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FIRST COMMITTEE
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New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 27TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PASTINEN (Finland)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 128: CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF
GUARANTEES OF THE SECURITY OF NON-NUCLEAR STATES (continued)
ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 128 (continued)

CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF GUARANTEES
OF THE SECURITY OF NON-NUCLEAR STATES (A/33/241; A/C.1/33/L.6)

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to draw the attention of representatives to the fact that the list of speakers for items 35 to 49 has been opened for inscription. I shall revert to this matter at the end of the morning meeting.

Mr. GANGA-MBALA (Congo) (interpretation from French): This session of the First Committee falls into a particular context because it is being held practically on the morrow of the special session devoted to disarmament which for our Organization and indeed the whole of mankind is an historic event, although it did not give us the satisfaction we would have hoped for. Although the Political Committee of the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly has the privilege of following the trail blazed by the special session on disarmament, it nevertheless has the difficult task of making necessary and viable arrangements to permit mankind, in the future, to achieve its urgent goal of living in a world of peace devoted solely to its own development and well-being.

Almost all the developing countries, and indeed of the third world, have been waiting anxiously, but also with justified optimism, for those very conditions. It is, out of concern for equity, the responsibility to spare the human race the greatest disaster it has ever known, that the Assembly has been good enough to agree to consider for the first time, the need to conclude a convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States.

(Mr. Ganga-Mbala, Congo)

The People's Republic of Congo appreciates the unanimous support for the view that the problem of disarmament is no longer the exclusive province of the great Powers, but that States great and small are just as interested in it. My delegation very much appreciates this view, the more so because the question under discussion is of great importance to countries like my own which have no desire whatsoever to acquire nuclear weapons, either in the short or medium-term.

Viewing the question from an over-all standpoint, my delegation would like to put forward some general considerations which govern its own approach and may possibly help others, during the debate on item 128, to reach positive and constructive conclusions.

In a world where poverty and hunger are rife, the continuing arms race has forced some Governments to divert their attention from pressing and priority questions concerning the survival of their peoples. Ever since the end of the Second World War the international community, primarily through the United Nations, has been dealing with this problem. But the more we debate, the more some peoples' appetites for weapons are whetted and the greater the increase in the momentum of the arms race. The frightening spectre of nuclear war haunts all peoples at a time when the effects of the bombing of Hiroshima have hardly died away.

World equilibrium depends upon security, complete security against the nuclear threat. That is why we have to achieve disarmament. It is indeed clear that the man in the street thinks of disarmament mainly in terms of nuclear disarmament. We cannot envisage true disarmament without the nuclear Powers deciding to put an end to nuclear tests and to any quantitative or qualitative development of nuclear weapons and their actually proceeding to the destruction of existing stockpiles. Such action would be symbolic of the advent of détente and proof that States which might be capable of withholding the weapon of the Apocalypse would finally agree to promote peace and security for all peoples.

The concept of the security of non-nuclear States is largely connected, not with the balance between nuclear-weapon Powers but with the advent of the great Powers in a world where we hope the nuclear weapon will be a thing of the past. We consider this goal to be absolutely realistic and realizable. It should constitute the very foundation and the very corner-stone

(Mr. Ganga-Mbala, Congo)

of our every action. This is the first aspect we should like to have reflected in the international convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States. It means that we must consider how we can induce the major nuclear Powers to be the first to accede to the convention.

In this way we wish to impart a certain sense of universality to the guarantees and we should also be aware of the importance of negative guarantees because, as we have been hearing in this Committee, security guarantees should be given by all nuclear Powers.

We must recognize, indeed, that the wishes of the non-nuclear-weapon States as to the guarantees they would like to receive from the nuclear Powers give rise to a number of political problems and perhaps others as well. We still recall the skilful way in which the nuclear Powers approached the matter at the tenth special session on disarmament, and how their sometimes comforting words were offset with restrictions and conditions which cancelled out the effects of the security they had intended to give to the non-nuclear-weapon States.

The security of the non-nuclear States should in no way signify that the nuclear Powers will take this opportunity to strengthen the defensive potential of the non-nuclear States by creating and thus strengthening their spheres of influence. It should, however, lead to the dismantling of military bases in foreign territory, something which constitutes a legitimate demand on the part of most States. This aspect, which was more or less overlooked by the special session, is of vital importance. Thus we shall be strengthening the denuclearization of certain zones such as the Indian Ocean or Africa. How could it be otherwise, and how can we achieve this while nuclear submarines continue to cross our seas and oceans?

Finally, we should also like to express our concern over another aspect of the question: what would be the security guarantees of a non-nuclear State party to the convention if it were attacked by a nuclear State not party to the convention? What would be the reaction of the nuclear Powers if a non-nuclear State party to the convention were to suffer a threat from a nuclear State not party to the convention?

(Mr. Ganga-Mbala, Congo)

This question seems to us to be of importance because to us it suggests South Africa, which may possess nuclear weapons but will never become a party to such a convention.

To sum up, the confrontation between nuclear Powers will not spare non-nuclear countries. The world is not divided into watertight compartments. We do not have a world consisting of great Powers and another made up of small countries. If we did the concept of universality would be meaningless. The system is all the more dangerous in that the small States are used as a backstop by the super-Powers.

My delegation very much appreciates the initiative of the Soviet Union and the high sense of responsibility it showed in submitting this proposal which constitutes a positive response to the recommendations of the special session on disarmament. The text is a further step towards true international peace. It is imbued with a sense of international equity, because those States which renounce the acquisition of nuclear arms are entitled to obtain and demand secure guarantees that in no circumstances will they be the target of nuclear weapons from States which possess those weapons. This would help to alleviate the fears of the non-nuclear States.

For all these reasons, the text to be adopted should be very strict and clear-cut in its provisions, and binding upon all. It should not remain a simple matter of words which can be renounced at any time.

At the present stage of our debate, this may be considered as the contribution of the delegation of the People's Republic of Congo to one of the urgent items on which our Committee must decide. As we said last May:

"Tomorrow it will be too late; with bowed heads we shall no longer be able to look fate in the face. It is today that all of us, together, must take out insurance on the future of generations to come and renounce the fairy-tale dreams of idle power. History, with its unforeseeable course, calls on us to do everything possible to bring about a picture of earth and mankind reconciled." (A/S-10/PV.8, p. 17)

Mr. BALETA (Albania) (interpretation from French): It has become almost a ritual that every year our Committee should be examining an item on its agenda on the proposal of the Soviet socio-imperialists, who seek to profit from the discussions here to camouflage their aggressive policy and to justify their armament and their war preparations. Their present phraseology about the "strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States" is nothing but a new attempt to force peace and freedom-loving peoples and States to close their eyes to reality and to divert their attention from the dangers threatening them.

We are already very well aware that the imperialist super-Powers have for many years now been ceaselessly talking about their so-called wish "to limit and to halt nuclear tests", "to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons" and to establish by means of agreements and treaties a system of "guarantees" which would strengthen the security of non-nuclear States and contribute to preventing atomic war.

