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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 8TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

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Statements were made by:

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Mr. Okawa (Japan)  
Mr. Marinescu (Romania)  
Mr. Hulinsky (Czechoslovakia)

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ENGLISH

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

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. LA ROCCA (Italy): Mr. Chairman, let me first of all express to you and to the other officers of the Committee our warmest congratulations on your unanimous election.

I am sincerely convinced that under your personal experienced guidance our work will achieve all the positive results possible; in this regard, I want to recall the decisive contribution you made to the full success of the negotiations on the elaboration of a new international strategy for development.

The thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly represents a timely occasion for collective reflection and debate on the range of disarmament issues at a particularly delicate and complex phase of international relations which adds further obstacles to the effective continuation of a constructive dialogue in the field of disarmament.

The First Committee will therefore have to assess the results of the deliberations carried out so far on disarmament matters, identify the specific problems and difficulties, carefully analyse their prospects and approve the most appropriate initiatives.

In addition, it will be necessary to give impetus to the operation of the disarmament structures existing within, or connected to, the United Nations in order to enable them to accomplish fully the tasks and duties entrusted to them at the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

The limitation and reduction of nuclear and conventional arsenals to decreasingly lower levels, the immediate ban of some categories of particularly lethal and destructive weapons, together with the definition of collateral security measures - especially those aimed at building confidence - are all urgent requirements for which there are no valid alternatives if we really intend to avoid the dangers resulting from an

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

uncontrolled accumulation of weapons, to foster an orderly economic and social development for all States, and thereby to establish a climate of peace and international co-operation.

The basic elements of the difficulties with which we are confronted today are widely known; they may be identified, inter alia, in the failure to observe the rules of international law, or in the insufficient or selective observance of such rules, and especially those contained in the United Nations Charter.

The improvement of the international situation and the restoration of an atmosphere of co-operation and trust are indispensable conditions for the reversal of the arms race for which we must exercise constant and vigorous action. Italy, for its part, intends to continue and intensify its efforts, strengthened by the experience it has acquired through two decades of disarmament negotiations.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

We must note to our regret that the expectations aroused by the success of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament have not yet been met with substantive and concrete results. As stated in its report, the Committee on Disarmament - a body defined as negotiating - has not yet been able to carry out completely the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly. In our view, not only must the characteristic negotiating function of the Committee be firmly safeguarded, it must also be encouraged through appropriate procedural solutions which would ensure both a careful examination at the technical level and a satisfactory pace of work. In this regard, the establishment of ad hoc working groups for the negotiation of important issues on the agenda has to be considered as a particularly positive initiative which can be developed further in order to achieve greater qualitative and quantitative productivity on the part of the Geneva Committee. Even so, the working groups have not yet been able to advance beyond a preliminary and often merely procedural stage in their activities. We hope that this situation will be speedily overcome, beginning with the next session, through the elimination of inadmissible vetoes which preclude, for example, effective negotiating action by the working group responsible for chemical weapons.

The Geneva meetings, in which we are pleased to note that all five nuclear Powers are participating, have indeed shown that the possibility and the will exist in many aspects to initiate serious and responsible international negotiations. The bilateral talks, which have registered undeniable results, should be usefully integrated into this framework and therefore brought back into the institutional structure of the Committee.

With regard to the trilateral talks on a draft agreement on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, we believe that the point has been reached where they can be effectively complemented and integrated by concrete negotiations in the multilateral forum, so that the contributions of all interested States can be taken into account. The fundamental importance of the comprehensive nuclear-test ban is recognized by all as it is the indispensable basis for the beginning of further suggested negotiations.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

We hope therefore that those countries still hesitating, in the trilateral context, to derive practical consequences from the acceptance of certain points of principle, in particular concerning verification, will overcome their doubts as soon as possible; indeed, it would be useless to call for further and extremely ambitious negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the absence of a readiness to seek reasonable solutions that would allow the achievement of the necessary preliminary comprehensive nuclear-test ban agreement.

