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Chairman: Mr. PASTINEN (Finland)

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ENGLISH

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

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(continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker is the representative of the World Food Council, on whom I now call.

Mr. VIDAL-NAQUET (World Food Council) (interpretation from French): At its Fourth Ministerial Session, held in June in Mexico at the same time as the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the World Food Council discussed the relationships between development and disarmament.

The Council, which was established following the World Food Conference, is, as members know, the United Nations organ responsible for co-ordinating policies concerning world food problems. The Executive Director, Mr. Morris Williams, on 20 October presented the report of the session of the Council to the Second Committee, and he felt that the members of the First Committee should also be informed of the actions taken in Mexico. In this respect the Council had emphasized that, if a fraction of the considerable and growing expenses devoted to armaments could be utilized for purposes of development, it would make it possible significantly to reduce world food problems. At the end of its session the Council appealed to all Governments in this sense.

The President of the World Food Council, Mr. Arturo R. Tanco, Jr., on 20 June 1978 addressed a letter to the Secretary-General along these lines, in order to draw his attention to the resolution contained in the preamble of the Mexico Declaration. That letter was circulated as an official document (A/S-10/AC.1/33) of the tenth special session, devoted to disarmament. I should like, with the Committee's permission, to bring to its attention a short paragraph of that letter:

"Noting that the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is taking place simultaneously with the meeting of the World Food Council, the Council fully supports the appeal made by President Jose Lopez Portillo of Mexico for hunger not to be considered as a matter of exclusive concern to the hungry and that the prospects for

(Mr. Vidal-Naquet, World Food Council)

development of the non-industrialized countries should be improved; and bearing in mind, inter alia resolution XIV of the World Food Conference, the Council reiterates the necessity of allocating a share of resources which would be freed, as a result of reduction of military expenditures, to finance measures directed to advancing the development of the developing countries, especially their food situation."

(A/S-10/AC.1/33, p. 2)

Mr. NUNEZ MOSQUERA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): In speaking on the broad range of items on our agenda, we do so with the aim of making specific reference to items 35, 36 and 39, which we regard as interrelated. In subsequent statements we shall make reference to other items which are of interest to us.

In the Final Document, adopted by consensus at the tenth special session of the General Assembly - the first devoted to disarmament - it is said that:

"The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned constitutes an important disarmament measure." (resolution S-10/2, para. 60)

Our delegation continues to support fully the provisions of that paragraph because, besides expressing a fact, it is in full accord with the interests of the Cuban people and Government.

I should like to stress that the next paragraph of the Final Document says that States participating in such zones:

"... should undertake to comply fully with all the objectives, purposes and principles of the agreements or arrangements establishing the zones, thus ensuring that they are genuinely free from nuclear weapons." (Ibid. para. 61)

In our region, the Latin American region, where, thanks to the praiseworthy and untiring efforts of the sister republic of Mexico, there is a zone which has been declared to be free of nuclear weapons and is often cited as an example, in reality it is a fact that the provisions of paragraph 61 of the Final Document are not being fully applied. That is not the fault of the Latin American States which signed the treaty. On the contrary, it is due to causes beyond their control, namely to the existence of several military bases belonging to a nuclear Power, a circumstance prejudicial to the self-declared nuclear-weapon-free zone. That is of paramount importance if we take account of the fact that nuclear weapons are installed on some of these bases, which is quite clearly incompatible with the existence of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

(Mr. Nunez Mosquera, Cuba)

Neither you, Mr. Chairman, nor the representatives sharing your work here in the First Committee can be unaware that in our country there is a foreign military base belonging to a nuclear Power which has been and continues to be imposed upon us.

It is of great interest to us to hear what has been said by the representative of the United States, to the effect that his country has entered into a contractual commitment not to use nuclear weapons against the States Parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Such an undertaking demonstrates only part of the path that we have to cover, since nothing is accomplished by making an undertaking of that kind when the zone is still infested with military and even nuclear bases.

We should like to reiterate our position concerning the existence of foreign military bases within an area declared to be a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It is incompatible with the denuclearized status of that zone, specifically and particularly when such military bases belong to a nuclear Power.

It is worth while recalling that during the preparatory work and in the special session of the General Assembly itself the non-aligned countries submitted a working paper which, among other things, contained a paragraph to the effect that the effectiveness of the nuclear-weapon-free zones would be increased if all the foreign military bases in the zone were dismantled and if no State of the region was subjected to acts of aggression. That paragraph was maintained in the debate on the adoption of the Final Document and was left in until the last minute, but it does not appear in the Final Document because a small group of countries did not join in the consensus. Our delegation maintains its resolute support for the ideas contained in that paragraph, because in addition to embodying an irrefutable truth it received the support of most of the States represented at the special session together with that of several important non-governmental organizations.

(Mr. Nunez Mosquera, Cuba)

The existence of foreign military bases, because of what they signify and because of the activities illegally carried out from them, endangers peace and security in the zone in which they are located. In that context we have, furthermore, to remember that the existence of foreign bases, some of them equipped with nuclear weapons, in territories and among peoples under colonial domination represents an obstacle of extraordinary magnitude to the achievement of the independence and sovereignty of those peoples. Furthermore, it is in patent conflict with what we have all agreed to and with the United Nations Charter.

