



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 18TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)  
later: Mr. MULLOY (Ireland)  
(Vice-Chairman)

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Statements were made by:

Mrs. Thorsson (Sweden)  
Mr. Cu Dinh Ba (Viet Nam)  
Mr. Rossides (Cyprus)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your most kind welcoming words at this morning's meeting.

Sir, although it is now fairly late in the day, I do want to join all previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee. I wish also to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election. As I have followed your outstanding career in multilateral diplomacy for quite a number of years now, I do not need to listen to the praise of you by others in asserting the complete confidence of the Swedish delegation in your eminent capacity to guide us in bringing our efforts to the most successful result possible.

What I should like to do today is to revive the spirit of the Mouse that Roared. The imaginary events of this book of 1955 have a direct bearing on our present predicament. Representing one of the little nations of the world to which the book is dedicated, it seems to me that what we need to do now is to roar with a unanimous voice at the big and mighty. We might not achieve the wonderful results of the disarmament efforts of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick, that is, the total abolition of all nuclear weapons under effective control. But we might set something in motion, to get out of the present arms control and disarmament impasse.

From this starting point, my statement today will not be the traditional tour d'horizon of the situation in the field of disarmament where we have tragically failed to achieve any meaningful results. Instead, I intend to devote the main part of my intervention today to issues relating to nuclear disarmament, including the imperative need to preserve and strengthen the non-proliferation régime. The reason for dwelling particularly on nuclear arms is, of course, the increased risk of a nuclear war resulting from the continued nuclear-arms race, the increased danger of nuclear proliferation, developments in military doctrines and a deteriorating international situation.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

People around the world certainly share my feeling that the 1980s have had a bad start. The situation indeed looks grim. We have behind us - and let us not shy away from stating this - serious failures in efforts to change the course of events in the nuclear-arms field.

We have taken note of, among others, a course of events which has had a negative impact on the human predicament, such as an ongoing Soviet military build-up and the deployment within Soviet forces of new intermediate-range missiles, such as the SS-20; continued qualitative improvements of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in both the United States and the Soviet Union; the decision within NATO on 12 December 1979 to develop, produce and deploy in western Europe a new generation of intermediate-range missiles; an inclination increasingly to regard nuclear weapons as militarily usable, with effects on doctrines, new weapon systems and modes of deployment; the fact that, at a time of economic difficulties, the arms industry seems to be among the few which can count on increasing orders and that military establishments in most cases seem to be immune from budgetary restraints; reports on alleged use in war of chemical weapons and the growing interest in developing new types of chemical weapons; reports on feared threats to the non-proliferation régime; and, last but certainly not least, the acute worsening of the international political climate through deteriorating super-Power relations, as well as increased tensions and military aggression in certain parts of the world.

Some bright spots, although few, should also be noted. Talks, and this is essential, are continuing between the super-Powers; the present United States Administration remains committed to the ratification of SALT II; the joint decision by the United States and the USSR to start a preparatory round of discussion on Euro-strategic weapons, the so-called Tactical Nuclear Forces (TNF) or theatre nuclear forces, set in motion just two weeks ago, and the Geneva agreement on particularly inhumane weapons which, although limited in scope and mainly aimed at the protection, for humanitarian reasons, of the civilian population, represents one of the very few tangible results of recent international diplomacy.

It is self-evident but worth stressing that most arms control and disarmament efforts are unlikely to move forward in the absence of a climate of

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

of détente and basic confidence among nations and, in particular, the super-Powers and their alliances. The present hardening of positions and the ongoing so-called arms modernization process, notably in the European area, are bound to influence negatively the prospects for disarmament negotiations. Such trends must be reversed while there is still time.

Representing a country in the small, but politically and strategically important, continent of Europe, I shall indeed have to return to a review of the precarious situation on that continent. But I want first to comment on a recent event in the general arms control and disarmament field.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

The second NPT Review Conference was held in Geneva during four weeks last August and September.

We are all, whether parties to the NPT or not, aware of the importance of the NPT régime, as well as of the delicate balance between the treaty obligations of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States that was introduced during the multilateral phase of negotiations preceding the signing of the NPT in 1968.

Since the early days of our participation in disarmament talks, Sweden has asserted the decisive importance of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and of nuclear disarmament as main prerequisites for keeping nuclear weapons from spreading to additional States. As a matter of fact, the existence of article VI of the NPT is primarily the result of efforts in 1967 and 1968 by two States members of the then Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, namely Mexico and Sweden.

We should beware of an interpretation of article VI as stipulating an obligation on the nuclear-weapon States parties only to start negotiations in good faith. Then they would be free to go on negotiating for years and decades without results. This would not be in consonance with the strongly felt view that there is a real and substantive obligation on the nuclear-weapon States parties.