Continuing on the subject of nuclear-arms limitation, we should like once more to reiterate our firm hope for a prompt ratification of the SALT II Treaty by the United States and for the subsequent undertaking of SALT III negotiations that will lead to an effective and significant reduction in the nuclear weapons of the two major nuclear Powers. In fact, we consider that the SALT negotiating process, even within the limits of its bilateral character, remains of fundamental importance for the strengthening of the peace and security of the entire international community.

In this light we should like to express our satisfaction at the beginning of discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union on the start of negotiations - that we consider within the framework of SALT III - on the limitation and control of Soviet and American long-range nuclear forces. Italy, together with the other European countries of the Atlantic Alliance, is fully associated with those negotiations and intends to make every useful and appropriate contribution to them and we hope that they will proceed rapidly and with positive results.

In adhering to the Non-Proliferation Treaty out of its own free will and a considered political choice Italy has renounced the acquisition and production of nuclear weapons and other explosive nuclear devices. Our status as a non-nuclear-weapon State lets us view with sympathy the request of many non-aligned countries to receive guarantees of security concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons from the nuclear-weapon States. Nevertheless, that cannot exempt us from stressing that the problem of negative security guarantees must be confronted in realistic terms and beyond any preconceived position. The various perceptions that the five nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear countries each have of their own security and the existence of defensive alliances in which both groups of countries are taking part make it difficult to arrive at a unified solution.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

The unilateral declaration by individual nuclear-weapon States of guarantees on the non-use of nuclear weapons - above all in regard to countries which adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty - and on conditions that take into account the needs of legitimate individual and collective self-defence of the nuclear States themselves and of their allies, seems to us the most appropriate and effective solution suggested so far, in view of the present political and strategic realities. We believe that such unilateral guarantees should be solemnly recorded by the international community through, for example, specific resolutions of the General Assembly or the Security Council which would strengthen the binding international character that at least some of them already possess. Any other alternative in our opinion might prejudice the security needs of one side or another with destabilizing effects at global level.

In the context of nuclear disarmament, the creation of denuclearized zones is certainly one of the most important measures. Denuclearized zones indeed have positive effects on the development of the process of non-proliferation and, indirectly, of the limitation and gradual reduction of armaments. In that regard Italy wishes to reiterate its support for any proposal of denuclearization originating autonomously from the region concerned and acceptable to all the States of the area.

The prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles is a measure which Italy, together with other countries, has not ceased to request now for too many years. Appeals for the timely preparation and approval of a treaty on that matter have been made persistently and repeatedly in the General Assembly - almost since the foundation of the United Nations - as well as to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and finally to the Committee on Disarmament.

Innumerable official documents and publications have stressed the particularly deadly character of those weapons, now becoming increasingly sophisticated through the parallel development of civilian chemical research, and have described their devastating effects on the environment. The serious threat of proliferation deriving from the relative ease of production of these weapons of mass destruction adds a further element of grave concern. Moreover, the very prohibition of their use, sanctioned by the Geneva Protocols of 1925, has now been thrown into doubt by reports, which we trust are unfounded, regarding the alleged use of such weapons in some specific armed conflicts.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

From a procedural standpoint it cannot be denied that positive steps have been taken within the Committee on Disarmament thanks also to the establishment of the working group first requested by Italy. Such progress must nevertheless be considered insufficient since it has so far had no effect on the substance of the negotiations. We reiterate also in that regard that the Geneva Committee must henceforth assume in full the negotiating responsibilities entrusted to it by the international community; in so doing it will avail itself when appropriate of the positive results achieved so far in the context of the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, and will confront without hesitation the difficulties still to be unravelled, especially in the fundamental sector of verification.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

In fact, it would be extremely dangerous to the credibility of the Committee on Disarmament and of the disarmament process itself if the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament had to be told that a treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons had not yet been concluded.