In the course of the debate we listened with great interest to what was said by the United Kingdom representative, when he made reference to the hope that when the process of accession to the Additional Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco had been completed by the nuclear-weapon States, no Latin American State would have any political reason for delaying the entry into force of the Treaty in its territory. For our part, we hope that when that time comes the United Kingdom will contribute to the dismantling of all existing foreign military bases in Latin America, thus giving real and effective meaning to the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

At this stage we venture to mention paragraph 63 of the Final Document of the General Assembly's special session devoted to disarmament, which calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to give undertakings on, inter alia:

"Adoption by the States concerned of all relevant measures to ensure the full application of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco), taking into account" - and I stress this - "the views expressed at the tenth special session on the adherence to it;" (Ibid., para. 63 (a))

That wording, adopted by consensus at the special session, is fully in accordance with the position taken by Cuban representatives in every debate on this item. It is of primary importance for Cuba, if there is a desire for a really effective nuclear-weapon-free zone, that the foreign military bases in that zone should be dismantled and that there should be an undertaking by all nuclear weapon States not to subject any State

(Mr. Nunez Mosquera, Cuba)

of the region to acts of hostility or aggression, whether they be of a military, political or economic nature, as in the case of the criminal blockade which my country has been suffering for almost 20 years.

We should recall here also that our country has furthermore had to stand up to military aggression of every kind, major and minor, financed, each and every one of those acts, by imperialism and, as every one will remember, it has suffered economic blackmail simply because of the fact that it undertook the building of a different kind of society, a socialist society, by the sovereign decision and will of its people.

All this is for us a moral question, a question of political principles, and we are sure that everyone who has thought about it fundamentally and with a clear head must understand our reasoning.

Without wishing to digress from the subject under discussion, we should like to make a brief reference to some statements of a unilateral character.

One nuclear weapon State has said, in a false and hypocritical manner, that it has already entered into an agreement not, in any circumstances, to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear State. Those mellifluous and seemingly attractive words are in contradiction with the position which that country constantly assumes, since it takes no part in any way in any of the disarmament negotiations and in fact is blocking any attempt to achieve effective disarmament measures.

In our view, all nuclear States without exception are obliged - in fact, are enjoined by the international community - to conclude binding agreements of universal application. Nothing is to be achieved by entering into unilateral undertakings which have no legal validity at all and whose aim is merely to deceive the international community or a part of it, unless there is active and constructive participation in disarmament negotiations by the country concerned.

(Mr. Nunez Mosquera, Cuba)

Turning to the item concerning the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we welcomed the rich, fruitful and lively debate that took place at the special session, in which it was clear that there were a good number of countries that had not acceded to the aforementioned Treaty - not because they intended or desired to produce or to acquire any kind of nuclear weapons but because it contained provisions and discriminatory clauses detrimental to the peaceful use of nuclear power by developing countries. We are convinced that those which, now and in the future, most need to master modern technology, including nuclear technology, are the developing countries, since otherwise the gap that now separates the developed countries from the developing countries will widen even further, to the detriment of the latter.

As our country has already declared, it is in the process of negotiations concerning the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are required of us in order to have access to nuclear technology. We believe no measure in this sphere should help increase the stranglehold in which the developing countries find themselves.

Although we fully understand the aims of the agreements on non-proliferation, we defend the ineluctable right of the developing countries to peaceful use of nuclear energy without check, let, hindrance or discrimination. But our delegation recognizes the need to put an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, which would be an effective disarmament measure designed to achieve the total elimination of such weapons. I therefore consider it fitting to recall what was said by the Vice President of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba, Mr. Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, to the General Assembly at its tenth special session, on disarmament, since he expressed the essence of the Cuban position on the items dealt with on that occasion. He said:

"Cuba was not able to accept passively the unilateral renunciation of its right to possess any type of arms while a part of its national territory continues to be illegally occupied, in Guantanamo, by a United States base which was, and still is, imposed upon us." (A/S-10/PV.8, p.72)

Later in the same statement he said:

"Additionally, so long as the nuclear Power of this hemisphere maintains an aggressive policy towards Cuba and resorts to ill-disguised threats even today, no one in all fairness can ask our country to respond with meek acceptance and voluntary renunciation." (Ibid.)

(Mr. Nunez Mosquera, Cuba)

Those are the positions of our country on items 35, 36 and 39. We consider that the General Assembly has the possibility of adopting as one of its decisions wording that in one way or another would condemn the existence of foreign military bases on the territories of other States which affects the sovereignty of those States and are prejudicial to international security and dangerous to world peace. Similarly it is our view that whatever may result from our work on non-proliferation and the transfer of nuclear technology, the developing countries must be guaranteed the possibility of using nuclear power for peaceful purposes without let, hindrance or discrimination of any kind.

Mr. ENE (Romania) (interpretation from French): The Romanian delegation views the present debate on agenda items 35 to 49, relating to a range of problems that have been subjects of preoccupation in the United Nations and other organs in the field of disarmament, as a natural framework for giving substance to the conclusions, recommendations and decisions of the special session of the General Assembly. We wish to emphasize this because, as was evident from the extensive debate at that session, if there exists an item that commands unanimity as to its results, it is the hope that following upon the special session there will be a new attitude, a new approach to the problem of disarmament. The central idea of the present debate must therefore be the implementation, in specific fields that we shall be examining, of the letter and spirit of the Final Document and constructive follow-up action on the policy started during the special session and reflected in, among other things, the numerous suggestions and proposals put forward by States designed to get the negotiations out of their present impasse.

In this statement I wish especially to deal with agenda item 35. I also intend to refer, in passing, to certain other subjects to which the Romanian delegation attaches particular importance in the present circumstances.

Agenda item 35, which concerns the application of the conclusions of the first review conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Establishment of a Preparatory Committee for the Second Conference, in our opinion represents one of the central points of the present debate. We place examination of this problem within the range of the over-all preoccupations concerning nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war, a field which, it is generally agreed, calls for the highest priority in our efforts.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

Romania attached particular attention to the conference devoted to the 1975 Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty because we saw in it an opportunity for a collective review, with the participation of all States, of the way in which the provisions of the Treaty were being applied.