Regrettably, twelve years have passed since those States signed a treaty pledging themselves to seek the cessation of the nuclear arms race "at an early date". Still, the nuclear arms race continues and intensifies, threatening to lead us to "the brink". In spite of that, those States, as they have recently done, claim their proper fulfilment of obligations under article VI. This is unacceptable to my country and, I imagine, to all other non-nuclear-weapons States parties to the NPT.

Events do, indeed, underline the need for controls related to the connexion between nuclear fission and nuclear-weapon production capacity in order to minimize the risk of nuclear-weapon proliferation. At the same time, we are aware that nuclear-weapon proliferation may also occur by means other than abuse of nuclear energy programmes.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

We find it reassuring that the second NPT Review Conference was able to deal extensively - and with quite a degree of agreement - with important matters such as International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and international co-operation regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this context, I want to recall the conviction of the Swedish delegation that relations between States in the field of co-operation in nuclear energy would improve if all non-nuclear-weapon States not parties to the NPT were to accept safeguards with the same scope as has been accepted by the parties. If all exporting States were to make such safeguards a condition of supply, a disturbing element of discrimination or even inverted preference would be avoided. Work on these matters must now continue in other forums.

Full-scope safeguards in all countries and including the nuclear-weapon States would also be an essential building-block for a 'cut-off' of production of fissionable material for weapons purposes, a measure that Sweden, among others, has strongly advocated since 1965.

Let me state that my country will continue to honour its commitments to non-proliferation. Aware of the Treaty's role as a main political instrument in efforts towards horizontal non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, we shall do our utmost to help preserve and strengthen it.

I have dealt at some length with article VI of the NPT. By accepting this article, the nuclear-weapon States have undertaken certain obligations to balance those pledged by the non-nuclear-weapon States. Its implementation, in letter and spirit, is therefore of great importance for the efforts to make the NPT universally accepted.

One should also carefully note the Treaty's tenth preambular paragraph, wherein the States parties recall their determination of 1963 to achieve the discontinuance of all nuclear-weapon tests for all time. For reasons to which I shall return, it is of considerable importance to emphasize the words "for all time".

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

The contrast between those commitments and the physical reality of observed nuclear testing has never been starker. One third of all nuclear test explosions from the start in the 1940s until now took place during what we have called the first Disarmament Decade, that is, the 1970s.

An average of 40 test explosions were carried out annually during that decade. And it should be noted that since 1977 a marked increase in observed tests has occurred, due to increases in nuclear testing by the Soviet Union and France, while the United States testing has continued on an unchanged high level. We have also noted with deep concern the atmospheric test carried out by China some two weeks ago. And I might add here that, according to a cable that I received yesterday from the Swedish National Defence Research Institute, a radioactive cloud emanating from that test has now reached Sweden.

Summary of nuclear explosions  
as registered and reported

	1944-1980		1970-1974		1975-1979		1980*
		%		%		%	
China	26	2.0	6	3.0	9	4.0	1
France	95	7.5	28	13.0	28	13.0	9
India	1	..	-	-	-	..	-
United Kingdom	32	2.5	1	..	4	2.0	2
USA	664	53.0	83	41.0	71	32.5	12
Soviet Union	442	35.0	86	43.0	106	48.5	16
Total	1,260	100.0	204	100.0	218	100.0	40

\* As of 24 October 1980. Figures for 1980 do not yet indicate any trend, as some nuclear-weapons States concentrate their testing on the autumn months.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

I have inserted this table showing the number of nuclear explosions as registered and reported from 1944 through 24 October 1980, with specifications for the 1970s. These are indeed disgusting statistics.

These developments, leading up to a nuclear-weapon test rate of roughly one test per week, must be considered against the background of commitments made. In the Final Declaration of the first NPT Review Conference in 1975 it was agreed, by consensus and without any reservation of the nuclear-weapon States parties, to call upon these very States "to limit the number of their underground nuclear-weapon tests to a minimum" pending the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. According to statistics, the nuclear-weapon States have indeed not abided by this commitment.

Regarding efforts to achieve a comprehensive test-ban treaty, the three negotiating nuclear-weapon States also have a very clear commitment. This has been confirmed in this Committee and subsequently in the plenary Assembly. Resolution 32/78, adopted in 1977, which received the affirmative vote of 126 countries - the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom included - urged those three States to expedite their negotiations with a view to bringing them to a positive conclusion as soon as possible and to use their best endeavours to transmit the results for full consideration by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva at the beginning of its spring session in 1978. The General Assembly also requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to take up with the utmost urgency the agreed text resulting from trilateral negotiations, with a view to the submission of a draft treaty to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

An unchallengeable conclusion stands out: those three nuclear weapons States have not lived up to their own commitments in either case. A comprehensive test-ban treaty has not been reached, nor has testing been limited in any way -- certainly not 'to a minimum'.