But it is enough to take a look at their concrete acts to realise that all their efforts are bent in a diametrically opposed direction. The two imperialist super-Powers - the United States and the Soviet Union - have become the greatest militarist Powers in the entire history of mankind. They have acquired unprecedented arsenals of conventional and atomic weapons. They have embarked on the most extensive arms race ever known and they continue each day to manufacture and perfect all kinds of weapons.

The peoples of the world, the whole of mankind and international peace and security are gravely threatened by the weapons now in the possession of the super-Powers and the imperialist Powers. Peace and freedom-loving peoples and States are quite rightly disturbed and alarmed by this situation. That is why the voice of revolt can be heard raised everywhere against the weapons of the imperialist Powers in general and against their nuclear arms in particular.

In order to stem the wave of indignation which is rising throughout the world against them, the imperialist super-Powers are seeking by every possible means to deceive the peoples of the world. They are trying above all to give the false impression that the danger of nuclear weapons can be averted by legal devices even if nuclear-weapon arsenals remain intact and the atomic arms race continues.

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

That is precisely the goal being pursued by the Soviet socio-imperialists in proposing the conclusion of an international convention between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States and in offering assurances that, in principle, all the nuclear Powers want to provide guarantees to the non-nuclear countries, even if the content of their actual declarations varies.

But the facts demonstrate that the super-Powers and the imperialist nuclear Powers are not at all keen on ending the threat of nuclear weapons. Their sole concern is to justify their nuclear weapons. It does not matter if, at one point, they use such language to create illusions or whether, at another, they utter charges against each other to mislead the peoples of the world and to avoid being condemned by world public opinion.

The Soviet socio-imperialists would have us believe that guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States already exist and that all we have to do now is to strengthen them by certain other purely legal guarantees by adopting an international convention. Indeed, we note that there are in fact no guarantees of this kind in existence.

We might also wonder what could possibly be the value of these so-called legal guarantees written on a sheet of paper if the nuclear-weapon arsenals remain intact and if the imperialist super-Powers continue the arms race. When the super-Powers speak of legal guarantees and of strengthening the security of non-nuclear States at the very time when they continue every day to aggravate further the situation of tension in the world, to provoke everywhere hotbeds of conflict and tension and to make feverish preparations for a major world conflagration, they are engaging in sheer trickery.

In these circumstances, the peoples of the world should not rest on their laurels and feel reassured simply because the imperialist super-Powers say that they will not use their atomic weapons against the non-nuclear States if these States accept in advance certain conditions put forward by the super-Powers.

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

It is important to note that the danger of a nuclear attack against any country or the outbreak of a nuclear war with very grave consequences for all mankind does not lie in the lack of a convention between nuclear and non-nuclear countries. The source of this danger is not just the existence of atomic weapons as such. We believe that the main source of this danger is the aggressive and hegemonistic policy of the imperialist super-Powers, whose ambition is to dominate the world and to divide it up into spheres of influence. Conventional or atomic weapons are simply the means used by the super-Powers to support their policies. The imperialist super-Powers swear that they have no intention of using atomic weapons and sometimes say that they will use them only in the case of extreme urgency. Now, we are very well aware that nuclear weapons have not been manufactured and stockpiled in such large quantities in order to decorate museums. The fact that the imperialist super-Powers have not used these weapons so far does not mean that they will not use them some day. Their intention is to use them at the right time, when they feel that it is in their interest to do so. That is why they want to maintain their nuclear stockpiles and why they are continuing the nuclear arms race. There can be no doubt that, if they decide to use atomic weapons, they will not feel at all embarrassed to strike anywhere and to forget about conventions giving guarantees to non-nuclear States or decisions proclaiming one or another part of the world as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Nor will they have any difficulty in finding or inventing any pretext to justify their use. That is what leads us to believe that the initiatives to establish so-called zones of peace or "denuclearized" zones in various parts of the world or ideas such as the creation of such a zone in the Balkans do not in fact reduce the danger of war and the threat posed by atomic weapons. When the imperialist super-Powers say that they are ready to support the creation of such zones and to respect their status or to give guarantees to strengthen the security of non-nuclear States, all they are trying to do is to put the peoples of the world off their guard.

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

The imperialist super-Powers have assumed the right to possess atomic weapons in as large quantities as they wish, to make them ever-more sophisticated and to require other countries to recognize their right to do so and to content themselves with a few formal guarantees - even highly conditional guarantees - offered by the super-Powers. According to the logic of the imperialist super-Powers, the atomic weapons which they possess would not be at all dangerous if we entrusted those super-Powers with the task of deciding in what circumstances these weapons could be used and against whom they should be used.

The draft convention which has been submitted to this Committee is designed to legalize the right of the super-Powers and the imperialist Powers to preserve their nuclear arsenals and to increase them. It is aimed also at legitimizing their right to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States as long as there is no convention, or even afterwards, as the nuclear Powers decide.

The draft, in fact, contains an overt threat that if any country does not sign such a convention it will remain exposed to a possible nuclear attack. It is quite clear, therefore, that this draft convention, which has been submitted with so much pomp and circumstance by the Soviet social imperialists as an important measure to strengthen security guarantees for non-nuclear States, could, in fact, become an additional weapon for threats and blackmail on the part of the imperialist super-Powers, which would not hesitate to accuse any non-nuclear country of having violated the provisions of the convention in order to threaten it or to attack it with their nuclear weapons.

The so-called guarantees offered by the imperialist super-Powers to the non-nuclear States are nothing but a camouflaged attempt to warn those States that they may run the risk of being the target of nuclear attack if they do not agree to yield to the aggressive policy of those super-Powers and place themselves under their "protective umbrella". Moreover, the so-called guarantees do not eliminate the causes of the nuclear threat, nor do they diminish the danger posed by nuclear arsenals. As stressed by the leader of the Albanian people, Enver Hoxha:

"The imperialists and the social-imperialist know that by maintaining their stockpiles of modern weapons and the monopoly of their production they are also preserving for themselves the possibility

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

of blackmail and threat, maintaining the fear and insecurity that their war machines arouse among other peoples, and keeping up the permanent pressure of their weapons even without having to use them".

In conclusion, the Albanian delegation wishes to voice its view that the struggle against any nuclear threat must pass through the stage of struggle for true disarmament, and to this end peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples and States must ever more resolutely oppose the aggressive policies and designs of the super-Powers.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): The problem of the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States is of fundamental importance for more than 140 non-nuclear States. Indeed, the existence of nuclear arsenals bursting with weapons that can destroy our planet several times over is a constant threat to the security of those States, which may overnight see their peoples, towns and territories destroyed by the rivalries of a few nuclear-weapon countries - rivalries whose causes or objectives are totally alien to them.

