in the field of disarmament. It would promote the further easing of international tension, the concentration of the efforts of all States on the constructive goals of solving the problems of social and economic development of peoples and the development of comprehensive and mutually advantageous international co-operation. In our view, all States without exception have an interest in the practical implementation of that proposal.

(Mr. Issraelyn, USSR)

It should be particularly stressed that in our view, a view which is shared by many countries, as is clear from the replies to the questionnaire of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the proposed world treaty is designed to confirm the right to self-defence and resistance against an aggressor and the right to fight for the elimination of the consequences of aggression. Neither would that treaty infringe the inalienable rights of colonial peoples to fight for their freedom and independence by using any means available to them.

On the basis of all the accumulated experience and the considerable amount of material on the question of concluding a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, the Soviet delegation believes that the thirty-second session of the General Assembly is faced with an important task, namely, that of getting down to practical measures for preparing and concluding such an international document. The implementation of that task would, inter alia, serve that purpose by creating a special committee which would have the task of working out such a treaty.

We hope that States Members of the United Nations, after a profound and comprehensive examination of this proposal, will take a constructive stand and make a positive contribution to its practical implementation.

For its part, the delegation of the Soviet Union is ready, together with the delegations of other States, to proceed without delay to working out an agreement on a mutually acceptable text of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

Mrs. BORODOWSKY JACHIEWICH (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation has already had the opportunity, at the beginning of the work of this Committee, of speaking on agenda item 127, entitled "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war", which was included in the agenda of the present session on the initiative of the Soviet Union. That is why at this stage I shall speak on the agenda item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

(Mrs. Borodowsky Jachiewich, Cuba)

We all recall that at its twenty-fifth anniversary session the United Nations adopted resolution 2754 (XXV) entitled "Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", which has enabled us at subsequent sessions of the General Assembly to give detailed consideration to international problems concerning its application.

At each session consideration of that item has enabled us to consider, on the one hand, the new achievements and trends in international relations and all other efforts contributing to the strengthening of international security and, on the other hand, the hotbeds of tension, the existence of crises and situations of aggression and all those other questions which in one way or another continue to be the main obstacles to the strengthening of international peace and security.

(Mrs. Borodowsky Jachiewich, Cuba)

My delegation takes the floor on this item from this dual approach prompted by the desire actively to contribute to the cause of peace, security and co-operation in the world, since we ourselves have been forced to live without that security.

Cuba, which had a long and difficult road before it and still has, in spite of the victory of the Socialist Revolution in 1959, knew that things would not be easy. We Cubans knew that for us an entirely new and difficult era was about to begin. The reactionary and imperialist forces unleashed against our country every form of political, economic and military aggression, designed to prevent Cuba from building its new way of life as a free and sovereign State. A long list of acts could be cited of which our country has been and is a victim, acts affecting international peace and security. To mention just one of them, the ignominious blockade of Cuba by the United States still continues.

Therefore, it is so important for my country to preserve international peace and security, not only at home but also beyond its shores. We practise international solidarity even at the cost of much effort and sacrifice. We do not forget that without the disinterested and generous assistance of the socialist countries and, first and foremost, of the Soviet Union, our country could not have survived its confrontation with imperialism. We have received help and international solidarity in maintaining our revolution.

Consequently, we feel morally bound to provide similar assistance to all forces struggling today to ensure that the concepts set forth in the Declaration on International Security, adopted in 1970, become a reality.

My country's foreign policy has developed on the basis of peace and international co-operation. Its guidelines are reflected in the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba. Eloquent proof of this, among other aspects, are the numerous joint communiqués subscribed to, with other friendly countries, some of which appear as official documents on this item.

(Mrs. Borodowsky Jachiewich, Cuba)

Today, the policy of détente and peaceful coexistence among States with different economic and social systems constitutes the fundamental factor impelling us towards a harmonious development of international relations. Thus we are pleased to observe how the principles and provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe have reflected that feeling. The strengthening of the liberation struggle and the struggle against all manifestations of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, and so on, has recently been highlighted. In this connexion, we have in our midst, in this world Organization today, the legitimate representatives of the heroic peoples of Viet Nam, Laos, Kampuchea, Angola, Mozambique and other African peoples.

The progressive forces of the world, which is tantamount to saying socialist forces, along with non-aligned and peace-loving countries are working for contemporary international relations to develop in a climate of confidence, mutual respect and co-operation among nations.

However, it should not be forgotten that there are still developments which continue to be a dangerous threat to peace and international security. The situation in the Middle East is one such development. A settlement on the basis of the Charter and of the relevant resolutions, both of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations, is an immediate requirement. The exercise of the legitimate and permanent rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to establish its own national State, is one of the fundamental prerequisites for this region in the world.

In southern Africa reactionary activities are increasing against peoples of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. The international community is in duty bound to help the national liberation movements of these peoples.

(Mrs. Scroedowsky-Jachimech, Cuba)

The total elimination of the vestiges of the colonial system and the immediate implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples should be carried out. It is also necessary that the intervention of imperialists and reactionary international forces should cease in the internal affairs of free and independent African countries.

