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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 5TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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- General debate

Statements were made by:

Mr. Troyanovsky (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)  
Mr. Klestil (Austria)  
Mr. Terefe (Ethiopia)  
Mr. Fein (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 34 TO 40, 42, 44 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

The CHAIRMAN: Before we begin our work this morning I should like to remind members that the list of speakers in the general debate on all disarmament items will be closed on Tuesday, 21 October, at 6 p.m. Although a number of representatives have already inscribed their names there are so far no speakers for the afternoon of Monday, 20 October, and only one for the afternoon of Tuesday, 21 October. If the situation remains as it is, we shall be obliged to cancel the afternoon meeting on both those days.

Therefore, once again I urge delegations to add their names to the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all I should like to congratulate you, sir, on your election to the important post of Chairman of the First Committee and express my conviction that the work of our Committee will be fruitful and will be consummated by the adoption of important and useful decisions which will promote a limitation of the arms race and the strengthening of international security.

Permit me to congratulate also the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of our Committee on their election to the important posts they occupy and to wish them success in their work.

I should also like to note that our discussion began at a high level with the contribution of the representative of Mexico, whose statement made a great impression on many participants in the work of the First Committee.

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

States and peoples of the world live today in the conditions of an aggravated international situation where the policy of détente is being put to a severe test and where the danger of war is mounting. In these circumstances it is essential to multiply efforts to arrest such a course of developments. Guided by this, the Soviet Union has proposed the inclusion in the agenda of the current United Nations General Assembly of an important and urgent item entitled "Certain Urgent Measures for Reducing the Danger of War" and has submitted a relevant draft resolution (Document A/C.1/35/L.1)

Within the framework of the initiative advanced by the Soviet Union, it has been proposed that a number of priority practical measures be taken. This is a minimum of what should be done without delay in order to slow down the arms race somewhat, prevent the world sliding to a new cold war and to preclude the danger of a nuclear conflict. The Soviet Union is acting on the assumption that through joint efforts of States and active moves by peace-loving forces, it is possible to reduce tension in international relations, to preserve and to give a new impetus to the process of international détente and strengthen universal peace.

The timeliness of the Soviet Union's new initiatives is obvious to any unbiased person. In the current circumstances, which are characterized by the aggravation of the international situation brought about by imperialist forces, the struggle against the danger of war becomes particularly important. Having embarked upon the course towards hegemony in world affairs and having worked out to this end a sort of "anti-détente doctrine", the United States, with the support of some other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries and the present leaders in Peking, is deliberately whipping up tension in various parts of the world, working to expand existing military blocs and create new ones, accelerating the build-up of its armies, stockpiling nuclear and conventional armaments on an ever increasing scale, adopting new military programmes and stepping up military preparations.

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

In this connexion it is to be recalled that not so long ago, in the summer of 1979, during the meeting in Vienna between the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Erezhnev, and the United States President, Mr. Carter, the American side also recognized the need to preserve the existing approximate parity of military power between East and West. Leaders of other NATO countries recognized this as well. But leaders of this military bloc, primarily the United States, are stepping up their attempts to upset the approximate strategic balance between the East and the West to their advantage and to the detriment of the USSR and other socialist countries.

A sort of nostalgia about the past and, to put it bluntly, about the irrecoverable superiority of the United States in military power has of late been actively cultivated in the West. The former United States Secretary of State Mr. Cyrus Vance also noted this dangerous phenomenon in a speech he made at Harvard University on 5 June 1980. This nostalgia, he cautioned, "may lead to an error, if not to a disaster".

In the field of disarmament such a course has resulted in the United States, its NATO associates and the Chinese hegemonists working to slow down artificially or even to disrupt efforts and concrete negotiations on limiting the arms race; Consequently, what we are facing today is a situation where the momentum of the arms race by far exceeds the productiveness of talks designed to put an end to it.

Similarly, the ill-fated Presidential Directive 59 adopted by Washington which elevates the "new nuclear strategy" to the rank of official policy, and with whose help certain quarters would wish peoples to get accustomed to the idea that it is permissible and possible not only to threaten with nuclear weapons but also to use them, cannot fail to give rise to serious concern throughout the world.

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

Also typical are attempts to justify this militaristic course by asserting that the Soviet Union is building up its military potential on a scale that goes beyond its defence requirements. These attempts constitute a deliberate deception of peoples. The Soviet Union is not doing anything that goes beyond its own defence requirements and those of its allies and friends. Firmly committed to the principle of equal security, it believes that approximate equality and parity are sufficient to satisfy these requirements. The socialist countries have not, do not and will not espouse any strategic doctrine other than the defensive one, and they have not, do not and will not intend to acquire a first nuclear strike capability. These are irrefutable facts and the Soviet Union has made repeated statements on that score.

Take, for instance, Europe. In the last decade the number of medium-range nuclear-weapon delivery system in the European part of the USSR has not been increased by a single missile or aircraft. On the contrary, the number of launchers of medium-range missiles and their nuclear yields has even been somewhat reduced. For several years now the numerical strength of Soviet troops in Central Europe has not increased. What is more, in 1979-1980 the Soviet Union unilaterally withdrew from the territory of the German Democratic Republic 20,000 troops, 1,000 tanks and other material. Yet we have seen no concrete steps on the part of the West in response to those peaceful actions by the USSR.