It is widely recognized that a comprehensive test-ban treaty is a central point in efforts to start the process of nuclear disarmament. The question of a comprehensive test-ban treaty and of starting multilateral negotiations on that subject was a major stumbling block at the second Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. I have to state in no uncertain terms that the majority of States members of the Committee on Disarmament are exceptionally dissatisfied that the Committee has so far proved unable to establish an ad hoc working group on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Such a working group in the Committee on Disarmament would be in a position immediately to start multilateral negotiations on substance, such as the legal and organizational framework of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, including the organization of effective and objective machinery for verification and control.

Some progress in that respect was made during the second Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. I wish to recall to this Committee that the United States delegation was prepared to accept -- although not until the very last moment of the conference -- the establishment of an ad hoc working group on a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the Committee on Disarmament at its 1981 session. Consequently, the Swedish Government believes that the Committee on Disarmament should now be in a position to take an early decision at the beginning of its 1981 session to start multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The majority of States members of the Committee on Disarmament are also very dissatisfied, to say the least, with the present state of affairs as far as the actual trilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty negotiations are concerned. We are now told publicly that those tripartite efforts are not aimed at reaching a treaty of unlimited duration, as was pledged in Moscow in 1963 and repeated in 1968, but rather an agreement of a mere three years duration.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

Although such an agreement would undoubtedly represent progress of a kind, it is undeniable that it would have serious flaws which make one hesitate to call it a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Let me elaborate. It would be unlikely to attract wide adherence. It would be likely to stall multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty for all time. It could jeopardize international efforts to achieve and maintain an international verification system.

My conclusion would therefore be that such an agreement would in important respects amount to a moratorium on nuclear tests rather than the comprehensive test-ban treaty of unlimited duration that we have worked towards for decades.

A moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons pending the conclusion of such a treaty has been proposed many times by States Members of the United Nations. That question is also discussed as a matter of principle by Professor Bernard Feld in an editorial appearing in the May 1980 issue of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. He deals with what he calls the main problem, namely, that the two super-Powers negotiate arms control while at the same time they engage in a vigorous race to increase and improve the very weapons which those negotiations are supposed to control. The pace of negotiations is generally overtaken by weapons development. As arms control seems unable to check the arms race under such circumstances, those two activities have so far been incompatible. Thus, efforts at arms limitation seem to have been successful only when competition in the arms under consideration has been frozen during the critical negotiating period. Evidently, prior agreement on a moratorium, during the negotiating process, on further development and deployment of the weapons or weapon systems under consideration appears to be a prerequisite for success in eliminating any weapons system.

Examples to prove this point abound. We all remember the so-called bargaining chips that were introduced during various phases of the early SALT process: the Multiple Independently-Targetable Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs), the cruise missiles. Negotiations were dragging behind and now mankind is blessed with MIRVs and cruise missiles. Another case in point is of course the comprehensive nuclear-weapon test ban. I have quoted figures of nuclear test explosions

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

carried out during the period of ongoing talks on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It could be argued that not until an effective moratorium has been introduced can we count on breaking down the resistance to the comprehensive test-ban treaty that for too long has stalled progress.

For a limited period a moratorium could thus serve the purpose of bringing about an atmosphere conducive to reaching final agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty of unlimited duration. Obviously, a moratorium period must be utilized to the full for bilateral and multilateral negotiations on all relevant aspects of a comprehensive test-ban treaty including, in particular, the international verification system. The goal must of course remain the earliest conclusion of a treaty banning all nuclear tests in all environments and for all time.

The alarming situation in the field of nuclear weapons is clearly illustrated by the recently concluded United Nations Study on Nuclear Weapons. That study is a thorough and comprehensive review of nuclear weapons in the world today. One conclusion that must be drawn from the material presented is that the notion that a nuclear weapon in any way can increase the national security of any State is the greatest fallacy of our time.

The nuclear arsenals of the super-Powers are many times larger than would be needed for the effective fulfillment of their own declared purpose of deterrence. The technological diversification of nuclear weapons has made it more and more difficult to maintain that the so-called balance of terror functions as an instrument for peace. The risks that the development will get out of hand are increasing. Particularly worrying is the fact that new delivery systems permit nuclear weapons "to be used" the same way as other weapons, leading up to the idea that a nuclear war could be fought and won. On the contrary, the study shows that there can be no winner in a nuclear war and that its primary and secondary effects would be catastrophic for all

(Mrs. Thorsson Sweden)

countries of the world. The notion that a nuclear war could be kept under control is found to be unrealistic. In political terms, this means that the super-Powers keep the peoples of the world hostage to what they perceive as their own security needs. But the study shows that a system based on a precarious balance of nuclear deterrence can never be a reliable long-term solution for the problems facing international security.