The threat to the security of those States has been aggravated by the reluctance of the nuclear Powers to commit themselves not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. This negative attitude is, to say the least, inconsistent. By adopting general and complete disarmament as the ultimate objective of disarmament negotiations, all countries, including the nuclear Powers, have consented to the elimination of nuclear weapons. But to advocate the elimination of nuclear weapons it is necessary beforehand to have recognized their uselessness and the danger they constitute, and, above all, to have renounced their use; because failure to renounce the use of nuclear weapons can only mean that they are still being considered as usable and, consequently, to be retained.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

Today, therefore, we are faced with a paradox in which certain States recognize the need for the elimination of nuclear weapons but, nevertheless, have not renounced their use. The alleged security considerations, however real they may be, do not apply to the majority of non-nuclear-weapon States, which have no ambition to possess such weapons or to harbour them on their territories. Those States do not threaten the security of any nuclear State. Thus the principle of the unlimited use of nuclear weapons can have no valid justification but the desire for domination.

Hence, if acceptance of the principle of the elimination of nuclear weapons is to be credible, a clear renunciation of their use must be made, or, failing that, transitional positions must be taken in order severely to limit the possibilities of their use pending general and complete disarmament.

In dealing with this question, my delegation has based itself on the following considerations.

First, we are opposed not only to the existence of nuclear weapons but also to their use, anywhere and in any circumstances.

Secondly, we believe that we should approach the problems of disarmament in a spirit of equity and equality.

Thirdly, we are convinced of the urgent need to take the most appropriate measures to eliminate the threat of nuclear proliferation which certain racist and expansionist régimes pose in certain parts of the world.

Unfortunately, these elements have not always been reflected in the most appropriate way in the efforts made thus far to guarantee the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. At the root of the problem is the imbalance in the obligations contained in the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Here the nuclear Powers have demanded that other countries formally renounce the acquisition of nuclear weapons, while refusing to commit themselves formally not to use nuclear weapons against those countries.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

Security Council resolution 255 (1968) of 19 June 1968, contains a commitment on the part of three nuclear Powers to provide immediate assistance to non-nuclear-weapon States which have fallen victim to a threat or act of aggression involving the use of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, that commitment did not include renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons against States which do not possess them.

It follows, therefore, that the problem of guaranteeing the security of non-nuclear-weapon States remains unresolved, since the commitments of the nuclear Powers still fall short of the legitimate expectations of the majority of States in the international community.

This situation is liable to give rise to growing dissatisfaction among that group of countries and multiplies the risks of nuclear proliferation. Hence the nuclear Powers have decided to make declarations on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. However, while those declarations constitute substantial progress in comparison with the previous situation, for some people they have the shortcoming of being equivocal and restrictive. Furthermore, they do not have the same validity as a formal commitment enshrined in a multilateral treaty.

The General Assembly, which has recognized their profound inadequacy, has declared in the Final Document of its special session devoted to disarmament:

"The General Assembly notes the declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States and urges them to pursue efforts to conclude, as appropriate, effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons." (resolution A-10/2, para. 59)

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

My delegation's interpretation of paragraph 59 and the declarations made by certain States is that the statements constitute a beginning and not the final stage of a process of perfecting guarantees. Therefore, we believe that the Soviet proposal in document A/C.1/33/241 is in keeping with the spirit of paragraphs 58 and 59 of the Final Document. That is why we are pleased to welcome this initiative and support the proposal that we should refer to the Committee on Disarmament the draft convention annexed to draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.6

To conclude, I would like to lay stress on the fact that the security guarantees of non-nuclear-weapon States are not limited to the non-use of nuclear weapons by certain nuclear Powers. We must also prevent certain States such as the racist régime of South Africa, whose conduct is ambiguous with regard to nuclear weapons, from finding, through passivity on the part of international public opinion, the means to acquire such weapons. The strengthening of guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States should include putting an end to nuclear co-operation with racist régimes. This preventive measure would have the effect of reducing the spectre of nuclear blackmail against the States of the region. Furthermore, it would make it possible to enhance the credibility of guarantees by eliminating the danger of their being called into question in the early future. This concern is recognized by the special session of the General Assembly in paragraph 12 of the Final Document, the last sentence of which reads:

"It is, therefore, essential for purposes of disarmament to prevent any further acquisition of arms or arms technology by such régimes, especially through strict adherence by all States to relevant decisions of the Security Council." (A/RES/S-10/2, p. 5)

Finally, we believe that only the elimination of nuclear weapons can constitute a true guarantee. In the meantime, we must commit ourselves more formally to renouncing their use.

Mr. GURINOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The First Committee, after an exchange of views on the whole complex of questions relating to the search for ways and means to implement the recommendations and decisions of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament has now turned to the consideration of the specific items on its agenda. We note with satisfaction that this work has begun with the consideration of the important initiative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the conclusion of an international convention for the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States.

The question of the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States is not a new one. As long ago as 1966, the Soviet Union proposed the inclusion of an appropriate article in the text of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This same problem was reflected in General Assembly resolution 2936 (XXVI) containing a solemn declaration by the Members of the United Nations that they renounce the use or threat of force in international relations and prohibit permanently the use of nuclear weapons. This is also reflected in a number of other recommendations of the United Nations.

Now, as a result of what on the whole is a favourable development in the international situation, namely, the strengthening of the position of the forces of peace and the continuing process of international détente, additional possibilities have been created for measures to strengthen general peace and security and part of this relates to measures to strengthen international legal guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States. This is also required by the decisions of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament which, both in the Declaration and in the Programme of Action, focused considerable attention on this particular problem.

In paragraph 20, reference is made to the need to take measures "designed to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war and to lessen the danger of the threat or use of nuclear weapons ...". (A/RES/S-10/2, p. 7) Paragraph 32 states that

"All States, and in particular nuclear-weapon States, should consider various proposals designed to secure the avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons, and the prevention of nuclear war." (ibid., p. 9)

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

It also states that effective agreements and understandings are necessary which give guarantees to non-nuclear countries against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

The same subject is referred to in paragraphs 58, 59 and a number of others. For example, paragraph 59 contains an urgent appeal to nuclear Powers,

"... to pursue efforts to conclude, as appropriate, effective agreements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". (A/RES/S-10/2, p. 13)

In the Final Document, reference is made to the task of strengthening the régime of the non-proliferation of non-nuclear weapons, the creation of zones genuinely free from such nuclear weapons, and paragraph 30 stresses that:

"An acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations for nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States should be strictly observed."

(ibid., p. 8)

Everyone familiar with the content of the draft convention proposed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States understands perfectly well that it is entirely in keeping with the recommendations of the special session, and accommodates the just desires and aspirations of the non-nuclear countries to have guarantees on the non-use of nuclear weapons against them. Both in the course of the political discussion at the plenary meetings, and statements in the First Committee, scores of delegations quite rightly have welcomed this initiative by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and have made reference to the constructive approach of the Soviet Union to its share of the responsibility in this important matter. All this is very well known to the First Committee, but we draw the attention of the Committee to the collective position of large groups of States on this question.

For example, in the resolutions of the Ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held from 24 to 28 April 1978, it is pointed out

"that the existence of binding restraints against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States, would strengthen the security guarantees to non-nuclear States." (A/33/151, p. 18)

It also contains an appeal to nuclear Powers to take

"... rapid action in all relevant fora to strengthen the security of non-nuclear States." (ibid., p. 19)

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

The group of non-aligned States is also in favour of this.