In this connexion it should be noted that sometimes assertions are made, in particular in this Organization, about the equal responsibility of the great Powers for the arms race and the absence of adequate progress in the field of disarmament. It would be appropriate, however, to ask the proponents of that allegedly objective point of view the following questions:

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

Who froze the process of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) ratification, thus endangering its entry into force? Who took a decision in May 1978 on an annual automatic increase in military expenditures? Who took a decision in December 1979 to deploy in Western Europe qualitatively new medium-range nuclear missile systems, thus seriously endangering the approximate military-strategic balance and stability in Europe and throughout the world? Who unilaterally suspended talks on limiting and subsequently reducing military activities in the Indian Ocean? Who unilaterally suspended talks on limiting international arms trade and supplies? Who refuses to engage in serious talks on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles up to and including their total destruction? Who is creating artificial obstacles in the talks on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests? Who for several years now has been sabotaging agreement on reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe?

This far from exhaustive list of questions should make it totally clear that all the talk about so-called equal responsibility not only distorts the actual state of affairs but also serves as a convenient cover for the continuation of the militaristic policies so dangerous for the peoples of the world and for world peace.

In the present complex international situation, the Soviet Union believes it to be necessary to multiply our efforts to preserve and strengthen détente and prevent war. It is precisely for this purpose that the Soviet Union has proposed the adoption of a number of urgent steps to be taken to reduce the danger of war. These steps should include the limiting of both the nuclear and conventional arms races and improving the international climate as a whole.

What specific measures are we proposing? First, an important step would be for States members of military alliances to renounce the expansion of existing military-political groupings through the admission of new members, and for countries which are not members of such groupings to renounce the idea of joining them. It is our profound conviction that all States without exception should avoid any action liable to lead to the establishment of new military alliances or to the assigning of military functions to regional organizations which have no such functions at present.

A policy of blocs is inherently alien to the Soviet Union and other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. Those States have repeatedly declared their readiness to dissolve their alliance if at the same time the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bloc were also to be dissolved. They have proposed as a first step the dismantling of the military organizations of the two groupings beginning with a mutual reduction of their military activities. Naturally this position of the socialist countries remain fully valid today. We believe that it is the overcoming of the division of the world into military-political groupings, a reduction of confrontation between them and the strengthening of confidence in relations among all States, rather than the expansion of military alliances and the assigning of military functions to regional organizations, that is in the vital interest of all peoples and in the interests of maintaining world peace.

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

The non-expansion of military alliances and the renunciation of the establishment of new military groupings is of no small importance for the solution of the entire range of disarmament problems. It is clear that the trend towards the expansion of military blocs would undermine the existing approximate military-strategic balance in the world and would thus erect one more barrier to an early solution of the pressing problems of disarmament. It is clear that expanding of military blocs or assigning military functions to regional organizations which have no such functions at present would expand the whole geography of the arms race by actively involving in that race new countries, and even entire regions, would result in the possible deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of those countries where there are no such weapons at present and would lead to greater military expenditures and an increasing flow of arms throughout the world.

On the other hand, the adoption of the Soviet proposal would reduce the possibilities for expanding the arms race and would promote progress in the field of disarmament.

I should like to note yet another important aspect of the Soviet initiative. The proposal of the USSR that agreement be reached on the non-expansion of military groupings and the renunciation of the establishment of new ones is a further confirmation of the Soviet Union's consistent policy of supporting the noble anti-imperialist objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement, since the process of the proliferation of military blocs and the expansion of the geography of those blocs would certainly affect this Movement both directly and indirectly.

Secondly, the Soviet Union proposes that all States - and primarily the permanent members of the Security Council and countries which have military agreements with them - should, with effect from a certain date, say 1 January 1981, not increase their armed forces and conventional arms, as a first step towards subsequently reducing them.

It is our firm belief that such an action would facilitate progress in nuclear disarmament as well. In this connexion we believe it to be important to stress once again that, as was stated in the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, progress in limiting and subsequently reducing nuclear weapons would be facilitated both

by parallel political or international legal measures and by progress in the limitation and reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments of nuclear-weapons States and other States in the regions concerned. Of considerable importance too is the fact that the renunciation by States of building up their armed forces and conventional weapons would create more favourable conditions for the solution of problems of economic and social development, and other global problems of the day which face mankind.

Thirdly, the Soviet Union believes that an early conclusion of an appropriate convention, with the participation of all States, nuclear and non-nuclear, would best serve to strengthen security guarantees for non-nuclear States. At the same time, guided by the desire for an early settlement of this problem, the Soviet Union is also prepared to consider other possible solutions provided that the other nuclear Powers adopt a similar approach.

The Soviet Union has appealed to the other nuclear Powers to make identical solemn declarations concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States which have no such weapons on their territories, and it believes it useful for the General Assembly to support that appeal. If they serve that objective, such declarations could be strengthened by an authoritative decision of the United Nations Security Council. As to the content of the identical statements, in this area too the Soviet Union is prepared to adopt a flexible and constructive approach. We would be ready to consider possible compromise alternatives which would take into account the different approaches of nuclear Powers to this question and which would be designed to bring about a mutually acceptable formula.

Fourthly, it is our belief that if our partners in the talks on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests - the United States and Great Britain - evince the necessary readiness, it would be realistic to expect a successful completion of the elaboration of a relevant treaty within a short time. To facilitate this, the Soviet Union proposes that all nuclear-weapon States renounce the carrying out of nuclear explosions for a certain period of time and make appropriate declarations to this effect. We propose that agreement be reached on a one-year moratorium on all nuclear explosions with effect from a date to be agreed upon.