I have dwelt to some extent on the tremendous and complex problems facing us as a result of the momentum of arms technology, permitting the introduction of new weapons and weapons systems and the subsequent development of doctrines. Those effects are also evidenced by what happens on the European military scene. Tension is generally low among European nations, but tension between East and West causes both military blocs to take turns in further expanding new and perfected nuclear weapons as well as conventional forces. This see-saw of military procurement on an already over-militarized continent appears nearly unstoppable. But it must be stopped.

The peoples of Europe must get together to formulate a strategy for national and international action to break out of the continuing course of European militarization. The ultimate goal of our action must be a Europe free from nuclear weapons and a sizeable reduction of conventional weapons and forces, particularly those of an offensive or destabilizing nature.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

One recent development does indeed emphasize the urgent and immediate need for such an approach: the announcement earlier this year by France that it has developed and tested a neutron bomb. The Swedish Government has repeatedly denounced the neutron bomb, which would give a new aspect to nuclear warfare, adding further to its terrifying effects. Sweden has also noted with concern recent information about preparations for production and deployment of neutron warheads in super-Power arsenals - to be used, if ever, on the battlefields of Europe - with the inherent risk of lowering the nuclear weapon threshold.

In speeches before the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, in July 1978 and June 1979, I put five questions to the nuclear Powers regarding non-strategic nuclear weapons for possible use against targets in Europe. They reflected the grave concern of my country over the unimpeded nuclear arms race in our vicinity. We have noted with appreciation the response given to these questions by the United Kingdom. The Swedish Government is concerned, however, that so far no answers have come from the United States or the USSR. In order to recall the questions, I am now going to repeat them. They are still entirely topical.

The first question was: Are preparations being made for further development of systems of nuclear weapons of sub-kiloton yield within existing modernization plans? And would such preparations, if undertaken, substantially contribute towards abolishing the distinction between conventional and nuclear weapons?

The second question was: Does the Soviet Union possess, or even deploy, nuclear weapons of sub-kiloton yield or their means of delivery?

The third question was: Is production or deployment foreseen of nuclear weapon systems with a balance of characteristics other than that of those now deployed, and with the purpose of reducing collateral damage by such changed or new characteristics? This refers, of course, to the neutron bomb.

The fourth question, still topical, has meanwhile been answered by the super-Powers affirmatively and in a dramatically practical manner: Do present modernization plans foresee further deployment of intermediate-range ballistic missiles and medium-range ballistic missiles in substitution for older versions of such weapons or in addition to the total yield so far deployed?

Against that background, the fifth question was: will nuclear weapons also be deployed in areas of Europe where they have so far not been present?

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

It is in this broad perspective that proposals for a European disarmament conference take their proper place. Several such proposals have been presented, differing in approach and objectives. But they all aim at creating a less dangerous situation in Europe and at limiting and reducing arms in the region. Thus, there are elements of common interest to build upon in order to find an approach acceptable to all States concerned.

A European disarmament conference should deal with both confidence-building measures and disarmament properly speaking. It should aim at producing concrete and substantive results. Under no circumstances can it be permitted to become an empty verbal exercise producing declarations which would not be binding. In order to become an effective basis for producing subsequent measures for increasing confidence, as well as for arms limitation and disarmament, a conference must necessarily be regarded as a long-term and continuous process. It must start with limited and well-defined issues and gradually proceed to more substantial measures, covering militarily relevant parts of the European continent and - what is important - surrounding waters.

It is important that a conference deal with both conventional and nuclear weapons. In Europe there is a close connexion between these two weapon categories, and one part of the arms situation cannot be isolated and treated without consideration also of the other. Thus a comprehensive approach is called for.

To underline the seriousness with which we regard the situation in Europe, and the urgency of curbing the arms race in the region, the Swedish Government has expressed its willingness to host a European disarmament conference. It is our hope that the discussion of a conference will soon reach such a concrete level that this offer can take the form of a definite invitation.

As is true of the whole decade of the 1970s - tragically true - the continued and intensified arms race in 1980 challenges belief in human common sense.

The present situation is a very chilling one, but we must never allow ourselves to take a defeatist attitude. The recently deceased remarkable thinker, politician and novelist, C. P. Snow, said in one of his "Strangers and Brothers" series of novels: "When men believe that events are too big for them, there is no hope." It is my considered opinion that not even present events are too big to cope with.