In the statement of the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Troyanovsky, he gave a very comprehensively argued and thoroughly justified explanation of the need for the adoption of an international convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States, and explained its contents. This is something which has been referred to by practically all the representatives who have taken part in the discussion of this item. Therefore, we will not repeat these. However, individual speakers unfortunately have not displayed sufficient understanding of the great timeliness of the proposal of the USSR and have denied the significance of security guarantees of an universal international legal character for all States which do not possess nuclear weapons or do not have them on their territory. It would appear that there is no need to go into any detail in rebutting these statements by the delegation of China which opposes any disarmament measures or measures designed to strengthen international security. The delegation of China, heedless of the wish of non-nuclear States to achieve treaty guarantees on the non-use against them of nuclear weapons, is calling upon the new independent States to adopt a course of acquiring a nuclear potential. At the same time, for the sake of appearances, this delegation is trying to have us believe that it is, in its own words, a supporter of the total prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons. However, we all know that this country has not only failed to be a party to any of the existing agreements on the limitation of the nuclear arms race, but is stubbornly refusing to take part in talks on the subject of nuclear or any other kind of disarmament.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

The expression of a maximalist position, that is, an all-or-nothing position, has obviously been misdirected. After all, we all know very well who fails to support proposals for the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, for the beginning of talks on questions of nuclear disarmament for the purpose of the parallel and simultaneous cessation by all States of the manufacture of nuclear weapons in all their forms, whether they be atomic, hydrogen or neutron bombs or missiles, and the reduction of already acquired stockpiles, moving ahead towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We should also not forget that the States of the socialist community have proposed to all participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that a treaty be concluded on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other.

The lack of progress in resolving these and a number of other problems is also partly the fault of those who in some cases claim to be in favour of more radical measures but, when such measures are actually put forward, change their position and start talking about the usefulness of partial measures. However, when realistic and concrete measures of a partial nature are proposed, they start demanding even more. To act so inconsistently is simply to play into the hands of those who want to thwart the taking of realistic measures for practical disarmament and the strengthening of peace on earth.

It follows from the discussion that the non-nuclear States do not regard the question of guaranteeing their security as being already resolved as a result of unilateral declarations on the part of nuclear Powers, since a number of those unilateral statements, as distinct from the proposal of the Soviet Union, are accompanied by reservations. In other words, loopholes have been created which make it possible for them to fail to keep their promises. Perhaps it should be recalled in this regard that not a single nuclear Power, apart from the Soviet Union, supported the resolution adopted in 1972 by the United Nations on the non-use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

Like the majority of other delegations, we find unjustified and inadequate the proposal that the question of the consideration of the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States should be reduced to a matter of recommendations to the Security Council to take note of the unilateral declarations on the part of nuclear States. There are many reasons for this position on our part. I shall give some of the arguments in addition to those which have already been mentioned by representatives of other countries: the lack of uniformity between those statements; the difference in the relative status of those statements; the fact that the United Nations Charter does not provide for a procedure for taking note, but only for the adoption by the Security Council of decisions of a binding nature, which naturally cannot be different but must be uniform for all States. Merely taking note of something might be interpreted by some people as not implying a binding decision which all Members of the United Nations would be obliged to comply with in accordance with Article 25 of the United Nations Charter. We have all witnessed the failure to comply with a number of binding decisions of the Security Council on the part of certain Western countries, including certain permanent members of the Security Council. So far the Council has only been able to express its regret at this situation, but if a nuclear strike actually takes place, there will be nobody left to whom to express regret.

It is no accident that even in the Final Document of the special session we find an urgent appeal to the nuclear Powers to strive for effective agreements to protect non-nuclear States from the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. The proposal for the conclusion of a convention on this question is entirely in keeping with the letter and spirit of the Final Document.

In the light of this, objections to producing an international legal document providing for the strengthening of the security of non-nuclear States would seem ever more unfounded. Everything that we have said simply confirms even more the fact that what we need is multilateral action in the form of an international convention whereby the nuclear Powers would undertake the obligation not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States parties to the convention which renounce the manufacture

(Mr. Gurinovich, Byelorussian SSR)

or acquisition of nuclear weapons and which have no nuclear weapons in their territory. This obligation, as provided in the draft resolution, could be extended also to armed forces and installations under the jurisdiction and control of non-nuclear States wherever they may be. All that is expected from non-nuclear countries is strict observance of their non-nuclear status. The draft convention has been written in a spirit of total respect for the sovereignty and dignity of non-nuclear States and also with a view to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes by those States. An important feature of the text of the convention under consideration is also the fact that it proposes to make the obligations for security guarantees of non-nuclear States of a permanent nature.

The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR declares its readiness to become a sponsor of the draft resolution on the question of strengthening security guarantees for non-nuclear States and calls upon delegations of other countries to support it actively. We must do everything in our power to see to it that as a result of fruitful work by the Committee on Disarmament on the basis of the Soviet Union's proposal and in the light of the constructive views and considerations of the delegations of other countries, the General Assembly next year will be in a position to approve such an international convention and thus make a contribution to putting into practice the recommendations of the special session on disarmament. We believe that this is feasible, given the necessary goodwill and political wisdom on the part of all nuclear States, if the other nuclear States support the proposal of the Soviet Union and if what they have said in favour of security guarantees for non-nuclear States is converted into a universal international agreement, imposing equal obligations on all nuclear States and giving security guarantees to every non-nuclear State which strictly observes its non-nuclear status without any exceptions.

We believe that it would be highly appropriate for the international convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States to be approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in the course of the week devoted to promoting the goals of disarmament, which is provided for by a decision of the special session. Thus, all the Member States of the Organization would be clearly demonstrating their determination to move ahead persistently towards a solution to the problem of halting the arms race, bringing about disarmament and strengthening international peace and security.

Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan): The convening of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in May and June this year was an historic landmark that reawakened universal consciousness of the appalling drift towards a dizzy arms race that would inescapably plunge the world, by its sheer momentum, into ultimate disaster. Many Heads of State or Government and other high-ranking speakers were unanimous in stressing the urgency of containing, arresting and, it is to be hoped, reversing such a mindless drift towards a potential cataclysm. The optimistic, the naive and the rational alike assumed that, with the unanimous and enhanced dimension of awareness of what might lie in store for mankind, the political will of decision-makers in each and every country would impel them to take drastic action commensurate with the immensity and urgency of the challenge. The world watched, breathless, to see what would come next.

The scenario reminded me of a film that I saw a few years ago, which depicted an imaginary aggression by one of the more advanced planets against our mother earth. It portrayed the convening of an emergency meeting of the Security Council to consider what steps should be taken by mankind to ward off the attack and preserve our planet. Our fortunes, or misfortunes, are not in the other galaxies or stars: they are right within our hearts, our minds and our wills. The imaginary catastrophe, as distinct from the ubiquitous natural earthly catastrophes, will come not from without but from within if we continue to be so callous, seemingly indifferent and decidedly short-sighted. Nobody can prevent someone who is bent on committing suicide from doing so, and so it is with armament and its potentially terminal consequences.