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

It is imperative to reach from the very outset mutual understanding concerning the time frame for the proposed moratorium. The absence of such a framework would, in our view, enable certain States to continue delaying indefinitely solution of the problem of a complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapons tests. We should also like to stress that the proposed moratorium should be extended to embrace all nuclear-weapon States. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of a situation in which some nuclear Powers would completely renounce for a specific period of time the carrying out of nuclear explosions while others would continue testing and improving their nuclear weapons, being bound by no obligations whatsoever. We feel that such a situation would run counter to the fundamental principle of equality and undiminished security of all sides.

Naturally, the declaration of a one-year moratorium on any nuclear explosions would be of great importance in itself, in terms of lessening tension in the world. Moreover, such a step would unquestionably have a positive effect on international efforts to bring about a complete and general nuclear-weapons test ban.

In our view, those are some of the measures which, if implemented urgently, would have a restraining influence on the growing danger of war and would contribute to an easing of tension in inter-State relations and take the edge off some acute problems in international relations.

In advancing these proposals the Soviet Union has been guided by the mandate that the United Nations gave to all States of the world in the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly special session devoted to disarmament. The essence of that mandate is that disarmament and the strengthening of international security are inseparably linked and mutually complementary -- and this, incidentally, has found its expression in the new functions assigned to the First Committee of the General Assembly.

The Soviet Union thought it necessary to submit these questions for discussion by the world's broadest forum, the United Nations General Assembly, for the danger of war threatens not only a particular country or group of countries, but all countries and continents. This danger is growing from year to year. It cannot be overlooked, either, that the implementation of these proposals could contribute to reducing the burden of military expenditures,

(Mr. Troyanovsky, USSR)

strengthening the nuclear-weapons non-proliferation régime and creating favourable conditions for progress in other avenues of limitation of the arms race, as well.

In the present-day complex international situation the Soviet Union continues to believe that the necessary possibilities exist to prevent the slide towards a new cold war, ensure the normal peaceful coexistence of States with different social systems and avert the threat of a nuclear conflict. This is precisely the objective pursued by the new Soviet initiative in the United Nations.

It is imperative to reverse, while there is still time, the trend towards exacerbating international tension, towards whipping up the arms race and towards a greater military threat. To achieve this, all States should pursue a realistic policy and resume constructive co-operation in solving acute international problems - above all, those concerning the limitation and reduction of armaments. "Such a policy" - as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Leonid Brezhnev, recently emphasized - "will always meet with a positive response from the Soviet Union."

We express the hope that the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union will be supported by United Nations Member States and by the General Assembly. In supporting it the General Assembly will be making an important and useful contribution to reducing the danger of war and to strengthening peace and the security of peoples.

Mr. KLESTIL (Austria): Over the past 35 years our Organization has witnessed a constant increase in the number of conferences and meetings, a proliferation of declarations, resolutions and proclamations on the subject of disarmament. But in spite of the investment of thousands of hours and of megatons of paper, these years have not seen any real progress towards disarmament.

While there have been achievements in certain limited areas resulting from long and painstaking negotiations, these positive steps have been more than offset by the unremitting and ever-accelerating pace of the arms race as a whole.

Real and imaginary conflicts of interests between States leading to competition and mistrust, the action-reaction pattern of armament measures by rivalling nations, internal military, economic and bureaucratic special interests and, last but not least, the rapid technological innovations of the armaments industry - all these factors are contributing to the present situation of unprecedented waste of human and natural resources and unprecedented risk to the survival of mankind.

Even against this sombre background the year 1980 might very well stand out as a particularly dark period; as the beginning of a new phase of still accelerated military competition and acute international tension. Several times in the past year we have witnessed Governments initiating major weapons programmes and heard them announce intended increases in their defence spending. The discussion of international security matters has taken on a new aggressive and belligerent tone.

The underlying causes for this further setback to the prospects of disarmament and international security are well known to all of us. They demonstrate the intimate link between détente and disarmament. Any violation of the international code of conduct or any disregard of the vital interests of other States upsets détente and implies the disruption of the fragile ties of trust and confidence. In the absence of this essential minimum of trust every State reverts to enhancing its security by military means. And this individual and competitive search for security by every single State necessarily reduces the security of all.

While the chances of disarmament are intertwined with the existence and strengthening of détente, it holds equally true that the unbearable threat posed by the arms race should in itself be the most convincing argument for détente.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

I should like to highlight briefly some aspects of the present situation that are of particular concern to the Austrian Government.

The war machines of the super-Powers seem to have reached such a magnitude and complexity that, given the enormous time pressure under which they must operate, they are increasingly difficult to control. The news about repeated nuclear alerts caused by technical malfunctions in the warning systems have increased the likelihood of the horrendous possibility of the suicide of our civilization triggered by the mistake of a computer.

Because of their vast destructive power and the certainty of a retaliatory strike, nuclear weapons have in the past often been regarded as non-usable weapons. The technological innovations of the past years, especially the increased precision of nuclear missiles, have largely abolished this special quality of nuclear weapons and destabilized the "balance of terror". The evaluation of scenarios of "limited" nuclear war by the strategic theorists and practitioners of both super-Powers is clear evidence of this dangerous development.

As it has been repeatedly pointed out, military spending in 1980 has reached \$500 billion, about 20 times the amount of official development assistance. Approximately \$1 million is spent on armaments every minute and, at the same time, every minute 28 persons, including nine children, die of hunger.

The patent absurdity of this situation and the growing awareness that, if unabated, it will lead to catastrophe should make us all realize the enormity of our responsibilities. Only courageous and far-sighted decisions supported by the common will of the international community to survive will make it possible to turn the tide. An arms race is no competition which can be "won"; there would only be losers. At best, the same level of insecurity will be maintained at much higher cost. The smaller countries, which neither wish nor are in a position to follow the arms build-up of the major Powers, are those whose security is most seriously affected under such circumstances.