Mr. CU DINH BA (Viet Nam): This Committee has already spent two full weeks on the general debate on 20 disarmament items. My delegation has listened attentively to the statements made by various delegations and shares with them the overwhelming concern of the international community for disarmament. Speaking for the second time on these items, my delegation wishes to refer to the problems about which the majority of the delegations here have shown particular concern and which they have discussed extensively during the last two weeks.

Nuclear disarmament has always occupied the first priority in the field of disarmament. The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament indicates explicitly that

"Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. It is essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of war involving nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal in this context is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons" (resolution S-10/2, para. 47).

The Programme of Action of the Final Document devoted 25 paragraphs, paragraphs 47 to 71, to nuclear disarmament, which shows the indisputable importance given to that subject.

In the light of the discussion here in this Committee, we see all the more clearly the urgency of the need for mankind to make joint efforts to halt the nuclear arms race, especially when the United States, a major nuclear-weapon State, has adopted as its formal policy the "new nuclear strategy", which envisages a limited nuclear war, and when China, another nuclear-weapon State, speaks of "the inevitability of the third world war".

In his statement opening the general debate, Ambassador Garcia Robles, with his usual wisdom and lucidity, presented most clearly the concern of the international community in the face of the danger of a nuclear war and its consequences. His views have been shared by a good number of delegations speaking after him during the last two weeks.

Nuclear disarmament, first and foremost, concerns the nuclear-weapon States. Paragraphs 48 and 58 of the Final Document stress the special responsibility of all the nuclear-weapon States. But certain nuclear-weapon States have tried to shirk their responsibility and have challenged the priority given to nuclear disarmament. On 22 October, the Chinese representative argued in this Committee to the effect that nuclear disarmament was no more important than

(Mr. Cu Dinh Ba, Viet Nam)

While we agree that it would be better if there were no arms race of any kind, nuclear or conventional, we certainly cannot accept the Chinese notion of equating nuclear weapons with conventional weapons. In the same way, we cannot but protest against the Chinese atmospheric tests, since such tests endanger life on earth. We reject the Chinese policy of giving itself the green light for the nuclear arms race and its doctrine of bringing mankind closer to nuclear disaster.

This year the Committee on Disarmament held 93 meetings, formal and informal, with the participation of all the nuclear-weapon States, but the result is far from satisfactory. Obviously, the lack of political will on the part of certain nuclear-weapon States - the imperialistic and hegemonistic Powers - has prevented the Committee on Disarmament from achieving its desired goals. Such a negative attitude has been the main obstacle in the negotiations on nuclear disarmament as well as on other aspects of disarmament.

Obstruction by the same forces has also been found in the preparation for the Conference on the Indian Ocean. The United States has turned Diego Garcia into a huge military base and brought in fresh troops and naval units, threatening the security and sovereignty of the countries of the region. Moreover, it has stood in the way of convening the Conference in 1981.

My delegation believes that all consideration of the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean must be based on the interests and desires of the countries in the region. For this reason, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam supports the convening of the Conference on the Indian Ocean in Colombo in 1981. My Government also supports the initiative of the President of Madagascar, Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, on the convening of a summit conference on the Indian Ocean and has expressed its readiness to participate in such a conference.

(Mr. Cu Dinh Ba, Viet Nam)

Yesterday, in New Delhi, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius, once again reiterated his Government's stand and demanded that the United States and the United Kingdom begin talks with Mauritius on returning Diego Garcia to his country. My Government supports the position of the Government of Mauritius.

Recently, in Geneva, the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects concluded a Convention and three Protocols. My delegation welcomes that result.

As early as the 1960s Viet Nam appealed to the world to condemn and prohibit the use of these inhumane weapons. For more than a decade the aggressor troops used the Vietnamese people as guinea-pigs in the improvement of their murderous weapons. Vietnamese men, women and children alike still bear the wounds caused by napalm, mines and fragmentation weapons during the last war.

My Government is particularly concerned about the protection of the civilian population. The United States in the past and China recently, in their wars of aggression in Viet Nam, concentrated their attacks against civilian targets, killing people indiscriminately and completely destroying cities and towns.

This was the reason why Viet Nam participated in the early days of the discussions in 1973 on the prohibition of those inhumane weapons.

The delegation of Viet Nam also attaches great importance to the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. During the Viet Nam war the United States dumped 100,000 tons of toxic chemicals in South Viet Nam - "six pounds per head of population including men, women and children", according to United States Senator Gaylord A. Nelson. Those chemicals caused immediate and long-term damage to human beings and to the environment in Viet Nam.