For four weeks that Conference was engaged in intensive activity. Each participating State had an opportunity to explain its views and positions in detail. It is, however, to be regretted that the deliberations and negotiations that took place did not lead to any practical results. The debates once again revealed the rather unsatisfactory character of the Treaty and the short-comings of that important international instrument and even a certain absence of communication between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. Nevertheless, the Conference did provide a good opportunity to emphasize the principal fields of vital interest to States parties to the Treaty and problems solution of which calls for the continuation of common efforts in the future.

As we observed at the time - and unfortunately the same situation pertains today - at the end of the five years during which the Treaty had been in effect we were bound to observe that, whereas the States that did not possess nuclear weapons complied strictly with the commitment not to acquire or to produce nuclear weapons, vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and the arms race continued and had even been accelerated. As a result of the increased destructive capacity of new generations of nuclear weapons and the massive stockpiling of arms, particularly nuclear weapons, mankind now finds itself in a very serious state of insecurity. Moreover, in spite of the commitments envisaged in the Treaty, non-nuclear States, in particular the developing countries, are still far from having received the assistance they have been relying upon to make nuclear power an instrument that can contribute to their economic development.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

As we now examine the application of the conclusions of the 1975 Conference of the parties to the Non Proliferation Treaty, we must first of all speak of the way in which those consultations have guided international action in this sphere during the years which followed.

When they agreed not to oppose the consensus which was necessary for the adoption of a final document of the Conference, the States members of the Group of 77, parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, explained their position in this respect. They made it clear that the agreement that they had given to the final declaration of the Conference was governed by the introduction, as an integral part of the final document, of proposals presented by them at the Conference, which had not been accepted.

Those proposals were essentially expressed in the additional protocols to the Treaty, which were intended to establish a balance that was lacking in the Treaty by supplementing the obligation undertaken by non-nuclear States to renounce the nuclear option with equally binding commitments on the part of the States possessing nuclear weapons. This involved a firm commitment to put an end to nuclear-weapon tests, to stop the production of such weapons and to reduce existing stockpiles in proportion to the increase in the number of non-nuclear States which became parties to the Treaty. It also involved a commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States which in turn had undertaken not to acquire or emplace nuclear weapons upon their territory. A number of draft resolutions were likewise submitted at the Conference which, inter alia, provided for an undertaking on the part of nuclear States to refrain from placing new nuclear weapons upon the territory of other States and to withdraw such weapons, as well as to facilitate access of developing countries to the use of nuclear energy for their economic progress. Another request was directed towards the improvement of the framework for negotiations which would lead to the implementation of the obligation assumed by nuclear States under the terms of article VI of the Treaty, so as to make it possible for genuine negotiations, compatible with the principles of equality and the full rights of all States in disarmament matters, to take place.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

However, we are bound to say that until the recent special session of the United Nations, none of the problems that we have just mentioned had really shown any significant progress. That is why we wish to reaffirm today that, in our opinion, these requests, in the formulation of which Romania took an active part, remain in substance just as valid as ever. The fact that similar requests, indeed identical ones, appeared among the proposals put forward by a number of States at the special session, confirms our view.

We therefore feel that a series of priority actions is absolutely necessary in order to establish a balance in obligations which underlie the very idea upon which the Treaty on Non-Proliferation was based.

We should like to mention the following measures: the total prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests; the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons and the transition to the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles of such weapons; the assumption by nuclear Powers, under an international instrument, of a commitment not to use or threaten to use under any circumstances nuclear weapons against States which do not possess them; abstention from placing new nuclear weapons upon the territory of other States and the withdrawal of those which are already there. The adoption of such measures, as a matter of fact, is the only course that would make it possible to strengthen the non-proliferation régime. It is along the same lines that we have supported and attached particular importance to the convening, under the auspices of the United Nations, of an international conference to promote international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the unfettered access on a preferential basis of developing countries to nuclear technology so that their lag in general underdevelopment can be eliminated.

A second review conference of parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty is scheduled for 1980. We wish to stress the need to prepare that conference as thoroughly as possible. It should be oriented, in our view, towards the settlement of problems which remained pending at the time of the negotiation of the Treaty and which have not been resolved since then, including those of the first review conference in 1975. We have already referred to this earlier.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

At this stage we should like to say that in order to ensure the effectiveness of the conference in 1980, it is necessary for it to be prepared on a democratic basis, with extensive consultation of all countries and by taking into account the views, positions and interests of all concerned. Since, to our knowledge, consultations have already started on the subject of the setting up of the preparatory committee for the review conference of parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation, we venture to hope that the initiators of that action will find it appropriate to broaden the circle of consultations to include all concerned States.

Our agenda includes a large number of items relating to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world and to measures to be undertaken with respect to other types of weapons.

We assign equal importance to all of those actions which are designed to decrease the danger of a devastating war, either by reducing the geographical area concerned or by preventing the technological intensification of the arms race.

For that purpose, Romania has supported and steadfastly supports all measures aimed at protecting Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, southern Asia and the Indian Ocean from the nuclear danger by establishing in those regions nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, with that status respected by the nuclear Powers. We consider, at the same time, that efforts must be made to encourage similar actions in other parts of the world. As is known, the Romanian Government has reaffirmed on a number of occasions the proposal that it made as early as 1957, to transform the Balkans - a region of which Romania is part - into a zone of good neighbourliness, a zone of peace and extensive co-operation, free of military weapons, military bases and foreign troops.