As a small neutral country with a modest level of armaments and situated between the two major military alliances in the most highly armed region of the world, Austria obviously has a high stake in the eventual success of disarmament.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

We shall therefore do our utmost to contribute positively to the accomplishment of this great task. We are of course aware that, as the major responsibility for the present situation lies with the major Powers, our contribution can only be a limited one. Moreover, we have already made the most important contribution a State can make unilaterally; we have limited our military potential to a level which cannot be and is not interpreted by anyone as an aggressive threat. We should be glad if the same could be said of all the other States in Europe and the world. Apart from that, we consider it our duty to present our views as clearly and as unambiguously as possible.

When we met here a year ago, many of us referred to the signing of SALT II as one of the brighter aspects of the international situation. In the meantime the prospects of this treaty and, with it, the prospects of arms control have considerably darkened. As of now SALT II remains unratified and, in view of its limited duration, any prolonged further delay will severely compromise its usefulness.

The Austrian Government has always considered SALT II an important achievement significant not so much as a disarmament measure but as an effort by the super-Powers co-operatively to regulate and limit the build-up of their strategic arsenals. As it would make the acquisition policy of the two adversaries more predictable in some areas, it could help to reduce the anticipatory measures and over-reactions that have so often fueled the arms race in the past. SALT II constitutes one step in the right direction towards a more stable military balance and a more secure world. We fear that if this step is retracted, this direction might be abandoned and a runaway arms race might follow. Hence Austria considers it of great importance that, in spite of all the difficulties, SALT II should enter into force in the near future. In the meantime we urge the two parties to desist from any action that would contravene the letter and the spirit of the treaty.

Furthermore, the Austrian Government hopes that negotiations will soon be taken up with a view to achieving more comprehensive agreements providing for significant cuts in the strategic arsenals and for limitations on the development of new weapon systems. We believe that the Committee on Disarmament, as a multilateral negotiating body encompassing all nuclear-weapon States, ought to play a more concrete role in the elaboration of such agreements.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

The intensification of the arms race in the field of medium and intermediate range and tactical nuclear weapons has become a matter of great concern to my country. Those are the types of weapons most likely to be employed in the event of a military confrontation in Europe. And we all know that, once the nuclear threshold is crossed, the chances of avoiding an escalation to all-out nuclear war are very small indeed. Austria therefore welcomes the decision by the United States and the Soviet Union to begin preliminary talks on the subject of intermediate range nuclear weapons and hopes that the great urgency of the matter will impel them to overcome soon the admittedly difficult problems of defining and delimiting the negotiating subject. We urge all Powers concerned to contribute to an international climate conducive to the success of these negotiations by exercising utmost restraint in their activities in this field.

The danger of a further proliferation of nuclear weapons has for many years been a central item on the international agenda. During this time the focus of attention has shifted from the technical feasibility of acquiring nuclear weapons to the political incentives and disincentives for doing so. As more and more States are able to produce weapon-grade fissionable material, the development and strengthening of the international non-proliferation régime has achieved primary importance.

The Austrian Government therefore deeply regrets that the Second Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was unable to agree on a substantive final document. Austria nevertheless remains firmly committed to this Treaty and continues to consider it a major barrier against an even more dangerous world where nuclear weapons have proliferated. Furthermore, the high degree of consensus reached in Committee II of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference should not be overlooked. In our view, the over-all record of the first 10 years of operation of the Treaty has been a positive one.

The fact that 114 States have until now acceded to the Treaty is evidence of the overwhelming commitment of the international community to avoid the further spread of nuclear weapons. It is true, however, that the continued absence of two nuclear Powers and several threshold States constitutes the weakest point of the system. Since only a universally accepted non-proliferation régime will be truly credible and stable, intensive efforts to convince these States of the merits of the

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

Treaty will have to be undertaken. It has to be acknowledged, however, that one of the two nuclear-weapon States non-party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty has publicly committed itself to the principles of non-proliferation laid down in the Treaty.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

There is general agreement that the obligations of articles I and II of the Treaty concerning the non-acquisition and the non-transfer of nuclear weapons respectively have been fulfilled by all Member States. It is equally accepted that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard system provided for in article III has worked well in the past and should be further developed and extended in the future. Given the necessary divergencies of interest between nuclear-supplier countries and recipient States, it is not surprising that the implementation of article IV concerning co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is sometimes the subject of differences of opinion. My Government has therefore noted with satisfaction that the Second Review Conference has been able to achieve a considerable measure of agreement in this area. We hope that discussion will continue on the basis of the draft documents prepared by committee II of the conference.

Unfortunately, there remains one area covered by the Treaty in which implementation has been extremely disappointing. I refer to article VI, concerning nuclear disarmament. Opponents of the Non-Proliferation Treaty frequently denounce its inequitable and discriminatory nature. And clearly, as the Treaty's object is to limit the spread of nuclear weapons, the responsibilities and obligations of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear States are different. In acceding to the Treaty, the non-nuclear-weapon States have accepted these discriminatory elements as the lesser evil compared to the dangers of a world of proliferation. Article VI, however, attests to the fact that they were not ready to accept the unlimited perpetuation of this inequitable situation. Vertical and horizontal proliferation are ultimately two closely interrelated aspects of the same problem. If progress continues to elude us on the one, the fragile achievements with regard to the other will be jeopardized.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

It is this linkage between disarmament and non-proliferation that makes the long-overdue conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty a matter of such importance and urgency. A comprehensive test ban would not only prevent nuclear tests by non-nuclear-weapon States. Since the development of new warheads without testing would be very difficult, it would also impose certain limitations on the nuclear arms race itself. Because of its value in controlling both vertical and horizontal proliferation, the comprehensive test ban has to be considered an essential step in our efforts to bring about a safer world.