Taking note of the disarmament week proclaimed by the special session of the General Assembly in its Final Document, President Carter issued a statement in which he said; inter alia: "The United States is committed to balanced, effective and verifiable arms control and disarmament measures."

The Soviet Union too has repeatedly made statements to the same effect, as have all the other nuclear Powers. It therefore seems to me somewhat puzzling that instead of a confluence of views on agenda item 128 there seems to be a divergence.

(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

The Western Powers prefer that declarations regarding the security of non-nuclear States be taken note of by the Security Council, and in the course of the consideration of the Non-Proliferation Treaty they promoted the adoption of Security Council resolution 255 (1968), which declared their intention to go to the assistance of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in case of nuclear attack or threat against them. The non-aligned and small States took the position that those were statements of intent, not commitments. Furthermore, they could always be torpedoed by a veto.

The position of my Government remains the same - indeed, it is more pointed in view of the nuclear development that Israel has achieved, as acknowledged in a television statement by a former President of Israel, which I personally heard in Amman. Moreover, Israeli military circles have been callously stating that the nuclear option as regards the Arab countries is an integral part of their war machine. I am sure that all knowledgeable intelligence services in the world know that at least as well as we do.

In a heated argument between the mayor of one of the West Bank towns and one of his opposite numbers as to who owned what, the Israeli mayor of Nathanya stated categorically to the Palestinian Arab mayor, who reported the conversation to me in person: "If you do not agree to what we want, and the situation develops into a hazardous war, we shall not hesitate to atom-bomb the neighbouring Arab countries, and even the world, using our atomic capability." That is not idle talk and we do not view it lightly, since it involves the very survival of our people. How would a leader, a decision-maker, react to such a terminal danger?

The options are few, obvious and clear-cut.

The first is to surrender to atomic blackmail and thus become subservient to foreign hegemony, tutelage and enslavement. That our people could in no circumstances accept, come what may.

(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

The second is to find no alternative but to seek and obtain a nuclear-safety alliance and umbrella within one or other of the two major pacts.

The third is to yield to the irresistible temptation to develop over the years, using all available means, a nuclear deterrent, abhorrent as the idea might be, in order to free oneself from nuclear blackmail. I do not believe that such an option is unattainable considering the accelerated advances in technology, which is rapidly encompassing the whole world. Moreover, one of the main victims would be the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which has been solemnly signed and ratified by the overwhelming majority of Member States, including my own, but obdurately denied ratification by Israel.

The fourth and most rational option is to work out an unequivocal international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States. It is for that reason that my delegation supports in principle the draft resolution (A/C.1/33/L.6) of 27 October 1978 submitted by the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

This does not mean that the draft resolution and the annex embodying the proposed international convention are flawless and final. There are loopholes, and there should be amendments to further strengthen the security of non-nuclear States. This is what happens to every draft treaty or convention. But it would be surprising if a good idea were to be rejected outright simply because it emanated from one party or another. Both parties are, I am convinced, in basic agreement on the objectives and the issues involved, and so serious that there should be no room for a hypothetical match in publicity.

As a representative of a small and non-nuclear State which lives in the shadow of the threat of the use of nuclear capability, I have a few comments to make on the convention.

In article I of the proposed convention, for example, emphasis is placed on nuclear-weapon States pledging themselves, through legally binding instruments, not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States parties to the convention. My reaction to this article is this: thank you very much for the proposed pledge, which we certainly appreciate, but it does not allay our immediate and real fears. Super-Powers do not need nuclear weaponry to attack lesser Powers, nor would those countries fear that they would. The real guarantee that would make the three options I enumerated earlier unnecessary would be one from the major Powers guaranteeing the security of non-nuclear States vis-à-vis other States which do not even admit that they are nuclear States, even though all of us know better. There should be a collective guarantee by all the major Powers to act collectively to deter a would-be aggressor.

Secondly, article III of the draft convention must be beefed up if it is to carry a real and realistic credibility. Detection devices have become so advanced that the ascertainment of true information is no longer beyond the means of many States, in particular the major Powers. Such provision of information should be mandatory and not optional and ambivalent.

(Mr. Nuseibeh, Jordan)

In article IV (2), the draft convention states that

"Each Party to the Convention shall, in the exercise of its State sovereignty, be entitled to secede from the Convention if it decides that exceptional circumstances relating to the content of the Convention have placed its higher interests in jeopardy." (A/C.1/33/L.6, Annex, p. 2)

Now, quite frankly, what interests are higher than survival? Assuming that a would-be aggressor decided to resort to the nuclear option for reasons which that State considered affected a higher interest - it could be expansion; it could be avarice; it could be anything - would it be or should it be entitled to withdraw its guarantee to the non-nuclear States and leave them stranded and naked? I can understand secession in one situation only, namely, if another nuclear Power decided to secede. Then other nuclear and also non-nuclear Powers would be justified in regarding the obligations under the convention as having placed their higher interests - basically, survival - in jeopardy.

As I stated earlier, my delegation supports the draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly and the annex in principle and appeals to the nuclear Powers to give them more serious consideration, because a legally binding treaty or convention is inherently stronger than ephemeral declarations. That is the case with the partial test-ban Treaty, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other treaties that already exist or are in the making.

Let us always remember that we are all in the same boat. Popularity contests and holier-than-thou attitudes are understandable, but not in the area of the nuclear menace.

Finally, I need hardly add that no State which finds it imperative to acquire and develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes should be precluded from doing so under appropriate international supervision.

Mr. CHAVDA (India): The nuclear-weapon States as well as the non-nuclear-weapon States are all agreed that the gravest threat to international peace and security - indeed, to the very survival of civilization - comes from the existence of the arsenals of nuclear weapons in the armouries of nuclear-weapon States. It was in recognition of this fact that the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament accorded the highest priority to nuclear weapons in the Programme of Action. It is important to remember that

(Mr. Chavda, India)

not a single delegation expressed any reservation about according the topmost priority to nuclear weapons in the field of disarmament.

It was in recognition of this threat to the very survival of mankind that the United Nations General Assembly took up the question of nuclear disarmament in its very first resolution at its very first session. As members are well aware, although it is worth our while to remind ourselves of the fact, the Charter of the United Nations was drafted at a time when the destructive potential of the atom bomb was not common knowledge among the international community. Had the danger posed by nuclear weapons been known at the time one can be certain that appropriate provisions to deal with the genie before it escaped from the bottle would have been included in the Charter. In the absence of specific articles dealing with the nuclear menace, the Organization took the only step it could - namely, it adopted a resolution on the subject at the earliest available opportunity.

Over the years the General Assembly has taken the consistent view that the only effective and lasting guarantee against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament. Time and again resolutions have been adopted calling for the halting and reversing of the nuclear arms race, leading eventually to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The latest of such calls was issued just about four months ago by the special session, and a similar call will no doubt issue from the current session of the General Assembly. The response of nuclear-weapon States - and I am certain that they themselves would admit it - has thus far been less than satisfactory. The nuclear arms race continues unabated, giving rise to a feeling of frustration among the non-nuclear-weapon States. Many of us often wonder whether the appeals made by us in the form of resolutions in the General Assembly carry any meaning at all to the decision-making authorities of the Governments concerned.