(Mr. Cu Dinh Ba, Viet Nam)

According to the American professor Arthur H. Westing 320 pounds of dioxin accumulated in the chemicals was sprayed in Viet Nam, and he said that if only three ounces of dioxin found its way into the drinking water of New York City the lives of all its 9 million people would be in danger. It is also necessary to recall the fact that in 1976 the whole world was alarmed when 3 lbs of dioxin accidentally leaked out in Seveso, Italy.

The damage caused by the United States toxic chemicals is not restricted to the Vietnamese alone. American and Australian soldiers returned home and carried with them the potential effects of dioxin on themselves and their children. Thus, the consequences of the use of toxic chemicals during the Viet Nam war have in fact threatened many lives in many places. Emergency measures are needed to prevent the situation from worsening, and those who caused it must bear the full responsibility.

For its part, Viet Nam is trying its utmost to overcome the consequences caused by United States toxic chemicals and it has recently adhered to all three related international documents, namely, the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the biological weapons Convention and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques. Therefore the attitude of my Government towards chemical weapons is perfectly clear. We are against the production as well as the use of such inhumane weapons.

Recently, the United States, through its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) "secret army" in Laos and China and through its hangmen, the Pol Pot clique, spread rumours that certain chemical weapons had been used in Laos and Kampuchea. As in the case of Afghanistan, this is a manoeuvre politically concocted with a view to vilifying the Governments which China and the United States failed to depose by subversion. The Governments concerned have rejected those ill-intentioned rumours, and the International Committee of the Red Cross for its part has disproved the "Alleged use of poison gas in Kampuchea" (A/35/226).

(Mr. Cu Dinh Ba, Viet Nam)

This is but an attempt by the United States to whitewash its use of toxic chemicals against the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea with its adverse affects on its own troops and those of its allies. It is also a design by China to cover up its criminal act of poisoning water sources before withdrawing in its war of aggression against Viet Nam in February 1979.

Obviously, neither the United States nor China can escape world-wide condemnation.

This year, in all negotiating and deliberative bodies on disarmament -- the Committee on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and so on -- although many discussions and negotiations were conducted, no encouraging result was achieved. This is largely due to the intransigence of a minority of countries -- the imperialist and hegemonistic Powers -- which refuse to negotiate in good faith and seek every means and every pretext to obstruct the negotiations.

My delegation hopes that the deliberations here in our Committee and the predominant and powerful desire of humanity for disarmament will give negotiations a good start next year and that we can begin the Second Disarmament Decade in a healthier atmosphere.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I should like first to extend my congratulations to the Chairman, the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur, and to say how happy we are that a person of such stature is presiding over our deliberations during this time of crisis.

For indeed, we are in a time of crisis in the world at large, a crisis that seems to have gone from a sharp decline to almost unprecedented levels of insecurity and to near anarchy internationally. It seems as though the Charter has been forgotten and that we have gone far back to a time when the use of force was a legitimate exercise of sovereignty, as though the United Nations were hardly in existence as a functioning Organization. Furthermore, it is as though the international community were apathetically witnessing ferocious wars of attrition, with heavy loss of life and of valuable and direly needed resources.

However, the international community and world opinion are not apathetic; they are gravely concerned and alarmed at this situation. The reality is and remains that the United Nations through its Security Council has proved unable to intervene effectively because the system of international security and legal order required and mandated by the Charter has not been complied with all along. This is a matter to which prompt attention must be given by this General Assembly at this critical time of challenge, very grave challenge, to the United Nations and to its functioning. This period is a landmark in the history of the United Nations. For 35 years this Organization has been lamely functioning because the decisions of the Security Council have been shorn of their validity and effect through not being implemented and through the Council's being deprived of any possibility of enforcing its resolutions. Thus, we have resolutions of the Security Council that are hardly worth the paper on which they are written, so far as implementation is concerned. And this is a very grave matter.

The drafters of the Charter never intended this Organization to be ineffective. They would not have created a United Nations if the resolutions of the Security Council were not to be implemented to give security and order to

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

the world. Yet, in spite of all this, the United Nations has worked wonders and has proved indispensable to our world. Not a day could pass without the United Nations, because today's world is interdependent, because we have reached such a stage in technological progress where an Organization like the United Nations is indispensable - and it is indispensable. But it has to be effective. The time has come when its effectiveness is to be put to the test. I shall revert to that subject later.