In view of its implications for the nuclear arsenals, the progress on this issue also serves as a yardstick of the credibility of the commitment of the nuclear-weapon Powers to live up to their obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. To this day, the record has been very disappointing. Seventeen years have now passed since the partial test-ban Treaty was concluded in 1963. The trilateral negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty are in their fourth year. While progress could be achieved in some areas, as was recently evidenced in the Tripartite Report to the Committee on Disarmament of this summer, other important problems remain unsolved. On the basis of the present rate of progress, one cannot be optimistic about the conclusion of an agreement in the near future.

In the meantime, both the report of the Secretary-General of March 1980 and the findings of the Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts support the hypothesis that the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have by now been sufficiently explored and that only the absence of the necessary political will prevents the successful conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. The persistent and even intensified testing activity of the past years points in the same direction.

In this situation we think that the trilateral negotiations should be paralleled by multilateral negotiations within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament. In our view, the unsatisfactory record of the present approach

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

can to a large degree be attributed to the climate of mistrust inherent in negotiations between military opponents. Involving other parties equally interested in a positive outcome but with a different perspective might have a catalytic effect on the negotiations. We therefore hope that the Committee on Disarmament at its spring session will be in a position to set up a working group to deal with the subject. Its enormous importance warrants that all options be explored that might lead to an eventual breakthrough.

The issue of appropriate arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is of considerable relevance in this context of efforts to strengthen international security. While such measures can in no way be seen as a substitute for nuclear disarmament, they would to a certain extent alleviate the threat perceived by non-nuclear-weapon countries and thereby enhance their commitment to non-proliferation.

The Austrian Government has welcomed the unilateral declarations issued by the nuclear Powers in the course of the special session on disarmament and supports the efforts undertaken by the Committee on Disarmament to develop on the basis of these declarations more effective arrangements concerning these assurances. We regret that these efforts have so far yielded little success. The failure to agree on a common approach reflects the divergency in the strategic doctrines and security perceptions of the nuclear-weapon States. We firmly believe that if these countries would muster goodwill and show readiness for compromise, it will be possible to overcome these difficulties.

In its future work on this subject, the Committee on Disarmament should continue to focus attention on the scope and nature of the arrangements and search for a common formula acceptable to all parties. It should keep in mind that it is essential that the assurances be kept free of limitations and escape clauses that would allow nuclear-weapon States to divest themselves of the obligations they have assumed.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

Extensive discussion on the legal form in which the assurances might find their final expression would seem premature at this time. It has to be stressed, however, that the idea of an international convention raises a number of questions that would have to be carefully considered. It would appear to us that the non-nuclear-weapon States which adhere to such treaties as the Non-Proliferation Treaty or the Treaty of Tlatelolco cannot be expected to contract any further obligations to obtain the assurances. In particular, any obligation committing parties to such a convention to a binding mechanism of consultations would not be acceptable to Austria.

The suggestion that as an interim measure and pending agreement on a common approach the Security Council should adopt a resolution on negative security assurances deserves careful consideration. The Austrian Government feels, however, that as long as an agreement on the essence of the matter is not forthcoming, it will prove exceedingly difficult to formulate a resolution substantive enough truly to contribute to international security and non-proliferation.

Allow me to turn now to some non-nuclear issues to which the Austrian delegation attributes equal importance.

A subject of particular timeliness and of great concern to my Government is the long-overdue conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

Since the appearance of these weapons on the battlefields of the First World War, most Governments have exercised a considerable measure of restraint in their employment in military conflicts. While the especially cruel and insidious character of chemical warfare might by itself have had an inhibiting effect, a high degree of the credit is due to the 1925 Geneva Protocol that outlawed the use of chemical weapons. Indeed, we consider this treaty one of the major achievements in the field of international security in this century.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

The largely positive record with regard to the use of chemical weapons has unfortunately not induced the majority of States definitely to renounce the chemical weapons option and destroy their arsenals. The lack of trust among many nations has effectively precluded such unilateral actions. In that situation it became obvious that the Geneva Protocol would have to be complemented by a multilateral convention covering the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. In view of the enormous complexity of the issues and the technical problems associated with delimiting the scope of the treaty and elaborating a verification mechanism, it was accepted that the negotiations would be long and difficult.

The Austrian Government has noted with appreciation that the "USSR-United States Joint Report"<sup>1</sup> transmitted to the Committee on Disarmament in July of this year has once again documented a certain measure of progress. But we cannot deny that we remain unsatisfied with the slow rate of progress of the bilateral negotiations. We welcome the decision by the Committee on Disarmament to set up a working group to deal with this matter. Since its contribution during 1980 proved valuable, we believe that at the beginning of the 1981 session another working group should be set up to continue under a broader mandate the multilateral deliberations on the matter.

The Austrian Government's deep concern does not derive primarily from dissatisfaction with the negotiating process, but rather from the fear that the present climate of crisis might undercut these efforts. In past years there have been reports - although not sufficiently confirmed - about the use of chemical weapons in various local conflicts. Fears have been voiced that the super-Powers are seeking to enlarge and strengthen their chemical warfare capabilities. Such developments not only risk adversely affecting the negotiations and diminishing the chances for the eventual conclusion of the treaty but they might also lead to an erosion of restraint with regard to the use of chemical weapons.