(Mr. Chavda, India)

It is out of this despair that proposals began to be put forward during the past few years seeking what have come to be known as "negative security assurances" from the nuclear-weapon States in favour of the non-nuclear-weapon States. The first of such initiatives was taken in 1961 when the General Assembly adopted the historic resolution 1653 (XVI) declaring that the use of nuclear weapons is contrary to the aims of the United Nations, a direct violation of the Charter and contrary to the rules of international law and laws of humanity. That resolution received a large majority in its favour, including the affirmative vote of one nuclear-weapon State.

My delegation, together with a number of other delegations, has introduced draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.2 at the current session seeking to declare the threat or use of nuclear weapons as a violation of the United Nations Charter and a crime against humanity. We believe that if all the nuclear-weapon States subscribe to such a declaration they would have nothing to fear from one another and in fact they would make a valuable contribution to allay the sense of insecurity among non-nuclear-weapon States. My delegation is convinced that only such an approach, which may be termed over-simplified by some delegations for their own reasons, would provide an answer to the search for security by non-nuclear-weapon States.

We have often been told that the problem of nuclear disarmament is an extremely complicated one to which answers can be found only piecemeal and in stages. My delegation would like to remind those who put forward this argument that the problem which was not so complex at the beginning has been made so by nuclear-weapon States. We, the non-nuclear-weapon States, bear no part of responsibility for the complexity of the situation. The disheartening feature of the history of disarmament negotiations is that no progress, absolutely no progress, has been made in the field of nuclear disarmament over the past 30 years. Even if one small step had been taken so far towards actual nuclear disarmament, the international community would have some reason to hope for more steps in the future.

(Mr. Chavda, India)

In disarmament negotiations our attention has been diverted from the real issues of nuclear disarmament to other definitely less important measures of non-armament or confidence-building, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty, nuclear-weapon-free zones, and so on. Similarly, on the subject of security assurances, we have unfortunately been made to focus our attention on the contents, form, language and other unimportant issues involved in the so-called negative assurances.

My delegation at this stage would not like to go into the merits of various proposals now before the Committee on the subject. We would do so at the appropriate time and in the appropriate forum. However, I would like to pose the question: would we, the non-nuclear-weapon States feel genuinely reassured about our security even if one or two or all the nuclear-weapon States were to extend conditional or even unconditional security guarantees to us? As I pointed out in my statement in this Committee on 19 October, the air that we breathe and the atmosphere in which we live is one and indivisible. It would be small comfort to India, for example, if we had to breathe contaminated air as a result of a nuclear strike on a nuclear-weapon country. Similarly, the accuracy of the nuclear missiles is not always dependable. It would be interesting to know the number of misfires or mishits which occur during the test programmes. Again, it would not be much help if country A were told that the nuclear weapons which hit its territory were actually meant for country B.

For all these reasons my delegation continues to maintain that negative assurances would only create an illusion of security. We must not allow ourselves to be detracted from the overriding goal of nuclear disarmament, and, pending nuclear disarmament, of obtaining a general ban on the use of nuclear weapons.

Sir Derek ASHE (United Kingdom): I have listened with great interest to this debate and would now like to take the opportunity of summarizing briefly the United Kingdom's attitude on this item.

(Sir Derek Ashe, United Kingdom)

First of all, I must state categorically that the assurance given in Parliament by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Dr. David Owen, on 27 June, and repeated by me at the special session here on the same day, was given most solemnly and formally. That assurance could not be enhanced in any way by its inclusion in an international convention. It is misleading to assert that it would.

By the same token my Government also recognizes the solemn importance of the unilateral declarations made by other nuclear-weapon States, most recently by the Foreign Minister of China in his statement to the General Assembly on 28 September. And I would like to take this opportunity of warmly welcoming Mr. Huang Hua's reaffirmation that at no time and under no circumstances will China use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries.

It follows that my Government sees no need to negotiate an international convention embodying the assurances of the nuclear-weapon States. Further, given the varied nature of these assurances, we do not believe that a uniform formula is attainable or, for that reason, that the negotiation of a convention is, at any rate for the moment, feasible. The complexity of this issue and the difficulty of arriving at a common formula were recognized by the Ambassador of Pakistan in his statement of 31 October.

(Sir Derek Ashe, United Kingdom)

At the same time, my Government is extremely sensitive to the concerns so often and consistently stated by many delegations here about the need to ensure the confidence of non-nuclear-weapon States in the assurances given by nuclear-weapon States. As long ago as last February, my Government took the initiative, in co-sponsoring the Western draft Programme of Action, in proposing that nuclear-weapon States should consider giving security assurances at the United Nations special session. This was precisely the reason why my Prime Minister, Mr. Callaghan, said in his statement to the special session on 2 June this year:

"We recognize ... that States which have renounced nuclear weapons are entitled to look for some more specific assurance that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. My country acknowledges these expectations and wants action to meet them. In February we proposed that the matter should be considered here, at this special session".

(A/S-10/PV.14, p. 35)

The Prime Minister continued:

"I place on record now that the United Kingdom will be prepared itself to take part with other nuclear Powers in firm, far-reaching and permanent assurances to the non-nuclear States". (Ibid. p. 36)

This last sentence was quoted by the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in his statement to this Committee on 30 October. He interpreted it then as meaning that the United Kingdom was willing to seek

"... a formula of guarantees for the security of non-nuclear States which would be agreed upon by the nuclear States". (A/C.1/33/PV.20, p. 11)

This is of course a misinterpretation. The Prime Minister was clearly understood at the time to be declaring the willingness of the United Kingdom to give a unilateral security assurance and in doing so to join other nuclear-weapon States which had made or were soon to make unilateral declarations. He made no reference to any joint formula which, I repeat, is not a practical possibility at the moment. And the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary gave that firm, far-reaching and permanent assurance

(Sir Derek Ashe, United Kingdom)

on behalf of the British Government when he declared in the House of Commons on 27 June;

"We are now ready to give the following assurance to non-nuclear weapon States which are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or other internationally binding commitments not to manufacture or acquire nuclear explosive devices: Britain undertakes not to use nuclear weapons against such States except in the case of an attack on the United Kingdom, its dependent territories, its armed forces or its allies by such a State in association or alliance with a nuclear-weapon State".

In these circumstances the United Kingdom is not prepared to enter into any commitment at this time to negotiate an international convention on security assurances. But, in deference to the expressed wishes of many delegations on this highly important subject, we are willing to agree that the General Assembly should recommend to the Committee on Disarmament that it consider further ways of enhancing the confidence of non-nuclear-weapon States in their own security against nuclear attack. In the days to come my delegation will therefore be prepared to discuss with the delegations of the Soviet Union and Pakistan, and any other interested delegations, the possibility of reaching agreement on a resolution, to be adopted by consensus, giving effect to this end.

Mr. MUJEZINOVIC (Yugoslavia): The question of what has become known as negative guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States should be a component of the complex of other positive actions and measures necessary for guaranteeing the security of the international community and removing the threat that the very existence of nuclear weapons poses for the survival of mankind.