As far as Italy is concerned, we have never ceased over the years to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need to integrate its efforts towards nuclear disarmament and a ban on chemical weapons with concrete and effective measures also in the field of conventional weapons. Naturally, we do not underestimate the difficulty of this task; it should suffice to point out that, while nuclear weapons are possessed by only five Powers, conventional weapons are widespread in all countries and often represent the legitimate instrument for safeguarding their independence and territorial integrity. It was for that reason that Italy offered a preliminary contribution in the Committee on Disarmament aimed at exploring the possibility of examining the problems of the international transfer of conventional weapons on a regional scale among the countries directly affected and, at the same time, on a global level within a central and widely representative ad hoc body. Other useful initiatives have been put forward by friendly countries and we hope that the General Assembly will decide at this session to adopt the relevant recommendation made by the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

With special regard to conventional disarmament, Italy some time ago presented draft proposals relating to possible amendments to the 1967 outer-space Treaty in order to specify more precisely some of its disarmament provisions. While we continue to maintain that consideration of this matter is urgent, we are prepared to re-examine our suggestions in the light of comments submitted by all interested countries and also within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, so as to reach a broad consensus with regard to appropriate and timely modifications to the Treaty.

The reduction of military budgets is an issue which must be considered in a global context involving the nuclear and the conventional sectors of disarmament.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

As is well known, the goal is to achieve, as a first stage, a reduction in the military expenditures of the most significant countries and therefore to limit, at a further stage, military appropriations in all States.

In this context, Italy has always lent its full support to the work of the panel of experts entrusted by the Secretary-General with preparing a standardized reporting instrument on military expenditures and has also, in consequence, contributed to its practical testing. Indeed, we believe that this exercise is a necessary and preliminary step towards the consideration of any further initiative in the field of military budgets.

We have examined carefully the draft report of the Secretary-General on the work done by the panel. In the draft report is expressed, inter alia, the need further to refine the instrument being utilized. This point has also been confirmed by the difficulties some States have encountered in subdividing their defence expenses under the categories included in the panel's questionnaire.

In order to overcome these technical problems and to make the instrument more precise, Italy and other States have put forward specific suggestions, which, however, the experts have not yet been able to scrutinize fully.

Therefore, we consider it indispensable that the group be given the possibility to pursue its present work and to begin, as suggested by the panel itself, to study the question of comparability of military budgets and the establishment of an effective verification system.

We appeal, finally, to all States that have not yet done so to respond to the Secretary-General's questionnaire in the spirit of mutual trust and constructive co-operation which form the basis of any programme in the disarmament field.

Italy attaches great importance, to the adoption, in parallel with the initiatives conducted at the global level, of regional measures, which we consider particularly desirable and effective in the field of conventional disarmament, whose problems are often connected to situations and circumstances specific to a given geographical area.

The Secretary-General's report on this subject will certainly constitute an ideal basis for reflection from which to develop concrete initiatives under the auspices of the United Nations.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

Strictly linked with the issues of regional disarmament are the proposals for the establishment of zones of peace, which Italy is following attentively. In our view these initiatives should be correctly channelled towards areas whose political and military conditions are homogeneous enough to allow of unified solutions applicable to all parties. For that very reason we also deem essential the acceptance in principle of the relevant proposals by all the countries of the region.

Thus, with reference to the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, Italy is following the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee, in which we participate as a maritime State. The work done by the Committee so far offers proof, in our opinion, of the need to examine further the very concept of a zone of peace both with reference to the specific content that should be assigned to it and in order to define precisely the geographic area of application. Last, but not least, the Ad Hoc Committee will have to ensure the indispensable full protection of the existing freedom of the seas according to the rules and principles of international law.

In this connexion we wish to emphasize that the invasion of Afghanistan, where foreign troops continue to be stationed, has not only contributed to a deterioration of the general international situation but also specifically introduced into the Indian Ocean region an extremely serious element which, if it were not promptly removed, would render extremely difficult the prospects for the success of the Ad Hoc Committee's work.