We believe that a greater and more dynamic role by the United Nations to stimulate and support the efforts made at the regional level to establish such zones, would be in keeping with the interests of the States directly concerned and with the interests of international peace and co-operation. If it is true that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a question which depends upon the political will and decision of the States of the region concerned, it is equally true that the situation prevailing in different parts of the world has a direct bearing upon the over-all climate in the world.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

This truth was acknowledged a number of years ago by the United Nations when, by resolution 2129 (XX) initiated by Romania, the General Assembly expressed its conviction that

"... any improvement in relations" at the regional level "... has at the same time a positive effect on international relations as a whole and thus contributes to the creation of an atmosphere conducive to peace and international security and to the settlement of the major problems which have not yet been solved".

We consider, therefore, that the United Nations can contribute usefully to supporting proposals concerning the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, proceeding from the conclusions of the special session in this respect, as well as from elements contained in the study on this subject conducted, at the request of the General Assembly, by a group of experts under the auspices of the former Committee on Disarmament.

As for the technological intensification of the arms race, we firmly support all the measures designed to put an end to the further development of the means of destruction and to contribute to their elimination. In this respect, Romania has always been in favour of the total cessation of the production of nuclear, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction, the destruction of existing stockpiles of such weapons, and the achievement of effective agreements in the field of conventional weapons.

We consider that it is necessary to undertake effective action to put an end, while it is still possible to do so, to the use, for the purpose of developing new types and systems of even more frightening weapons of destruction, of the knowledge placed at our disposal by advances in science and technology.

In this connexion we see the usefulness of an agreement of principle proclaiming the political will of States to refrain from using scientific research to produce new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction, which would be supplemented by protocols containing more specific provisions in various fields. Moreover, this method, which involves proclaiming the fundamental goal and linking it with additional protocols on various subjects, in terms of specific conditions

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

seems to us to lend itself rather well to the technical fields now in the process of development and, with an application of foresight, it should be more extensively used in the field of disarmament. We would wish to mention in passing the possibility of applying this, for instance, in the case of weapons with excessively inhuman effects to be dealt with at the United Nations Conference to be convened in Geneva in 1979. The more extensive goal assigned by the special session to that Conference might also be given substance, by stages, by means of protocols which would refer to specific types of such weapons. A proposal along these lines has already been submitted by the Mexican delegation.

The Romanian delegation attaches particular importance to the problem of the reduction of military budgets, which is being considered under agenda item 45.

We feel that a major goal such as that of general and complete disarmament can be achieved only gradually by transitional and partial measures. While it is true that disarmament represents a complex process, in the course of which technical questions which may emerge cannot be overlooked, it is just as true that underlying disarmament is after all the political will of States to commit themselves firmly to a programme to hold back the arms race and gradually to reduce existing stockpiles. In this context, the question of the gradual reduction of existing arms acquires particular importance also as a means of reinforcing confidence between States. For its part, Romania has supported in the past proposals in this field providing for budget reductions in terms of percentages or of fixed amounts, whether by political or by technical actions, to the extent that they contribute to establishing firmly among the preoccupations of the United Nations the pursuit of the principal goal, which is to stop the arms race. We shall do so also at the present session.

Aware of the fact that reduction of military expenditures is one of the fields which depends conclusively upon the political will of the States concerned to put an end to the arms race and to pass on to concrete measures of disarmament, Romania proposed at the special session that military expenditures be frozen at the 1978 level and gradually reduced beginning with the financial year 1979,

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

so that they might be cut by at least 10 to 15 per cent by 1985. Part of the funds thus saved were to be used to set up a United Nations development fund, with a view to promoting the economic and social progress of developing countries with low per capita incomes. Our proposal is just as relevant today, and we intend to promote it in the future also in the appropriate bodies.

The multitude of problems and situations raised by firm action in the field of disarmament makes it all the more necessary to have a properly structured conception of the organization of efforts in this field. This was the purpose of the proclamation in 1969 of the first Disarmament Decade, whose principal bench-marks were set from the very outset by the request to organize efforts in the elaboration of an over-all disarmament programme which might offer prospects for negotiations and action in this field, and constantly maintain in the minds of all the relationship between disarmament and economic development. Unfortunately, as is stressed also in the Final Document of the special session, the goals set by the General Assembly within the context of the Decade appear today to be just as far off as, if not even farther off than, in 1969, since the arms race has not really slowed down but, on the contrary, has accelerated and far exceeds in intensity the efforts to put an end to it. This morning the representative of Nigeria spoke at length on this subject and my delegation fully shares his view.

The international disarmament strategy established by the special session sheds new light upon international action to promote disarmament. We subscribe to the need to proclaim the decade 1980-1990 the second Disarmament Decade, to mobilize the over-all efforts to translate into action the recommendations and decisions of the special session devoted to disarmament.

In our opinion, the main feature of the second Disarmament Decade will have to be the achievement of its goals in close association with the third Development Decade which is in the course of being prepared, and on the basis of the global disarmament programme which should be adopted at the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

To conclude, I should like to emphasize that the principal message which we feel is emerging from the present debate is that we have to embark upon a stage of concrete activity. As you yourself pointed out recently, Mr. Chairman, it is to be supposed that the present session will produce a record number of resolutions, which are evidence of the activation of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament. Some of them will relate to fields which have already been the subject of preoccupation in the United Nations; others will deal with new fields. Nevertheless, it will be necessary for all to be tackled in a new spirit, which is that of the special session, it being understood that disarmament is of universal interest and that all States have the right and the duty to take part in it actively.

For its part, Romania is ready to associate itself effectively and responsibly with efforts directed towards the adoption of concrete measures for immediate application and to support any action, global or partial, which might contribute to the acceleration of the disarmament process, to the mobilization of all forces which might produce the climate and current of opinion necessary for the achievement of disarmament.