Yugoslavia has always advocated the taking of effective measures for preventing and eliminating threats to peace, curbing acts of aggression and other violations of international peace and ensuring the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Together with other Member States, particularly within the framework of the actions and initiatives of the

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

non-aligned movement, Yugoslavia has been working for the establishment of a system of international security which will not be based on the present precarious balance of military-political blocs and the arms race, but precisely on overcoming the bloc divisions of the world, with a view to building a system of security founded on Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations which embodies, as one of its fundamental principles, the prohibition of the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Unfortunately, international relations are still burdened by the use of force, in its most varied forms, the main victims of this being the non-aligned and developing countries as well as the liberation movements of peoples under colonial domination.

Consequently, in order to create conditions for the prohibition of the use of force, it is necessary to change, in the first place, the present unsatisfactory state of international relations, remove the focal points of crises, liquidate colonialism and racism, and open clearer perspectives for the establishment of the New International Economic Order and for the accelerated development of developing countries. This process should evolve concurrently with efforts to regulate by rules of international law, wholly or partially, elements or relations in the sphere of prohibition of the use of any form of force, including the prohibition of the use or the renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons. The conclusion of international agreements on the prohibition of the use of force, through or within the framework of the United Nations, is a component part of the efforts exerted by the international community in this exceptionally important field.

Together with several delegations of non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia is one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.2, which was introduced behalf of the sponsors by the representative of India a few days ago. That document embodies all the important positions regarding the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Together with other non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia insisted - in the course of preparations for, and during the

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament - on the necessity to incorporate into the Programme of Action of the Final Document clear provisions with regard to: the total and unconditional prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State, without discrimination and without additional obligations; the cessation of the proliferation and further refinement of nuclear weapons; the withdrawal of military forces from foreign territories, including the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from such territories; the urgent start of negotiations on halting the nuclear arms race and effecting a progressive reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, leading to their final and total destruction and elimination.

(Mr. Mujezinovic, Yugoslavia)

Therefore the question of negative guarantees is linked, in our mind, primarily with the urgent need to undertake positive actions which will objectively diminish the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, pending their complete elimination not only in relations between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States but also in relations between the nuclear-weapon States themselves. That is how we interpret paragraph 59 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, which calls for

"... efforts to conclude, as appropriate, effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons." (Resolution S-10/2)

We consider that what is involved is a legal and moral commitment of nuclear-weapon States so as to bring an indispensable political balance to the existing imbalance of obligations between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

The Yugoslav delegation has always believed that this question should have been regulated by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Without a clause on guarantees, this Treaty is even more defective.

The Soviet initiative for the conclusion of a convention on this question has actualized the problem at the right time, which is undoubtedly a positive idea. We are faced with the important task of starting discussions and reaching agreement on this important matter within the framework of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, in the Committee on Disarmament and at the second review conference on the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We have several times in the past explained our views on this problem. In principle, every international document embodying the unilateral obligation of nuclear-weapon States to the effect that they will in no circumstances resort to the use of nuclear weapons nor threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States deserves, in our opinion, to be examined with due attention. Such an obligation must be clear, precise and without any reservations. Although the Soviet draft convention poses some conditions, on which I do not intend to comment, we shall examine with attention the proposal of the Soviet Union that the question of negative guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States should be regulated by an appropriate international convention.

Mr. MAROOFI (Afghanistan): The Committee will recall my delegation's statement on agenda item 125, in which special attention was called to the matter under consideration and to the fact that every effort must be made to seek ways and means to broaden the scope of the unilateral assurances offered by certain nuclear Powers in such a way as to make it legally binding on nuclear-Power to refrain from deploying nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. However, the importance of the matter and its impact on our common quest for peace prompted us once more to address ourselves to this subject and to highlight some of the main principles contained in document A/C.1/33/L.6, namely, "Conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States".

This Committee, in reviewing the decisions and recommendations of the tenth special session on disarmament, once more listened to the unanimous verdict of the Member States emphasizing the urgent need for practical measures towards achieving disarmament as essential prerequisites for maintaining tranquillity, peace and progress.

The achievement of these lofty goals, for which mankind has striven for almost half a century, and the slowing down of the spiralling arms race and the nuclear build-up, would inevitably depend on the political will of Member States, particularly the nuclear Powers. To this effect the General Assembly at various sessions has reiterated the fact that the realization of the decisions and recommendations of the United Nations can be translated into action only when the major Powers which are in possession of sophisticated weapons - nuclear as well as non-nuclear - demonstrate their sincere willingness to contribute to the implementation of those decisions and to initiate measures commensurate with their obligations and commitments under the provisions of the United Nations Charter by virtue of the trust placed in them as guarantors of world peace and security.

As a result of our consistent endeavours and exhaustive discussions aimed at working out the principles and priorities leading to general and complete disarmament, we have now arrived at a state of affairs where we can embark on more practical and action-oriented measures to acquire more guarantees for security. To this end, in order to strengthen the security of non-nuclear States, the Final Document, among other important measures, in paragraph 59 calls on

(Mr. Maroofi, Afghanistan)

nuclear-power States to undertake precise commitments by way of ensuring guarantees of the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. It urges them:

"... to pursue efforts to conclude, as appropriate, effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons." (resolution S-10/2)

In analysing the nature of the problem, once again the Final Document categorizes the big Powers as the major source for ensuring guarantees to the non-nuclear States in case of nuclear threat. In other words, to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament all the nuclear-weapon States, particularly those possessing the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility, as defined in paragraph 48 of the Final Document. It is obvious that the fulfilment of this obligation would inevitably create a climate favourable to fulfilling the process of disarmament.

It is encouraging to note that some of the nuclear Powers, in outlining their policies in the general debate, underlined the importance of the provisions of paragraph 59 of the Final Document and its contribution to the prevention of the threat of a nuclear war. However, to translate these words into deeds is yet a step to be taken.

It is a source of great satisfaction to my delegation that one of the major nuclear Powers, namely the Soviet Union, has, in order to respond favourably to the common concern of the international community, put forth a constructive proposal in the form of a draft convention with legal consequences on those nuclear Powers that would attempt to deploy nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear State. In congratulating the Soviet Union on its meaningful initiative, which is fully in line with the spirit of the decisions and recommendations of the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries in Belgrade and the last conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic countries in Dakar, my delegation believes that the proposal will receive the utmost consideration and that comprehensive negotiations should proceed on the preparation of a multilateral convention ensuring concrete guarantees to non-nuclear States in the case of nuclear war threat. We believe that the realization of such a measure will attest to the goodwill of all nuclear States actively to participate in mitigating the danger of nuclear war and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Maroofi, Afghanistan)

My delegation is of the opinion that the recently expanded Geneva Committee, with a balanced membership representing the nuclear as well as the non-nuclear States, is the most appropriate machinery to be charged with the responsibility of studying the matter in the light of the comments made in this Committee and to submit its recommendations to the forthcoming session of the General Assembly for review.