We attribute great importance to the negotiations, proposals and initiatives which concern the European continent. In this context, we maintain that all initiatives concerning arms limitation and disarmament - whether in progress, such as the Vienna negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions, or planned for the future in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process with regard to the military aspects of security - should be aimed towards the strengthening of stability, and thus of security, at decreasingly lower levels of armaments. To that end, and bearing in mind that European regional negotiations should take into account the world political and military context, we must proceed with all due consideration - which, however,

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

does not mean slowness - and always be watchful to preserve and strengthen the existing military balances and to re-establish them where unilateral initiatives may have altered them. In this spirit Italy will continue to make a full contribution to these initiatives and negotiations in the conviction that concrete positive results, at least of a temporary nature, are substantially possible in some sectors, such as, for example, the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions, provided that efforts to make proposals on the one side are met promptly with adequate and constructive responses on the other.

The efforts that must be made in order to make progress in the various negotiations under way on specific disarmament measures should not relegate to second place the contextual need to proceed to the elaboration of a comprehensive disarmament programme. Indeed, that programme is meant to constitute the appropriate framework for ensuring the gradual and balanced pursuit of the final goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

The programme, to which Italy again referred in detail in January 1978, should contain long and short-term measures to be carried out in gradual stages and to be accompanied by increasingly stringent collateral measures in the field of verification and confidence-building measures, in order to arrive finally at the establishment of an effective system of collective security.

It is in that context, inter alia, that the transfers of resources which will result from decreased military spending and which the developing countries require for their economic and social progress may find an appropriate disposition.

We consider that the definitive drafting of that programme, which will have universal application, is one of the most important goals that States have assigned themselves in the field of disarmament. Therefore, Italy intends to continue to make its full contribution to the activity of the Working Group that the Committee on Disarmament has appropriately created for the drafting of the comprehensive programme. We should also bear in mind that that basic instrument must be concluded in time to be submitted to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Indeed, in Italy's view the comprehensive programme will represent a constant reference for the whole range of negotiations on disarmament so that, at the end of the road paved by the comprehensive disarmament programme, the international community will be in a position to reject armed violence and the use or threat of use of force and to respond effectively to international disputes.

In the view of my delegation, the international community should exert itself, through the work of this thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly as well, to tackle the obstacles placed on the road to disarmament by the inadmissible violations of the United Nations Charter which have determined the present serious international situation. In such circumstances, in fact, it is more than ever necessary for us to reaffirm our determination to use any possible means to enable the disarmament goals set forth in the Final Document of the special session on disarmament to receive preliminary application promptly. That is indispensable for restoring credibility to our

(Mr. La Rocca, Italy)

commitment to disarmament and for creating the conditions for new momentum on the occasion of the second special session devoted to **disarmament in 1982**.

Italy intends to make its full contribution to those efforts, in the awareness that that special session represents both a challenge and a great opportunity to progress along the road to disarmament.

Mr. BELTRAMINO (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): In expressing to you, Sir, our best wishes for success in the fulfilment of your tasks as Chairman of our Committee, a success which is guaranteed by your well-known impartiality, skill and experience, I should like to state at the outset that we shall confine this statement to those aspects of the questions under discussion that concern us more deeply, while at the same time we shall endeavour to co-operate with you in the successful accomplishment of the tasks of this body. The outstanding qualities of the other officers of the Committee and of the Committee's secretariat will also greatly contribute to that task.

I shall be referring successively to the principle of responsibility, to negotiation and dialogue and to certain questions to which we attach particular importance, as well as to what we feel should be done in the framework of our Organization once the current session of the General Assembly comes to an end.

Once again the First Committee of the General Assembly is faced with the responsibility of tackling the questions which are included in its mandate and which take pride of place among the tasks of the United Nations, in keeping with the provisions of the Charter. Without prejudice to the functions it shares at present with the Committee on Disarmament, or the holding of special sessions on the subject, the yearly session of our Committee should not be a mere deliberative exercise, but rather an endeavour to balance out and give impetus to United Nations activities.

All States Members of the United Nations have a place in those deliberations, which, in turn, reflect the universal responsibility for disarmament - which should be the object of the joint concern and sense of responsibility of all and not an item of selective interest for some States alone.