Mr. HANDL (Czechoslovakia): Entering now into the discussion on the broad scope of disarmament issues that are on the agenda of the First Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation would like to express its conviction that our deliberations will be characterized, as they have been up to now, by joint constructive efforts. The tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly provided the needed foundation for unifying all genuine aspirations to halt the arms race and to secure lasting world peace. The conclusions reached by that session are beginning to make themselves felt as a positive impulse towards expanding current negotiations and strengthening their continuity. Now, however, the main attention must be devoted to the task of ensuring that the new organization of disarmament machinery brings tangible results in those questions that form the actual content of the negotiations. They are, in the first place, questions discussed in view of their urgency by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. We think that the finalization of these negotiations must be a priority task also in the expanded Committee on Disarmament.

While on this point, I would like to express the appreciation of my Government for the responsible and useful work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament accomplished by that main international disarmament negotiating body over a period of 16 years. The Committee achieved a number of important results and international agreements that helped to reduce the arms race in several fields and to diminish its accompanying risks. In a number of the other issues discussed, as is also apparent from this year's report submitted to the General Assembly, undeniable progress has been achieved which gives hope for their successful solution. That is the main foundation on which the Disarmament Committee must continue to build.

Another task pointed out by the special session is the attainment of the broadest possible participation by States in agreements that have already been concluded. It is in the interest of the entire international community to achieve universality of such treaties as, for instance, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction; the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques; the Treaty on the Prohibition of the

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Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, and other agreements, in particular, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The most urgent among all the issues and tasks in the sphere of disarmament is that of making progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. The cessation of the continued stockpiling of nuclear arms and the transition to the gradual liquidation of all these stockpiles would, first of all, bring about a considerable improvement of the international climate and would substantially reduce the danger of a nuclear catastrophe and strengthen international peace and security. At the same time the way would be opened to radical progress in the entire field of disarmament. That is why we welcomed and fully supported the constructive proposals submitted in that respect by the delegation of the Soviet Union to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in the document on "practical measures for ending the arms race".

These comprehensive proposals, applying to all types of weapons of mass destruction, as well as to conventional weapons, show a necessary and realistic way out of the current situation. They respond thus to the urgent demand by the overwhelming majority of members of the international community for achieving real disarmament as speedily and as effectively as possible. Together with another important proposal by the Soviet Union, on the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States, they represent a substantive and reliable basis for the deliberations in the United Nations disarmament bodies and in the Committee on Disarmament.

We firmly hold that the constructive work to that end must not be undermined by the feverish development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and their systems. The United Nations General Assembly should take an unequivocal position in respect of this situation in which, on the one hand, enormous positive efforts are being exerted for curbing the arms race and ensuring lasting international peace, while, on the other hand, plans are made for growing stockpiles of armaments and for the refining of the arsenals of war which undermine that

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peace, This year, as is known, the countries of the socialist community submitted to the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament the draft of an international convention that would prohibit the production, stockpiling, development and use of nuclear neutron weapons. We advocate that the Committee on Disarmament should immediately proceed to substantive negotiations on drafting the text of such a convention.

We also believe that the achievement of over-all progress in nuclear disarmament would be significantly and, we could even say, decisively enhanced by speedy conclusion of the proposed second agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of offensive strategic weapons. Czechoslovakia therefore welcomed with great satisfaction the recent statements by leading representatives of two participant States which testify to the fact that very significant progress has been reached in the preparation of the agreement. When considering this question in the spirit of the conclusions of the tenth special session, the General Assembly should stress in particular the exceptional interest of Member States in achieving this agreement and in thus contributing to its speedy conclusion.

An important and necessary step forward in the efforts at the halting of the arms race must be the achievement of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. We can say with satisfaction that after many years of negotiations tangible progress has also been made on this pressing issue.

While on this point, I would especially like to express our appreciation of the fact that in the tripartite negotiations held within the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament among the delegations of the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, agreement has been reached on the principal issues of the proposed treaty and that those delegations were able to proceed to an exchange of views on the drafting of the actual text of the treaty. We trust that in the nearest future the remaining problems related to the securing of reliable verification of the observance of the treaty will also be successfully resolved. We also believe that in the current stage of the talks the necessary technical prerequisites for this already exist.

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Within the framework of the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, Czechoslovakia is taking an active part in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and to Identify Seismic Events which strives to prepare the establishment of such a system of seismic stations that would in the future become the principal international instrument for the verification of the observance of the treaty. It is apparent from the report submitted this year by the Geneva Committee that sufficient reasons exist for the assumption that the Group of Experts will bring their work to a successful conclusion. I should like to reaffirm that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is prepared to link up, as appropriate, its seismic facilities to such a system of verification.

As I have already mentioned, Czechoslovakia considers the achievement of an effective ban on nuclear-weapon tests to be of the utmost importance. We believe therefore that it is necessary also for the two remaining nuclear Powers to accede to the proposed treaty as soon as possible.

In our deliberations concerning disarmament we should unceasingly devote our closest attention to the potential danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the fact that the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has not yet been acceded to by almost 50 States Members of the United Nations, including two nuclear Powers. In that connexion I should like to stress that Czechoslovakia attaches importance to a careful discussion of this question by the second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be held in 1980. One of the main objectives of the Conference should be effective international measures aimed at achieving the earliest possible universality of this Treaty. This objective should, in our view, be fully backed also by the United Nations General Assembly and by its First Committee. For our part, we are prepared to co-operate fully, both within the United Nations and in the Preparatory Committee, to ensure positive results for the Review Conference.