We therefore urge all States actively to commit themselves to the goal of a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons and to abstain from any activity that is irreconcilable with this aim.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

For many years the massive concentration of conventional armed forces and armaments in Central Europe has been a matter of serious concern to Austria. In our view, it is in the interest of all countries in the region to achieve a reduction of these forces and to establish a genuine balance at a lower level. We have therefore regretted that the Vienna negotiations on the mutual reduction of forces, armaments and associated measures in Central Europe have not produced any tangible results in seven years. We hope, however, that these efforts will not be lost and that the remaining obstacles can be overcome as soon as possible. A first phase agreement, while not itself providing for very substantial reductions, could prove helpful in leading to more comprehensive agreements.

With regard to security in Europe, we also attribute great importance to the Madrid follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. That meeting presents the opportunity for all participating States to recommit themselves to the process of détente, to ease prevailing tensions and to re-establish a climate of co-operation in Europe. Those who seek to put the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in doubt take on a heavy political responsibility, for there is no question about who will benefit from a breakdown of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe - we shall all lose by such a development. In spite of recent events we have not given up hope.

We would welcome it if the mandate for a disarmament conference in Europe could be formulated at Madrid. The first phase of that conference should be devoted to the elaboration of further more comprehensive and important confidence-building measures. In our view, that would serve two interrelated purposes. By leading to greater openness and predictability in the military field those confidence-building measures would contribute to greater stability and reduce the fear of surprise attacks. They would also, through an increase in mutual trust, improve the negotiating climate and thus prepare the ground for the disarmament efforts to be undertaken in a later phase of the conference.

(Mr. Klestil, Austria)

I have addressed myself to some of the many important issues before this Committee. The close interrelationship between most of them and the linkage between their individual fate and the over-all prospects of disarmament require a global and comprehensive approach. In this connexion, the declaration of the 1980s as the second disarmament decade, to be adopted by the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, is of great significance. In addition to reaffirming the extreme urgency of real progress in disarmament that document will establish guidelines and principles of fundamental importance. The comprehensive programme to be incorporated in the declaration will serve as a valuable frame of reference for the next 10 years. We welcome the decision to include a list of priority measures on which progress seems particularly urgent and attainable, since it is proof of a realistic and pragmatic attitude. We hope that the next decade will fare better than the one nearing its conclusion.

Without losing sight of the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament, we shall have to seek progress where we can find it. Only if we combine our firm commitment to the ideal of disarmament with a sober assessment of the realities of the situation shall we achieve real progress. We have to take into account the existing balance of power, the divergent security interests of States and the need for adequate verification of any arms control agreement. Building on the basis of the very modest results achieved in the 1970s, we have to adopt a step-by-step approach, confident that with every new agreement we improve the conditions for the next one.

Above all, however, we must remember more than we did in the past that it is not enough to demand disarmament sacrifices from others only; we must all be ready to accept our adequate share of sacrifices, not only in oral or written declarations and initiatives but also in real life. If we pursue this painstaking and often frustrating approach we might reach our goal - to transform the second disarmament decade into the first 10 years of real disarmament.

Mr. TEREFE (Ethiopia): I wish first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. The Ethiopian delegation is confident that under your able leadership the Committee will reach workable conclusions and make practical recommendations on the many political and disarmament problems which are influencing international peace and security today. I should like to wish you every success in this important task.

As the representative of Ethiopia and also the current Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament, I have the great privilege and honour as well as a personal sense of mission to draw the attention of the First Committee to the annual report of the 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament to the General Assembly contained in document A/35/27, together with other pertinent documents and records. The report includes an account of the organization of the Committee, a list of the Member States that participated in its work, the agenda for the 1980 session and the programme of work for the first and second parts of the session. It also includes a subsection concerning the participation by States not members of the Committee, a proposal to amend the rules of procedure regarding participation by States not members of the Committee and communications from non-governmental organizations. The three appendices to the report contain the list of participants, the documents issued by the Committee and the index of statements by country and subject and the verbatim records.

The Committee on Disarmament during its 1980 session dealt with the following items: a nuclear-test ban; the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; chemical weapons; new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, and radiological weapons; and the consideration of other areas dealing with the cessation of the arms race and disarmament and other relevant measures.

(Mr. Terefe, Ethiopia)

These items were considered within the broader framework of the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the recommendations made to the Committee by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, some of which contained specific requests to report to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

All States Members of the United Nations have, in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, reaffirmed their full commitment to the search for effective measures of nuclear disarmament and to the prevention of nuclear war. In particular, those Member States which possess the most important nuclear arsenals bear a special responsibility for preventing the outbreak of nuclear war and achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament. Despite the constraints imposed by the ever-worsening international situation, the five nuclear-weapons States sat for the first time around the Committee's negotiating table. The Committee on Disarmament established four working groups to undertake negotiations concerned with negative security assurances, chemical weapons, radiological weapons and the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The progress of the work of these working groups is fully reflected in their reports, which are integral parts of the Committee's report, and I do not, therefore, need to elaborate on any one of them. But I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to paragraph 74 of the report, wherein mention is made of a number of working documents concerning the positions taken by individual countries and groups of countries concerning their evaluation of the Committee's work in 1980 and other pertinent issues that were raised during the consideration and adoption of the report of the Committee.