(Mr. Beltramino, Argentina)

Naturally, that responsibility is in direct proportion to the means available to each State or the capacity of States to contribute to or to hinder international security and co-operation.

Thus, as regards the five great Powers in particular, it is quite clear that the fact of their not adopting the necessary measures or not sufficiently negotiating amongst themselves with a view to disarmament and international security as is appropriate, does not exempt them from the fundamental responsibility incumbent on them in the matter. The provisions of the Charter, which give them certain rights in the Security Council, do not stand alone; nor are those rights a privilege entailing no obligations. Rather, to the contrary, they clearly and implicitly entail greater responsibility on the part of those Powers for the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is only natural and logical that the responsibility of States which are not great Powers and which do not have the means to annihilate others should be focused above all on the maintenance of their own security. That, however, does not mean that they should not participate in multilateral efforts with a view to achieving the aforementioned purposes of the Charter.

In view of the fact that the responsibility incumbent upon all Members of the United Nations is no such thing unless it materializes in the form of actions by States which give it content and validity, there is no course other than that of negotiation and dialogue as a counterpart to confrontation and conflict, if we truly wish to achieve the ultimate goal of avoiding war and ensuring peace.

Negotiation and dialogue are continual exercises in international relations and here they are oriented towards a much desired and concrete objective. I am referring to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective control, in the terms set forth in paragraph lll of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

You yourself, Mr. Chairman, when you took up your office in this Committee, stated that

"in a spirit of conciliation, accommodation and useful dialogue, we can achieve positive results". (A/C.1/35/PV.2, p. 3)

What you said was necessary for the work of this body is also applicable in an international context.

But for that spirit to govern contacts among countries and their representatives, the point of departure must be the desire and will to reach the agreements for which the United Nations has been pressing almost unceasingly since its inception. No one in this forum is unaware of the efforts, the meagre results and the enormous difficulties inherent in the subject of disarmament, which have led to frequent deadlocks, stalemates and failures, to disappointment and scepticism in the process. And here once again the major responsibility of the great Powers is clear, and this can never be stressed too much. We are not here to condemn them, but rather to confront them with the awesome reality of a nuclear conflict which their peoples, like those of other countries, fear and wish to avoid.

We are not here to overlook their national defence and security interests, which we all understand. But it is in their own interests, as well as in those of all mankind, that the process of rearmament and the stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction be reversed, and that efforts by both sides be substantially intensified in order that the will to avoid mutual annihilation and destruction should be the motive power giving impetus to their dialogue and negotiations.

The interest of the countries which do not belong to the small group of great Powers in these negotiations achieving success in the shortest possible time is easily explained: no one stands to gain, and so much stands to be lost in a conflict between great Powers. Neither would it be admissible, however, that agreements among those Powers should be prejudicial to third countries in an attempt to dominate them or to interfere in their internal affairs.

The group of non-aligned countries has, over the years, engaged in an untiring labour of insistence, appeal and arousing of awareness, both in this Committee and in other forums. My delegation is convinced that the countries of the Movement would be ready to lend their renewed and patient efforts

with a view to the most complete fulfillment of the purposes of the Charter. What is at stake, in our view, is too great and too important in its consequences to be left in the hands of the great Powers alone.

In the light of the ideas put forward with regard to the international responsibility of States and to the diplomatic dialogue which replaces confrontation and conflict, I should like now to refer in particular to some subjects which deserve special attention.

I shall first mention the relationship between disarmament development. This has gained the attention it deserves, and we should therefore like to express some views which we regard as timely. That relationship lends itself to an in-depth analysis, both as regards the comparative allocation of resources devoted to each field, as well as the courses of action it might be possible to carry out in the field of development if, on the global level the enormous resources which at present are devoted to armament were to be released. Undoubtedly, the security of each State demands that substantial costs be assumed, and this entails sacrifice and effort. But it is not this which is in question, but rather the excessive, multi-million-dollar expenses incurred by the great Powers to purchase, develop and maintain complex weapons which greatly exceed their territorial defence needs. Those expenses are all the more inadmissible if their object is to endanger the security and integrity of other States.