Elimination of the shameful régime of apartheid and the cessation of racial discrimination are essential preconditions for the strengthening of international peace and security.

International repudiation of the fascist régime of the Chilean junta has not ceased. Support for the just struggle of the Cypriot people for their independence and territorial integrity has turned into a world clamour.

The absolute rights of peoples over their natural and economic resources to develop their countries and to achieve their objectives, as well as efforts designed to establish a new international economic order, entail the total eradication of manifestations of inequality in international economic relations.

The question of the cessation of the arms race is another prerequisite for the strengthening of international peace and security. The elimination of foreign military bases imposed and maintained against the will of peoples and Governments, the prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction and systems of such weapons - and it is noteworthy to recall the international protests against the manufacture of the neutron bomb by the United States - the total prohibition of chemical weapons and other vital and urgent questions within the context of general and complete disarmament, in particular the question of nuclear weapons, would constitute effective guarantees for world peace and security.

In this connexion, the forthcoming special session of the United Nations on disarmament should set forth fundamental guidelines for the solution of this urgent problem and should pave the way towards the convening of the world disarmament conference, at which achievement of effective solutions should be our goal.

The only genuine basis for international relations is strict respect for the principles of national independence and sovereignty, equality of rights, renunciation of force and the threat of force, and the right of each people to elect and freely develop its political, economic and social régime without foreign interference. Efforts should be stepped up to make international détente an irreversible process extending to the four corners of the earth. It is the unavoidable duty of all progressive forces in the world to struggle to create economic, political and social conditions which should make a reversal of this trend impossible.

We hope that in future statements on this item, the questions analysed today as the main and fundamental obstacles to total and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security will have ceased to exist, being replaced by positive international achievements, entailing implementation of the provisions of the Declaration, as well as strict observance of the principles and purposes of the Charter. It depends on us.

Mr. THIEMELE (Ivory Coast) (interpretation from French):

Speaking for the first time in the First Committee, I take pleasure in addressing to the Chairman, through you, Sir, the congratulations of my delegation on his election to the presidency of this important Committee of the General Assembly and on the tact, dignity and efficiency with which he is carrying out his important task. Those who know him are not at all surprised to see him place his wealth of experience so generously at the service of our Organization. This makes the Ivory Coast, a fraternal neighbour of Ghana, sincerely happy.

Following consideration of the various agenda items relating to disarmament, items 37, 50 and 127 of the agenda of the General Assembly give us a new opportunity to face the problem of peace in the world, which is a major objective of our Organization. The Ivory Coast, whose internal and foreign policies are consistently guided by the persistent search for peace - peace within its borders, peace with its neighbours and the other African countries, peace between Africa and the other countries of the world - is here in all humility but frankly and realistically to participate in this debate and make its voice heard.

My country desires and seeks peace for men of all countries and not just for a few privileged ones, whether these be individuals or States. My country wants peace to enable all men to develop freely and fully in order to attain their deepest aspirations. In Africa peace should enable us, once the last vestiges of colonialism and racial discrimination are eradicated, to promote the new African man through economic and social progress while respecting our most authentic values, so as to move away for ever from centuries of humiliation and exploitation.

The Ivory Coast, on the basis of history and also of its conviction, insists that only dialogue, that is, negotiation and the exploration of peaceful means of settling conflicts of all kinds in all regions, can contribute to the establishment of a real and lasting peace.

(Mr. Thiemele, Ivory Coast)

Thus, since 1971, President Félix Houphouët-Boigny, following his memorable press conference on the neutrality of Africa, has undertaken a pilgrimage to urge his African peers as well as all political officials in the world to renounce the creation of hotbeds of tension and to resort to dialogue in the search for settlements of the numerous conflicts which break out in various places, and to put an end to situations which are an offence to mankind, such as colonialism and apartheid.

The Ivory Coast not only advocates dialogue but has made it its creed, a basic principle of its policy which it applies both within and beyond its borders in order to solve its own problems as a young nation in course of development and also to participate, as appropriate and within its means, in the solution of the grave problems which affect the world. Today we can only welcome the initiative, set under the seal of history, that President Anwar Sadat has just taken to set in motion in all responsibility and in all freedom a dialogue with the Israeli Government in order to put an end to the state of war which has persisted for 30 years in a region which, more than any other, should enjoy peace and harmony. We sincerely hope that practical solutions will be found to the elements underlying the conflict and that mistrust and hatred will soon give way to understanding and co-operation among the peoples of the Middle East.

As long as the world continues to arm, as long as the arms trade enjoys a reprehensible impunity and enormous sums are devoted to armaments and the search for new and ever more lethal weapons, thus creating an atmosphere of insecurity and permanent mistrust, a true balance of terror, it will be very difficult to establish real international détente.

Just as we desire that disarmament be as general as possible so that the resources released may help in the solution of the problems of deprived peoples - hence the great hope we place in the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on disarmament - so my country is in favour of international détente, true détente among peoples and among States, whatever their system, colour or power.