We are now facing a most grave menace from a seemingly impending nuclear war and the holocaust that would result would threaten the very survival of mankind. The functioning of the United Nations therefore becomes more important and more urgent, for what will save this world when so many forces are being concentrated on continuing the arms race? And here we must mention that all the efforts at disarmament are frustrated by the arms race, to the point that the problem that is really before the United Nations is not one of disarmament, but one of checking and halting the arms race. Obviously, there cannot be disarmament proper, armaments cannot be shed, while at the same time we are producing more and more effective armaments and more destructive weapons. How can we talk of disarming in a vacuum and yet continue to produce more weapons? Let us forget any question of disarmament proper until we have checked the arms race, and let us centre on the important matter, which is the curbing of the arms race. By curbing the arms race, we can reduce the danger of a nuclear war.

For the danger of war is created by the antagonism of the two sides in the arms race, and the arms race is the result of the so-called balance of power. There is no balance at all; any balance is only hypothetical. At no point during all these years has it been admitted by both sides that a balance exists. The other side is always stronger and we therefore have to arm. Thus, the balance of power is but a cover for the bid for superiority and domination in armaments resulting in the arms race.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

That this is so has been shown in the discussions in this Committee. From one side, we have heard that we have now reached a balance and that therefore we should not proceed further with the arms race, but rather turn towards preserving détente so that we can move towards disarmament rather than more armaments. But then we hear from the other side, "No, not at all; there is no balance, there is too much superiority on the other side." This is one instance, but it repeats itself alternatively. We must, therefore, get rid of the balance-of-power concept. After all, the balance-of-power concept is but a negative notion. It implies such mistrust, hatred and actual military confrontation that any superiority on the one side or the other will immediately cause a war. The balance of power is but a thin thread of security and that is what engenders, sustains and perpetuates the arms race. Get rid of the balance of power and you get rid of the arms race, because there would be no longer any excuse for it. Keep the arms race and there is no hope either for disarmament or for any other progress towards international peace and security. How do we get rid of the arms race? I shall come to that in a few moments, after I have referred to the immediate danger of nuclear war.

We have heard many important statements in this respect. I wish to praise the excellent statement by the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, who brought out very impressive quotations showing the dangers and the unthinkable catastrophe of a nuclear war. I need not dwell on that, for we have heard it from other speakers. I wish to go beyond that and speak of the remedies, for we all know the dangers of a nuclear war. But what are the possibilities of avoiding it?

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Now, Ambassador Robles has listed a number of options, objectives or measures. They are: first, ratification and implementation of the SALT II agreement; secondly, the beginning of negotiations on the conclusion of SALT III; thirdly, the conclusion of a nuclear-test-ban treaty; fourthly, the immediate proclamation of a moratorium on all nuclear tests; fifthly, the establishment of an ad hoc working group within the Committee on Disarmament entrusted with multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Now we agree with all those suggestions. Surely we want the ratification and implementation of SALT II, although we know that SALT II does not either curb or affect the arms race. The arms race goes on and that is the real problem. We agree with the beginning of negotiations on the conclusion of SALT III, but how do we know if the political will of either or both sides will allow any effective progress there? So the situation is very precarious. The conclusion of a nuclear-test-ban treaty -- surely it is now 10 years or more since it was shown that there was no technical difficulty in obtaining a comprehensive test-ban treaty and it has been repeatedly stated that it is only the lack of political will that prevents its conclusion. But if it is allowed to be the prerogative of every Member State to show political will or not -- and they have the option of accepting or unreasonably rejecting a proposal and thus obstructing progress towards peace -- then we are nowhere. The fifth proposal for establishment of an ad hoc working group within the Committee on Disarmament entrusted with multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament is an excellent proposal as well. We support all these objectives, but we think that we should go further. We have to go further in order to curb the arms race. For none of the proposals stops the arms race, and if the arms race continues there cannot be hope for any effective measure to relieve the situation.

We now come to the question of the arms race and I believe that we have a problem here that can be solved, with a modicum of rationality and appropriate action. The arms race is the result of a grave violation of the Charter soon after the establishment of the United Nations. The Charter provides for a system of international security and legal order through the effective implementation of Security Council decisions. We have therefore to establish the basic ingredients of this system of international security and order which is mandatory under the Charter.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

Therefore it is not a question of arbitrary political will - that some States may agree and others may not; they have to agree to the system of international security and order under the Charter because it is a mandatory requirement of the Charter and every Member State is committed to it by being a signatory of the Charter. It is an obligation of every Member State to comply with Article 43 of the Charter, an obligation that it cannot escape from by saying that its political will is opposed to it. If its political will is opposed to it then it should not be a Member of the United Nations. One cannot be a Member of the United Nations and violate the Charter in its very heart and function. That would be truncating the United Nations by depriving the Security Council of its validity and effectiveness through its resolutions. How can one conceive of a Security Council resolution that is disobeyed, neglected and set aside unimplemented, even though it is a unanimous one? This is a matter that has arisen in recent years, when we have had cases, to which I need not refer, where unanimous resolutions of the General Assembly, without any abstentions, fully and unanimously endorsed by the Security Council, have remained unimplemented, without any regard for law and order or for the United Nations.