In 1980, the Committee held 43 formal plenary meetings and 45 informal meetings on various subjects, and the working groups held in all 51 meetings, apart from a number of informal consultations. The United Kingdom, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist

(Mr. Terefe, Ethiopia)

Republics jointly reported on the progress of the trilateral negotiations on the question of the nuclear-weapon-test-ban. The increasing rate at which nuclear tests have been carried out, particularly during the past five years, was of great concern to many countries, and they advocated a total and comprehensive ban, covering all explosions, in all environments and for an indefinite duration. It was generally noted that the trilateral negotiations have made progress on the subject of verification. The establishment of an ad hoc working group in the Committee on Disarmament to initiate substantive negotiations on a nuclear-weapon-test-ban is still an open and live issue.

Several proposals were submitted to the Committee concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. One proposal concerned urgent steps for the practical implementation of negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing stockpiles of them until they have been completely destroyed. Other proposals related to the cessation of production of fissionable material for weapon purposes and the prohibition of further flight testing of strategic-delivery vehicles.

The Committee did not have an opportunity to attempt to reconcile the different points of view as regards the approach, the modality and the basis of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. The ratification and bringing into force of SALT II, the opening of SALT III negotiations and early negotiations on the nuclear-weapons situation in Europe were considered of paramount importance and urgency.

I should like now to draw the attention of the Committee to some considerations which my delegation would very strongly support. As we enter the second Disarmament Decade, the world community is expecting from us concrete actions in the field of nuclear disarmament. The Committee on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum, has been entrusted with a clear mandate, which is the promotion and

(Mr. Terefe, Ethiopia)

attainment of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. The tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament has provided a programme of action enumerating the specific disarmament measures which should be implemented over the next few years. However, the Committee has not yet been able to initiate any substantive negotiations in the area of nuclear disarmament. Conversely, the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field, continues and tends to undermine international confidence.

Thirty-five years ago the first nuclear weapons were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two hundred thousand people perished. The world has never forgotten those two traumatic days of 6 and 9 August 1945. Existing nuclear arsenals contain tens of thousands of nuclear weapons with the explosive power of one million Hiroshima bombs. These are capable of destroying all life on our planet several times over. Only the other day, ambassador Garcia Robles reminded us of the vivid account of recent nuclear alerts. He also told us of the genesis and development of a nuclear war. Mankind is thus living in constant fear of nuclear destruction, and this danger is being exacerbated by current international tensions. The numerous resolutions of the General Assembly urging the nuclear Powers to work towards the goal of general and complete disarmament attest to the pressing need for an end to the arms race and the prevention of nuclear war.

Renewed commitments to implement the objectives of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, will no doubt facilitate the work of the Committee on Disarmament. In all areas of disarmament negotiations, substantive agreements can be reached provided political commitments are made, particularly by the nuclear-weapon States, on the major issues involved in the negotiations.

(Mr. Terefe, Ethiopia)

I hope such commitments will be forthcoming during this session of the General Assembly. Member States must spare no effort to seize this opportunity before it is too late to save humanity from self-annihilation. It is in this general spirit that the Ethiopian delegation welcomes the proposal of the Soviet Union which now appears on the agenda of this Committee under the heading "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war."

My delegation is especially gratified that this proposal stresses, inter alia, the need for all nuclear-weapon-States to recounce nuclear explosions in all environments pending the conclusion of a treaty on a comprehensive test ban. Ethiopia, together with other States, has for a long time called for a moratorium on nuclear explosions of all types as a major step toward halting the arms race and gradually reversing its course until general and complete disarmament can be achieved.

Mr. FEIN (Netherlands): It is my privilege to make this first statement in the general debate on behalf of the States members of the European Community.

I intend to address myself today, on behalf of the Nine, to two important and related matters before this Committee: the two principal multilateral instruments at our disposal to deal with arms control and disarmament. These are, of course, the Committee on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

But before speaking about those two permanent bodies I wish to say a few words on a recent event that the countries in whose name I have the honour to speak find most encouraging.

I am referring to the successful conclusion, just a week ago today, of the diplomatic Conference held in Geneva on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, or popularly known as the inhumane weapons Conference. We the Nine are, of course, under no illusion that the results of that Conference are satisfactory in every respect, nor do those results meet all the expectations of the Nine. Nevertheless the fact that the

international community has been able to find common ground is -- especially in this otherwise discouraging year-- a source of satisfaction. We acknowledge fully that all parties to that Conference -- I say all parties -- without exception, made great efforts to reach these results through sometimes difficult negotiations, and many concessions were made from all sides. We, the Nine, also take pride in the fact that members of the European Community played an active part in bringing this Conference to a successful conclusion.

It is a source of satisfaction to the Nine that, notwithstanding the fact that 1980 was a difficult year in international relations, the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva was able to continue as a viable multilateral negotiating forum. The Committee on Disarmament did, of course, suffer the effects of international tension and events, especially after the Soviet armed intervention in Afghanistan. Also, some regrettable delays due to extraneous political disputes prevented some non-members, who had expressed an interest in participating in the work, from doing so until late in the session. The Nine regretted this time-consuming and disruptive interference which had nothing to do with the substantive work of the Committee on Disarmament as such and we hope that that will not be repeated.

Nevertheless, the Committee on Disarmament took significant steps towards the fulfilment of its mandate. The agreement to establish four working groups represented a welcome and constructive move in this direction. This decision has enhanced the effectiveness of the Committee on Disarmament as an instrument for undertaking negotiations.