In considering the text, efforts must be made to have the guarantees asked for in the convention worked out in a clear and concise manner so as to leave no way for confusion or loop-holes for violating the provisions of the convention.

These were a few remarks of my delegation by way of commenting on agenda item 128. We are confident that our deliberations on this important matter will lead us to further elucidation of the subject and greatly contribute to enhancing the possibility of arriving at concrete action conducive to international understanding.

Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius): The question of the strengthening of the guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States constitutes a major preoccupation in international relations. Over the years, in the General Assembly and at the Review Conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, my delegation expressed in detail its views on this issue. We consider that the granting of negative security guarantees by nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear ones is not an option: it is a must as long as some countries possess nuclear weapons and some do not. In fact, we hold the opinion that non-nuclear-weapon States have the right to such guarantees. It is against this background that my delegation whole-heartedly welcomes the initiative before us, especially keeping in mind that it comes from one of the major Powers.

The non-nuclear-weapon States have constantly tried over the years to create conditions protecting them against nuclear weapons. Of course, the basic solution to this problem can be found only in nuclear disarmament, in the complete elimination of this most horrible of all weapons from the arsenals of States. Although efforts aimed at this goal continue, expected results have not yet been achieved and other measures have been advocated. Among them is the establishment of nuclear-weapon free zones in various parts of the world and the granting of negative security guarantees, which should be considered as a step towards complete nuclear disarmament.

From this point of view, the question is: In what form should these security guarantees be given? The unilateral declarations by three nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty made during the special session of the General Assembly are welcomed. The proposal to have the Security Council consider them is also a positive one. We feel, nevertheless, that the conclusion of an international convention establishing legally binding obligations corresponds better to the expectations of the non-nuclear-weapon States. This is why we fully support the proposal before this Committee to initiate negotiations on the text of such a convention. We do not hold strong views as to where this matter be taken up, but we do insist that this be done as soon as possible.

(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

The large number of speakers inscribed on the list does not make it possible or even necessary for my delegation to enter into the details of the content of such a draft convention. What we want, in essence, is that security guarantees be given without qualifications so that nuclear weapons are never used, anywhere or in any circumstances, against non-nuclear-weapon States. Such guarantees should be real.

I formally request that Mauritius be added to the list of co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.11.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: It appears that, despite the interest of a great many representatives in speaking on agenda item 128, we will be able to conclude the debate on it this afternoon.

The next business to be taken up, as representatives will recall, is the block of items from 35 to 49. In our original working schedule we set aside four weeks - or from 38 to 42 meetings - for the discussion of them. However, as the Committee will also recall, we have agreed that the various draft resolutions should be discussed and voted upon as one block, and obviously we would have to set some time aside for that.

Unless there is any objection in the Committee, I would suggest that we allot to the debate on items 38 to 42 the three weeks from 6 to 24 November, and I have taken the liberty of instructing the Secretariat to inscribe names of speakers for those weeks only, since the week from 27 November to 1 December will be reserved for discussion and voting on resolutions. Our last week, as will be remembered from the debate, will be taken up with item 50, Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

Are there any observations, comments or questions on this?

Mr. PEREZ HERNANDEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): During the preparation period, we agreed to allot a certain amount of time to the joint consideration of a group of items. However, after thinking it over, I feel that it might be well to consider whether certain interrelated items can actually be grouped together. If we have 13 items to deal with between 6 and 24 November, it may be that many things are going to be linked together although they have no real interrelationship. For example, somebody might be making a statement on the issue of the Indian Ocean, immediately after which there might be a statement on the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and so on.

It might perhaps be well to find a way of grouping some of the interrelated items in the interest of the coherence of our debate, rather than going from item 35 to item 42, for example, or from 47 to 48. I do not know if I am making myself clear to you, Mr. Chairman, but, at any rate, it seems to me that we could endeavour to find a more rational way of dividing the time allocated to our debate in order to deal jointly with interrelated items, which, in my view, would make things clearer to those participating in the debate.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very grateful to the representative of Cuba for raising this point, because I should have raised it without his prompting.

(The Chairman)

In accordance with past practice of many years, this block of items will be discussed together otherwise, as practice shows, we would never finish our work. Representatives have much latitude in our discussions. Many representatives make general statements touching upon everything; others touch on only one aspect while others speak on everything. Representatives are free to make more than one statement should they feel the need so to do. I think that this nearly meets with what the representative of Cuba was seeking.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): I do not wish to comment on the suggestion made by the representative of Cuba. I think that you, Mr. Chairman, have responded to that very ably in your usual manner. I wish to make a suggestion concerning the arrangement of the general debate, and the time that has been set aside for the consideration of resolutions. As we see it, we would expect, on an average, between 30 and 40 resolutions to be put forward on disarmament matters. Already we have seven or eight of these on the table. Perhaps 10 meetings may not be entirely sufficient for considering and voting on all these resolutions. Therefore, my delegation would suggest that perhaps from the mid-point in the general debate that we shall start on Monday next, delegations may be allowed further latitude in submitting and introducing at least some resolutions that may be available as a result of consultations at that point. This would allow the other delegations to consider them formally and voting on the resolutions could then be made that much easier in the last week, the period set aside for that purpose.

The CHAIRMAN: Without contesting the view of the representative of Pakistan, on past performance I seem to remember that a week is ample time for resolutions, granted that there will be no more resolutions than before. Earlier we have been able to deal with resolutions within three days or so, but that is neither here nor there. If I understand the proposal of the representative of Pakistan aright the substance is that when there is a lull in the debate representatives would be able to use that slack period in order to introduce resolutions, but only to introduce them. I myself think this is an admirable procedure and would be a saving of time, but I would vote with the decision of the Committee if it feels that that would somehow interfere with the general debate in a disturbing way.

Mr. YANGO (Philippines): In connexion with the consideration of the resolutions and the time-table which has been set aside for these, my delegation wonders whether it would not be a good thing if we also considered a deadline for submitting resolutions. My delegation believes that if the Committee is aware of a particular deadline for the submission of resolutions, this would prevent resolutions being submitted late which would mean that there would not be ample time considering them. I make this comment in line with the suggestion made by the representative of Pakistan.

The CHAIRMAN: I entirely agree. We will think of a suitable cut-off date for the submission of resolutions.

Mr. BAFI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Am I to understand from this that the voting on the draft resolutions concerning items 125 and 128 will start in the week beginning 25 November? Or do I take it that the vote on those draft resolutions will take place after we complete our considerations of item 128, that is to say, this evening or Monday morning for example?

The CHAIRMAN: There is an earlier understanding in this Committee, which we have already discussed, about the voting on draft resolutions. Of course, outside that understanding every delegation is free to move that a particular draft resolution should be voted on earlier. In that case, it is obviously for the Committee to decide whether to adhere to the original ruling, or whether to satisfy the representative who wants an earlier vote. But I understood that it was the intention of the representative of Iraq to pursue this on Monday.

The following have announced their co-sponsorship of draft resolutions A/C.1/33/L.2, Cuba; A/C.1/33/L.7, Japan; and A/C.1/33/L.11, Mauritius.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.