(Mr. Thiemele, Ivory Coast)

For us Africans, children of a thousand-year-old civilization based on the spoken word, where only the given word counts, no declaration however beautiful, no commitment however solemnly entered into, can satisfy us, let alone reassure us, in a rapacious world where only personal and selfish interests determine the positions taken. Indeed, if these declarations and commitments were sufficient we should not be here today considering problems relating to the deepening and consolidation of international détente. Without referring to the United Nations Charter itself, as long ago as 1969, following the generous initiative of certain countries, the General Assembly discussed and adopted the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security. What real progress has there been in its implementation since then?

Moreover, in the summer of 1975 the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe - attended by 35 countries, including the most powerful in the world - adopted a declaration setting out the conditions for détente in Europe. I should like to recall some of these: respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, including the right of each State to choose and freely develop its political, social, economic and cultural system; settlement of disputes among States by peaceful means so as not to endanger international peace and security and justice; non-interference, direct or indirect, individual or collective, in the internal affairs of any participating State.

The Helsinki declaration also lays down conditions for co-operation in various ways among participating States. How can we fail to be pleased by this when we remember the atmosphere which prevailed among those same countries during the 1950s and 1960s? The problem of the effective implementation of that declaration is not ours. However, it can be said that it has ended the cold war in that region.

(Mr. Thiemele, Ivory Coast)

Our concern as Africans is to know whether that détente centred on Europe is not against universal peace - whether it has not, in the final analysis, deliberately or otherwise, created around the two greatest world Powers, the United States and the USSR, an "oasis of peace and prosperity" enabling those within it, by releasing them from certain constraints, to create or incite hotbeds of tension in other regions of the world.

Indeed, we cannot adopt the policy of the ostrich by ignoring the situation which prevails in Africa. At a time when colonialism is crumbling and racial discrimination is being attacked by the international community we see, as though brought about by the magic wand of a celestial pyromaniac, suicidal conflagrations in Africa in the form of fratricidal wars, within States or among States, with the participation of non-Africans of all colours and all ideologies supported by powerful paternalistic patrons whom no one dares to name.

(Mr. Thiemele, Ivory Coast)

Africa, our continent, the continent of the future with its immense wealth, is now a closed area of struggle between the two blocs. If through dialectics we can understand that the former colonial Powers have objective interests in defending our regions, we are entitled to wonder what those who call themselves friends of Africa want - those supporters of "independence, freedom and peace for peoples", who are not shy of affirming that their sympathies lie with States which have chosen the way of economic and social changes in favour of the popular masses, while refusing in all good conscience to associate themselves with the efforts of the international community to release sufficient resources to assist the peoples in developing countries. It is true that the assistance of those countries becomes important only to countries engaged in war in the form of supplies of weapons, never to the poorer countries or those affected by natural disasters such as drought.

Africa needs only one thing: peace to tackle relentlessly the tasks of economic and social development required by its future in the concert of nations. That is why the Fourteenth Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at Libreville in July last unanimously adopted a resolution condemning foreign interference in the internal affairs of States, whatever their source.

Africa hopes not to be subjected to the effects of a new Berlin Congress that would enable new Powers in search of spheres of influence to install themselves in conditions even more unbearable than at the end of the last century.

The Ivory Coast, for its part, relies on the sense of responsibility of the great of this world and on the legendary wisdom of Africa to avoid such prospects so that the United Nations will fulfil, sincerely and patiently, its objectives under the Charter, because, as was said in July last by President Houphouët-Boigny before the Heads of African States:

"Let each of us, aware of the long and hard way that we had to travel to reach independence, respect the independence of others. There is not a single country in Africa or in the world which could quite calmly vaunt itself on the supreme satisfaction of having created an ideal society other than in theory. Who could teach lessons to others by hiding his own poverty under Noah's mantle."

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on representatives who have expressed a wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. STRAUB (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation regrets that it must interrupt the work of our Committee to exercise its right of reply, particularly when we are considering items relating to the improvement of international relations and the fundamental principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States has been highlighted by the vast majority of delegations. However, that positive trend in our debate was interrupted by a speaker who made a political attack against my country, prompted by a spirit contrary to all the principles that have been reiterated here.

My delegation categorically rejects the fallacious assertions made by that representative and reserves its right to respond after it has studied them in greater depth.

Mrs. BORODOWSKY JACHLEWICH (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I apologize for speaking at this late hour when we are about to adjourn, but I must invite the Chilean representative to look at document A/32/74, which appears under the item entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". That document is the final communiqué of the ministerial meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries held at New Delhi from 7 to 11 April 1977, and it is one of the official documents under agenda item 50. I shall quote from it verbatim:

"The Bureau reaffirmed solidarity with the people of Chile in their struggle for a democratic régime that would guarantee respect for human rights." (A/32/74, para. 63)

As representatives can see, my delegation only reflected the views of other delegations which participated in that meeting. We could mention many other documents such as the Declaration of Colombo and so on, but I do not want to prolong this statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Since there are no speakers for this afternoon's meeting, I am compelled to cancel it.

I should like to suggest that after the conclusion of the general debate - which is likely to end on Wednesday, as it would appear from the list of speakers which was closed on 30 November and is now available to me - the Committee should proceed to take action on the draft resolutions before it. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees with my suggestion.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.