Not all working groups, however, were equally successful but the progress made on chemical weapons was an improvement over previous performances. The Committee on Disarmament showed itself capable of undertaking the negotiations in a responsible and constructive manner. The establishment of a working group showed that involvement of a multilateral negotiating body served to clarify and to offer possible solutions to the problems existing in this particularly difficult field. It is the hope of the Nine that during next year's session of the

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Committee on Disarmament the bilaterals and the multilaterals can be brought closer together, with a view to clearing the way for the early conclusion of a multilateral agreement.

In this connexion, the reports concerning the alleged use of chemical weapons in armed conflicts caused the Nine serious concern. These reports still remain to be found correct or false. But in view of the worldwide abhorrence of the use of these weapons, the Nine are of the opinion that every effort should be made by the international community to clarify this matter. The Nine will support any realistic step in this direction.

As I said, not all working groups could claim equally encouraging results. It is, for instance, to be regretted that a working group on radiological weapons could not have made more headway. Of course the draft containing the principal elements of a treaty, submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as other proposals, do need to be studied and negotiated with care in the Committee on Disarmament. Nevertheless, the Nine hope that the work on a radiological weapons treaty can be pursued without allowing extraneous or inopportune considerations to delay its finalization.

The working group on negative security assurances of course faced a very complicated and delicate task in an area regarded as being of particular importance to a large number of non-nuclear-weapon States. It is therefore not surprising that there remains much work to be done. This item should continue to be examined with great care.

The last working group of the Committee on Disarmament to be mentioned is the one on the comprehensive programme of disarmament. That working group has made a slow start, a reflection of its very complex and important task. This programme is closely linked with the preparation of the second special session on disarmament in 1982 and therefore it should be completed as early as possible. The Nine will continue to follow its progress and to contribute to a realistic result.

These were some general remarks about the Committee on Disarmament that I wish to make at this stage of our debate on behalf of the Nine.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, in its second substantive session in the spring of this year was called upon to concentrate on important points with wide implications for the future direction of the disarmament process. In doing so the Disarmament Commission has fulfilled its role as a deliberative body, entrusted with, among other tasks, considering the general guidelines and basic principles of disarmament.

The Nine state once again that they are fully aware of the problem mentioned in the report of the Commission with regard to nuclear weapons. The member States of the European Community subscribe to the need, expressed in the report of the Disarmament Commission, for the General Assembly to examine further ways to achieve, with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States, and especially those with the most important nuclear arsenals, the goals specified in paragraph 50 and other relevant paragraphs of the final document of the special session relating to nuclear disarmament.

The Nine wish to draw attention to the important conclusion of the Commission that a consensus has emerged in favour of recommending to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly that it approve in principle, the proposal for a study "on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces" (A/35/42, para. 20). The Nine are in fact firmly convinced that this issue is an essential component of the disarmament process. Only through progress in both the nuclear and conventional fields can the world community move towards a common goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. In accordance with the Commission's conclusion to which I have just referred, one member State of the Nine, with the support of all the others, will introduce a draft resolution on this subject. It is our firm belief that the Assembly should, as a result of its forthcoming debate, approve the carrying out of a study on all aspects of the conventional arms race.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

The nine member States of the European Community reiterate their belief that the decision to approve the declaration of the 1980s as the Second United Nations Disarmament Decade as adopted by consensus in resolution 34/75 is an appropriate step to increase the awareness of public opinion in the question of disarmament and the problems associated with its accomplishment. The Nine believe that during this Disarmament Decade, comprehensive information about disarmament should be presented with a view to contributing to an international setting in which fertile ground for the elaboration of specific disarmament measures is provided.

The Disarmament Commission, in its spring session, expressed regret at the deterioration in the situation with regard to international peace and security, a regret which the Nine fully share. The Commission emphasized again the close relationship between disarmament and development. In this respect we would stress the importance of the ongoing expert study in which several partners of the Nine are participating with experts. The Nine believe that the comprehensive programme could play an important role in facilitating the task of and, indeed, clearing the ground for the second special session on disarmament.

The Nine believe that the Second Disarmament Decade offers an opportunity to enhance the security and integrity of all States through a long-term process of concrete disarmament measures in different fields. As such it will provide an umbrella under which the comprehensive programme for disarmament, to be further elaborated in the Committee on Disarmament, can be fruitfully implemented. While being in conformity with the basic principles set forth in the Final Document of the special session on disarmament, the declaration should contain principles and objectives for the development of the disarmament process in the course of the decade without, however, fixing target dates for specific measures. This would run the risk of creating unrealistic expectations and therefore disappointment and frustration among the general public.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

With regard to the principles, the Nine stress the need to respect the following essential conditions: the safeguarding of security, the maintenance of balance, which is a condition of security, the necessity of taking into account regional situations, international verification and the progressive building of confidence through appropriate measures.

On several occasions the member States of the European Community have recalled the importance they attribute to the elaboration of concrete measures concerning the enhancement of the transparency of military budgets and the subsequent reduction of military expenditures.

The Nine welcome the fact that the Disarmament Commission, during its session in spring 1980, asked the General Assembly to be allowed, during its next substantive session, to continue its consideration of the question of a freeze and reduction of military budgets and in particular to identify and elaborate the principles which should govern the further actions of States in this field. At this preliminary stage the Nine reiterate their view that concrete measures concerning restraint, freezing or reduction of military expenditures can be based only on a standardized reporting system providing for the comparability of military budgets and taking into account the necessity of an effective verification system.

The Nine consider the item related to the preparation of the second special session on disarmament as one of the most important on our agenda. The Nine are therefore prepared to contribute actively to the relevant debate which will take place in this Committee.

This concludes the statement I have had the honour to make today on behalf of the member States of the European Community.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.