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I should also like to emphasize that while consistently opposing any further proliferation of nuclear weapons, we are at the same time convinced that measures to eliminate that threat do not create obstacles for, or reduce the possibility of, non-nuclear States having equal access to the utilization of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is actively participating, and has an interest, in the continued development of equal and mutually advantageous co-operation in that field.

We are also of the opinion that the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, on the basis of an agreement among all participating States, can make a useful and significant contribution to the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime, as well as to over all international security and stability. Such agreements naturally must contain guarantees that the respective zones are, and will remain, completely free of nuclear arms, as well as guarantees for the security of these zones and of the participant States. Czechoslovakia encourages efforts exerted in that respect by a number of countries in the regions of the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, Latin America, as well as countries of the African continent. We also fully share their concern over the growing threat of nuclear arms being acquired by South Africa and Israel. We would like to assure these countries that, as in the past, Czechoslovakia will support any action that would effectively prevent that danger.

The problem of territorial limitation of nuclear weapons undoubtedly merits our deep concern. We see a profound sense in the proposal put forward by the Soviet Union to the effect that all nuclear-weapon States should refrain from stationing nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present and that at the same time the non-nuclear-weapon States should commit themselves not to take any steps which would result in deployment of such weapons on their territories. Such obligations would no doubt contribute positively to the maintenance of international peace and security on a regional as well as a global scale.

(Mr. Handl, Czechoslovakia)

Three years ago the Soviet Union submitted to the United Nations General Assembly the proposal to ban the development and manufacture of all new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems thereof. The proposal received the support of the socialist countries and a number of other countries. We fully agree with the representative of the Soviet Union who, on 18 October, while drawing attention to the unsatisfactory progress of the negotiations so far, emphasized that "in this area, more than anywhere else, time is not on our side" (A/C.1/33/PV.7, p. 12). The neutron weapon is but one proof of that, and not the only one by far. For a number of years reports have been appearing on the development of ever new destructive weapons and weapon systems testifying to the fact that scientific and technological development in the military sphere is surpassing the will of a number of States to attain its discontinuation. Some of these projects might be at such a stage of development that before long we may be faced with yet a greater threat than that represented by current nuclear weapons. The new Soviet proposal, envisaging, moreover, also the conclusion of specific agreements in individual urgent cases, goes a long way towards meeting the positions of a number of Western States. In this connexion we welcome the statement of the Soviet Union and the United States in the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, from which it follows that the two countries intend to submit a joint draft treaty banning radiological weapons. At the same time we also resolutely advocate the over-all solution of this issue which must no longer be indefinitely delayed or silently bypassed. The General Assembly could recommend to the Committee on Disarmament to proceed immediately to a comprehensive consideration of this issue. To this end a special working body could be established within the Committee.

Another question that should attract increased attention is the achievement of a treaty on the prohibition and destruction of the stockpiles of all types of chemical weapons. The conclusion of this treaty is all the more pressing, since, as the experts in the Geneva Committee tell us, the actual liquidation of the stockpiles of chemical weapons already amassed is becoming a complicated problem that will in itself

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require years of difficult and dangerous work. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, like the other socialist countries, has always approached this issue with a view to reaching effective, mutually acceptable results.

Let me, for instance, recall the draft treaty, including verification procedures, which was already submitted by the socialist countries six years ago. As has been shown by the further course of the negotiations, that draft was basically in keeping with the requirements of an effective and final solution. We have furthermore welcomed the joint initiative of the Soviet Union and the United States whose delegations to the Geneva Committee have been conducting intensive bilateral talks in recent years. We appreciate the progress achieved by them particularly in the course of this year. It is apparent from the joint statement of the two delegations that basic agreement has been reached as to the scope of the ban that is, that the envisaged treaty should apply to all types of chemical weapons. We welcome this as a significant and needed progress. This, on the whole positive though still very complicated progress in the talks, should result, as soon as possible, in the elaboration and conclusion of a broad international treaty.

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We can note certain progress also with respect to the establishment of a verification system. We would like to stress that the respective verification measures safeguarding the effective observance of the treaty by all participant States must not, at the same time, infringe their sovereignty or lead to the disclosing of State, industrial or other secrets on which their security depends.

On the same basis, successful solution was reached also on the question of verification with respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. The significance of that Convention, which came into force three years ago, is all the greater, since up to now it is the only international agreement committing all the participant States to eliminate from their arsenals and liquidate completely certain types of weapons of mass destruction. Czechoslovakia supports the appeal of the special session of the General Assembly to all States that have not yet done so to consider the question of their acceding to the Convention. Furthermore, we believe that the General Assembly must contribute to the thorough preparation of the First Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention which is to meet in 1980.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is decisively in favour of the reduction of the enormous current expenditures on armaments. The situation urgently demands that these funds be used more effectively for purposes of peaceful development. We proceed from the fact, as has been stressed in the report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the economic and social consequences of the arms race, that

"Substantial progress in the field of disarmament would represent a decisive turning point as regards development ..." (A/32/88, para. 174)

We trust that understanding of these problems will be facilitated also by the work of the group of experts on the question of the relationship between disarmament and development.

(Mr. Handl, Czechoslovakia)

First of all, however, it is necessary to reach as soon as possible a concrete reduction of military budgets. The special session of the General Assembly clearly pointed out that this measure

"... would contribute to the curbing of the arms race and would increase the possibilities of reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly

for the benefit of the developing countries." (resolution S-10/2, para. 89)

It requested that "... The General Assembly should continue to consider what concrete steps should be taken" to that end. (Ibid.) It is our assumption that one quite concrete step of this kind could be taken by reaching, in the first place, an agreement among States with large economic and military potentials, including permanent members of the Security Council, on the specific size of the reduction of their military budgets in absolute figures.