Therefore if we want to have disarmament and if we want to curb the arms race we must establish this system of international security that is provided for in the Charter. Then it will not be necessary to have an arms race; the arms race was introduced soon after the establishment of the United Nations because nations, in the absence of international security under the Charter, turned for their security to the outmoded concept of the balance of power. However, the balance of power that prevailed in the 18th century was one between five or six big Powers balancing their power respectively; it was not today's balance of weapons in a polarized world, because if five or six Powers are balancing their power it does not mean that they have to proceed to an arms race, but if the world is polarized and there is dependence on the weapons of one side or the other, an arms race ensues and engenders the dangerous situation that we are facing today. It is generally admitted that we have to halt the arms race. But this has proved impossible so long as

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

the balance of power concept provides the inevitable excuse for the arms race which in its escalation has now reached the figure of \$500 billion a year. The balance of power as the supposed means of security has eventually to be replaced by international security under the Charter. The process would be gradual and there would be no interference with any balance of power arrangements, which can continue. But we start by establishing the basic ingredient of the system of international security and order provided for by the Charter. Let that be established parallel to the balance-of-power concept and eventually the lawful system of the Charter will prevail and the balance of power will recede naturally and with it the arms race. That is the proper way to deal with that problem. There must in any case be the Charter system of international security, the lack of which has been the cause of the deviation from co-operation and peace to mistrust, antagonism and the scourge of the arms race. In a nuclear age it brings us rapidly to the brink of catastrophe. This question could also be brought to the Committee on Disarmament for action as international security is directly linked with disarmament. The dependence upon disarmament in international security was brought up in the General Assembly in 1977 and a unanimously adopted resolution called for a preliminary study of the relationship between international security and disarmament. The special session on disarmament reaffirmed the need for a study by deciding that a group of experts should be set up for that purpose. Its report should be of significance for the problem of disarmament.

Parallel to international collective security through the United Nations system, there should be the peaceful settlement of disputes, as provided in Article 2, paragraph 3, of the Charter. A proviso here, of course, is that the way to the free use of force is barred effectively by the establishment of international security, as already explained, for in a world dominated by the use of force the stronger side will not be willing to settle other than on its own terms. In this connexion, a wider use of the International Court of Justice should be considered.

I reserve my right to speak again during the general debate.

The CHAIRMAN: Two of the representatives who were on the list for today have withdrawn. I say again that we would appreciate it if the original list of speakers could be adhered to because it is difficult, given the length of the list of speakers for the remaining meetings of the general debate to preserve the order of speakers if at this stage speakers withdraw.

I now call on the representative of Democratic Kampuchea, who has asked to speak in the exercise of his right of reply.

Mr. KOR BUN HENG (Democratic Kampuchea) (interpretation from French): My delegation certainly did not wish to re-open the debate on the situation in Kampuchea, my country, because the General Assembly discussed this last year and again very recently and adopted resolutions 34/22 and 35/6 by an overwhelming majority. However, the stupid lies and slanderous accusations of the representatives of the Vietnamese regional expansionists compel me to exercise my right of reply.

(Mr. Kor Bun Heng, Democratic Kampuchea)

We have a saying in Kampuchea that it is not possible to hide the corpse of an elephant in a wicker basket. The calumnies and lies of the Vietnamese regional expansionists cannot hide their aggression, their occupation of Kampuchea and their crime of genocide against the people of Kampuchea - aggression and occupation condemned both by the General Assembly in the resolutions which I have already mentioned and by all the peoples of the world. It is the 250,000 Vietnamese troops that are putting my country to the sword and massacring the people of Kampuchea using three means: conventional weapons of all kinds, the weapon of famine, and chemical and toxic-gas weapons.

My delegation already informed the Committee yesterday that these chemical substances were being used by the Vietnamese army of occupation, and my Government has informed all States Members of our Organization about these crimes. A detailed albeit incomplete list has been circulated as an official United Nations document regarding the spreading of chemical products, the firing of poison gas shells and the poisoning of water points or rivers in Kampuchea by the Vietnamese regional expansionists. To date, after almost two years of aggression against and occupation of Kampuchea, the Vietnamese expansionists have massacred almost three million Kampucheans by those three methods.

General Assembly resolutions 34/22 and 35/6 have provided the ways and means of solving the problem of Kampuchea in such a way as to re-establish peace, stability and security in South-East Asia. The only honourable way out for the Hanoi authorities is to abide by and implement those resolutions.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.