Another aspect of the question of disarmament and development relates to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this area we should affirm the necessity of not hindering development in the name of disarmament. Such reprehensible conduct always involves the erection of artificial barriers of political and economic self-interest to the capacity of each country to develop its inventiveness for the benefit of the numerous civilian uses which modern technology permits, in particular that relating to the development of nuclear energy sources.

The excuse usually offered in these cases - the noble principle of non-proliferation, which we share - is hardly compatible with the expression of concern by one of the super-Powers at the insufficient production of plutonium for military purposes.

(Mr. Beltramino, Argentina)

We reiterate our interest in the exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and in this connexion we have from the beginning been among those who support the convening of an international conference on the promotion of international co-operation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which we believe should be held in the first half of 1983. We shall refer to this again in a plenary meeting of the Assembly when that item comes up for discussion.

We consider it essential that the confidence and support of all States for the efforts made by the Committee on Disarmament be reconfirmed unequivocally. We are not unaware that the results of the 1980 session leave much to be desired. The declaration of the Group of 21 at the end of the annual session, contained in document CD/134, dated 6 August 1980, is sufficiently enlightening and makes it unnecessary for me to go into details which are in any event well-known.

(Mr. Beltramino, Argentina)

But the meagre results achieved, however imperfect or partial they may be, are indicative of the real possibilities for progress that do exist. It is for this reason that we urge the great Powers in particular to give concrete proofs of the political will for compromise and the negotiating spirit necessary in order to enable the Committee in its 1981 sessions fully to discharge its responsibilities.

At the same time, it is necessary to plan with deliberation the activities for the short period of time that separates us from the next special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in 1982. As opposed to the position regarding the first session, we now fortunately have behind us the experience of a negotiating process which came to a happy conclusion and which we can use today as an example for making further progress. Therefore we propose that the necessary consultations be carried out in order to set up the preparatory committee, following the organizational guidelines which earlier proved so effective and including the number of countries which is now deemed appropriate. However, we believe that, over and above any material arrangements, there must prevail a spirit of co-operation, a sense of responsibility and a readiness to engage in the dialogue to which we referred earlier.

Last but not least, if our debate is to meet the requirements of a true dialogue we cannot but form our views in the light of and bearing in mind those of other delegations which have spoken before us. In this connexion, we attach the highest importance to the emphasis so rightly placed by the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Garcia Robles, on questions relating to the main threat to peace and security, **the nuclear threat**, and therefore the primary responsibility of this body concerning the steps that must be taken to eradicate from the face of the earth the dangers stemming from the existence of an ever-growing number of nuclear weapons in the hands of a few States.

(Mr. Beltramino, Argentina)

This is the most important task before us, and it is therefore on these questions primarily that we should concentrate our attention. It is for this reason that I believe that it would be logical for those countries that agree in attributing the utmost urgency to nuclear disarmament to consider the possibility of preparing a draft resolution to that effect. The non-aligned countries, whose original and rewarding contribution to the whole question of disarmament is most praiseworthy, could undoubtedly contribute valuable ideas on the question.

Without prejudice to the attention that should be given to any proposal that may be put forward and notwithstanding the relative merits of any draft resolution that may have already been elaborated, we believe that our debate should be properly oriented; that is, we should devote our attention to those aspects that require it most and not succumb to the temptation to multiply our efforts in other directions.

In short, in our view and without prejudice to what has already been done, our efforts should focus on the following aspects, which we regard as most essential and practicable.

First, increased effort should be devoted to multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament with a view to the adoption in the shortest possible time and on priority questions of appropriate international agreements and programmes. The Committee on Disarmament should be not only encouraged but urged to do as much as it possibly can.

Secondly, the great Powers should be urged with even greater force to fulfil their primary responsibility vis-à-vis the rest of mankind and take the necessary steps to reverse the existing situation. Those States that do not belong to any bloc should at the same time co-operate fully and negotiate with the great Powers with a view to achieving that objective.