A grave threat to world peace and the security of nations is posed also by the creation of huge arsenals of conventional weapons and by the growing size of the armed forces in various parts of the world.

That is why we believe, as we have already stated, that it is necessary to conclude an agreement as soon as possible on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. It is our considered opinion that such an agreement would simultaneously stimulate arms reduction on a regional basis in other parts of the world also.

The prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of conventional weapons of great destructive capability would be a step of far-reaching significance. We also support the proposal by the Soviet Union that the permanent members of the Security Council and the countries which have military agreements with them should agree not to expand their armies and not to build up their conventional armaments.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic shares also the objectives of the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious

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or to have Indiscriminate Effects, which is to be convened next year. It intends to work actively at that Conference for the prohibition or limitation of such weapons.

The current discussion in the First Committee reflects the extraordinary complexity and diversity of problems with which the international community and the United Nations are faced in the field of disarmament. There is no doubt that their solution will require a long time and the overcoming of many obstacles inherent in disarmament negotiations. One must also not forget that these negotiations affect the vital security interests of the participating States, which must not be endangered, and that no State should be allowed as a result of the measures adopted to gain one-sided advantages that would be to the detriment of other States. The only feasible course to be taken consists in persevering and responsible negotiations, the overcoming of prejudices from cold war times, the promotion of international détente and its political, economic and legal foundations, and the adoption of such partial concrete measures as are most urgent and realistically achievable at the current time. This is the only way to prepare for the future transition to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The attainment of that final goal could be substantially speeded up through a thoroughly prepared world conference on disarmament. We are of the view that our deliberations should respond to that part of the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly that calls for the convening of a world disarmament conference "at the earliest appropriate time" (ibid., para. 122) by establishing a body entrusted with its practical preparation and by setting for it at the same time an appropriate target date.

In conclusion, the Czechoslovak delegation would like to express its conviction that this year's deliberations of the First Committee of the General Assembly will make a constructive contribution to the efforts for halting the arms race, and that it will help to unify the views on the disarmament issues discussed. For its part, the Czechoslovak delegation is prepared to exert every effort and to co-operate with all delegations with a view to making as substantive progress as possible.

(Mr. Handl, Czechoslovakia)

As Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Mr. Lubomír Štrougal, stated recently in his address at the meeting commemorating the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak State and the tenth anniversary of the Czechoslovak Federation,

"The dearly paid for lessons of both the distant and more recent history of Czechoslovakia have firmly set us on a course leading to the attainment of the great ideal of mankind, that is, to remove forever the danger of a world conflict."

Mr. CORREA DA COSTA (Brazil): During the debate on item 125 of the agenda the Brazilian delegation had the opportunity to present its comments on the results of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In that statement we set forth in general terms our basic views both on the substantive aspects of the Final Document and on the question of disarmament deliberations and negotiations within the United Nations framework.

Today I will refer to some of the issues in the field of disarmament which are submitted for the consideration of this Committee under items 35 to 49 of the agenda.

A little over a month ago, the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, in his statement opening the General Assembly general debate at this session, prefaced his remarks on disarmament by the following comments:

"I cannot avoid making special mention of a problem which increasingly endangers the very existence of mankind. I refer, obviously, to the arms race and, in particular, to the nuclear arms race.

"The situation today demands decisive action on the part of the international community which has complacently and for many years contemplated the uncontrolled accumulation, by a few States, of arms of mass destruction and the terrifying and permanent refinement, by those same States, of instruments capable of annihilating human life on earth. The threat to us, to each of us in this room, and to each one of the 150 countries we represent, lies not only in the danger that those weapons may one day be used, but also in the very existence of that weaponry."

(A/33/PV.6, p. 7)

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

It is incumbent on this Committee, assisted now by the newly recreated Disarmament Commission, to establish the guidelines for the decisive action that is urgently called for in order to eliminate the nuclear threat that has menaced each and every one of the countries we represent for the last 33 years. And it is not until such action is taken - or, at least, initiated in good faith by those who are primarily responsible - that the international community as a whole can realistically be expected to take effective measures to halt and reverse the conventional arms race. Even then, the overwhelming preponderance of a handful of States in non-nuclear military terms must necessarily be taken into account.

The whole process of disarmament must thus be approached in an integrated and realistic manner, with due recognition of the priorities involved.

The General Assembly can recommend that the major military Powers agree to adopt concrete measures in the field of disarmament. It can even condemn them for not yet having done so. But it cannot substitute itself for the political will without which the situation will only, in all probability, steadily deteriorate.

The completion of a draft treaty on the comprehensive ban of nuclear weapon tests, although not a measure of disarmament in the true sense of the word, is among the most urgently requested and long delayed measures on our agenda. Year after year the General Assembly has reaffirmed that the highest priority should be accorded to negotiations in this area. Those appeals have gone unheeded and a comprehensive test-ban treaty is still not in sight.

We have been told repeatedly by the representatives of the nuclear-weapon States that the elaboration of such a treaty is an extremely technical and complex matter involving painstaking and lengthy negotiations. Furthermore, we are constantly informed about certain apparent differences of opinion on details of the verification system that require time to solve.

But 15 years have elapsed since the parties to the partial test-ban treaty of 1963 expressed their intention "to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time" and their determination "to continue negotiations to this end". Whatever real technical problems there were to solve should have been solved many years ago.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

The very fact that nuclear weapon tests are still being conducted to this day, in spite of the repeated appeals and condemnations by the international community, can be explained only if we assume that the nuclear Powers have attached -- and possibly still do attach -- considerable importance to the continued testing of these weapons of mass destruction.