(Mr. Beltramino, Argentina)

Thirdly, the efforts at this session should be concentrated on priority questions, such as the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, avoiding anything that is purely declaratory and unrealistic and that in the last analysis would have no effect on the fundamental objectives which are being pursued.

Fourthly, the necessary steps must be taken at this session of the Assembly to prepare for the special session of the Assembly to be held in 1982, in particular by the establishment of a properly integrated preparatory committee.

Mr. OKAWA (Japan): Mr. Chairman, it is an honour for my delegation and a personal pleasure for me to be able to work under your able and experienced guidance during this year's session of the First Committee.

In declaring the 1980s the Second Disarmament Decade the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session held last year, expressed a renewed determination to promote disarmament in the course of the next ten years. The current session of the General Assembly is the first to be held during the Second Disarmament Decade and it would seem to be the occasion for us to review the negotiations on disarmament that have taken place in the past and to consider how we can tackle those that we hope will take place in the years ahead.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

We certainly cannot say that the international situation prevailing at the outset of this Second Disarmament Decade augurs well for the advancement of disarmament. The military intervention in Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, which occurred immediately after last year's General Assembly session, is the main factor underlying this pessimistic assessment. The basic position of the Japanese Government regarding the Soviet intervention has already been made known on several occasions and needs no repeating here. But if I may say just one thing, limiting myself to the field of disarmament, which is the concern of the Committee, it is that the current situation has been detrimental to the feeling of trust among nations that is the prerequisite for the promotion of disarmament, and is consequently exerting an immeasurably adverse effect on progress in that field.

The Foreign Minister of Japan, Mr. Ito, said in the general statement he delivered on 23 September that Japan will continue to work for the advancement of understanding and trust among nations. Today I wish to urge once again that all Member States take concrete action to eliminate mistrust among nations. Japan places a high value on the role of effective confidence-building measures and hopes that the work now being conducted by the group of experts on that subject will produce fruitful results.

The Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was unable to adopt a final declaration because of the opposing views regarding the state of nuclear disarmament -- one of the main pillars of the Treaty. This constituted a double blow to the international community, which has been striving to strengthen the non-proliferation régime on the basis of the NPT.

In spite of the existence of article VI of the Treaty providing for pursuance of negotiations on nuclear disarmament, the nuclear arms race is intensifying, as is indicated in unmistakable terms in the report of the Group of Experts on a Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons. For those non-nuclear-weapon States which have adhered to the Non-Proliferation

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

Treaty and which have consequently accepted the non-proliferation obligation, this delay in the progress of nuclear disarmament will surely be taken as an even further widening of the so-called inequality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Fortunately, there were no direct challenges to the NPT régime itself during the recent Review Conference, and the Conference managed to arrive at a more or less general consensus in the field of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nevertheless, enormous damage will be inflicted on the very credibility of the NPT if nuclear disarmament continues to advance at a snail's pace, if at all, in the years ahead.

At the same time, the failure of the Conference to adopt a final declaration will certainly not prove to be an inducement to the States which have not yet done so to adhere to the NPT.

It is said in the present-day world that it is not possible by technological means to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Let us fervently hope that the efforts of the international community to achieve the universality of the NPT régime in the hope of preventing nuclear proliferation do not end in failure as a result of the recent NPT Review Conference.

The only way by which such a situation could possibly be averted would be for the top leaders of the nuclear-weapon States to give the green light for nuclear disarmament to move forward. Fortunately, all the nuclear-weapon States have been assembled together in the Committee on Disarmament as from its spring session this year - the first year of the Second Disarmament Decade. In other words, the actors are gathered on the stage of nuclear disarmament and the curtain has already been raised.

The first feasible measure that can be mentioned in the field of nuclear disarmament is the prohibition of nuclear test explosions.

The question of the prohibition of nuclear test explosions has been widely discussed by the international community ever since 1954, and there have been certain results of such discussions, including the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

Japan hopes that all the nuclear-weapon States will adhere to the partial test-ban Treaty and that the Soviet Union and the United States will refrain from any action that would breach the provisions of the treaty on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests and the treaty on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, both of which have yet to come into force.