It is in this context that we should consider the present situation with regard to negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Although somewhat doubtful about the procedures involved, we joined the majority of Member States in supporting resolution 32/78, by which, inter alia, the General Assembly noted with satisfaction that negotiations had begun among three of the nuclear-weapon States with a view to the drafting of an agreement on this subject. The same resolution urged these three nuclear-weapon States to expedite their negotiations so that, after full consideration of the resulting proposals by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), the treaty could be opened for signature in time for the special session on disarmament.

Just recently this Committee was reminded once again by the representative of one of the participants in the trilateral talks of the "complexity of these negotiations" and was told not to expect "any promise as to precisely when the negotiations will be concluded".

The lack of results of the trilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty has only served to confirm the serious doubts with which many delegations agreed last year to the terms of resolution 32/78. We cannot be expected to renew indefinitely our optimistic expectations about the outcome of these restricted negotiations.

Whatever decision this session of the General Assembly adopts on this matter, it must be clearly understood that the multilateral negotiating body will in fact have ample opportunity to examine, review and revise any proposal submitted to it on this subject by the three nuclear-weapon States or, as a matter of fact, by any of its members. In particular, the Geneva Committee must ensure that a proposed international agreement on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is both effective and non-discriminatory and that it establishes an equitable balance of rights and obligations for all States.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

It is only after such thorough consideration and in the light of the resulting decisions of the negotiating body that a draft comprehensive test-ban treaty would be submitted to the General Assembly for its approval. This procedure must be followed in order to permit the exercise by all States of their right to participate fully in the negotiation of measures which affect their legitimate interests.

The statements we have heard on this subject during the present session of the General Assembly do not appear to have improved the prospects for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the very near future. But it is high time that some concrete action be taken with regard to the continued testing of nuclear weapons. We are therefore in agreement with the initiative of the Indian and other delegations, contained in draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.3, to have the Assembly call upon

"all nuclear-weapon States, pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, to refrain from conducting any further testing of nuclear weapons". (A/C.1/33/L.3, p. 2)

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

The situation with regard to chemical weapons remains much the same as that I have just described in connexion with the comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests. Through the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, opened for signature more than six years ago, the States Parties affirmed

"... the recognized objective of effective prohibition of chemical weapons" and, to that end, undertook "... to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of their development, production and stockpiling and for their destruction, and on appropriate measures concerning equipment and means of delivery specifically designed for the production or use of chemical agents for weapons purposes."

(resolution 2826 (XXVI), Annex, article IX)

Such a precisely worded and binding commitment has not yet led to the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention, a task to which the General Assembly has assigned high priority. As in the case of the comprehensive test ban treaty, the international community has for some time been awaiting the results of negotiations being carried out directly between the two major military Powers.

The inauguration of the Committee on Disarmament early next year in Geneva should represent the beginning of an entirely new phase in international negotiations in the field of disarmament. The members, old and new, of the negotiating body should be fully aware of the short-comings of the past and willing to make a fresh start towards the achievement of urgently needed effective measures of disarmament, in particular of nuclear disarmament, to which the highest priority should be accorded not only in theory but also, and above all, in actual practice.

The Committee on Disarmament should fully assume the high responsibilities with which it has been entrusted and should not hesitate to come to grips directly with the most politically sensitive problems within its very comprehensive mandate. The fact that two or three of its members

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may be engaged in private consultations on certain specific matters should not preclude it from actively considering the subject in question.

There is no reason why the Committee on Disarmament should feel any constraints about turning its attention not only to the very basic issues in the top priority field of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems but also to other aspects of the arms race among the major Powers which affect the security interests of the international community as a whole and which heretofore, for one reason or another, have eluded careful consideration at the multilateral level. In this connexion, we believe that the time has come for at least a preliminary discussion of the question of the military use of outer space.

The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies has already unequivocally outlawed the deployment in outer space of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and has determined that the moon and other celestial bodies, but not outer space itself, "shall be used by all States Parties to the Treaty exclusively for peaceful purposes" (resolution 2222 (XXI), Annex, article IV). We are all keenly aware that, according to all available information, the provisions of the 1967 Treaty have not had the effect of preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space. The international community cannot pretend to ignore the grave implications of these reports.

Before concluding I wish to refer briefly to the items on our agenda relating to nuclear-weapon-free zones, and then to make some comments on the question of regional approaches to different aspects of disarmament.

Brazil has always supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the initiative of the States of a clearly defined region, and has consistently held the view that other States have the duty to respect the status of such zones and to undertake legally binding obligations not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the States in the region. As a Latin American country, we are particularly interested in items 36 and 39,

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which relate to the signature and ratification of Additional Protocols I and II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America - the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Having signed and ratified the Treaty, Brazil considers itself committed to its purposes and objectives. We still look forward, however, to the day when all the requirements of article 28 will have been fulfilled and the Treaty will thus have legally entered into force. In that connexion, we welcome the announcements made over the past year which lead us to hope that the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco may lie not too far distant future. We are convinced that that Treaty, together with its two Additional Protocols, is an effective example of the proper regional approach to priority issues in the field of disarmament.

It has already been pointed out that current attempts to attach undue emphasis to regional aspects of disarmament have the effect of diverting the attention and the efforts of the international community from the immeasurably greater threat to mankind posed by the massive accumulation of nuclear and conventional weapons by the major military Powers.

It is particularly ironical that certain recent initiatives have sought to focus on the situation in the Latin American region. An objective analysis of the available data immediately reveals that Latin America, taken as a whole, is the least armed region of the world and that most countries in the region, including my own, devote smaller proportions of their resources to armaments than many countries in other regions of the world.

My delegation reserves the right to revert to this point at a later stage of our debates.

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting I would inform the Committee that Senegal has become a sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/33/L.16.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.