Those various measures can of course be evaluated for what they are worth, but I hardly need to say that the ultimate objective of our efforts to prohibit nuclear test explosions is the achievement of a comprehensive test ban. There cannot be a more poignant demonstration of the necessity of a comprehensive test ban than the fact that nuclear test explosions have actually been increasing in number in the period since the partial test-ban Treaty was concluded.

No words are necessary to stress how ardently the international community is awaiting the achievement of a comprehensive prohibition of all nuclear test explosions.

A progress report on the tripartite negotiations on a comprehensive test ban was presented to the Committee on Disarmament during its summer session this year. That certainly deserved appreciation. However, the expectations of the international community concerning the attainment of a comprehensive test ban have reached the stage where it can no longer be satisfied by merely listening to reports on how the tripartite negotiations are progressing.

The trilateral negotiators have always insisted that the commencement of concrete negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament before the conclusion of their tripartite negotiations would impede the progress of those negotiations. My delegation nevertheless feels that it would be possible for the Committee on Disarmament to contribute to the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty if it were to study ways of conducting concrete deliberations on the subject without prejudice to the trilateral negotiations.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

To give one example, the recent progress report on the trilateral negotiations refers to the establishment of an international seismic data exchange system to verify compliance with an eventual comprehensive test-ban treaty; it also proposes the setting up of a committee of experts that would be charged with establishing and operating such a data exchange system. The international seismic data exchange has been under study in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and in the Committee on Disarmament over the years, as is well known, and my Government is of the view that the initiation of concrete discussions on such a system within the Committee on Disarmament would by no means adversely affect the trilateral negotiations but would actually be instrumental in the early conclusion and implementation of a comprehensive test ban-treaty.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

Furthermore, it would be a tremendous encouragement to the international community if the nuclear-weapon States were to suspend spontaneously all their nuclear explosion tests or at least reduce the number of such tests during the period prior to the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban Treaty. At the same time, my delegation wishes to launch a strong appeal to all States to refrain strictly from any action leading to nuclear explosions whatever the pretext. All further nuclear explosion tests will be regarded by my delegation as a serious act of defiance to all peoples of the world who aspire to peace and security on this planet.

Japan has placed a high value on the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) begun in 1969 between the Soviet Union and the United States as contributing to a more stabilized strategic relationship between those two Powers and also as constituting a realistic step forward in the direction of nuclear disarmament.

My Government strongly hopes for the early advent of a situation that will render possible the ratification of the SALT II treaty that was signed in June last year by the Soviet Union and the United States. It also counts on those two States to refrain from actions that would be contrary to the objectives of the interim SALT I agreement and the SALT II treaty before the entry into force of the latter.

The limitation and reduction of theatre nuclear weapons, bearing in mind the need to maintain the military balance between East and West, would render a tremendous service to peace and stability on the European continent and in the world as a whole; it would also be of great significance from the point of view of nuclear disarmament. My Government therefore welcomes the commencement last week of preliminary talks between the Soviet Union and the United States on this subject.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

If we could agree to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stocks, this would constitute a significant step forward in the field of disarmament. For chemical weapons are weapons of mass destruction that can be manufactured with relative ease, and therefore many countries are deemed to have the potential to manufacture them.

The prohibition of chemical weapons has been discussed as a priority item in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) for many years. The various draft conventions and the numerous working papers that have been submitted to the CCD all testify to the efforts devoted by that body to the solution of this question.

My Government appreciates the fact that a further detailed progress report on the USA-USSR bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons was submitted to this year's session of the Committee on Disarmament.

Japan has urged over the years that discussions on chemical weapons in the CCD and in the Committee on Disarmament should move forward from the stage of a general exchange of views to the stage of concrete negotiations. We are therefore pleased that the issues to be dealt with in the negotiation on a chemical weapons convention were examined in the Working Group established during the 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament, and that the issues on which there existed a general convergence of views were separated from those on which such a convergence of views had yet to be achieved. It can be said to be highly significant that, as a result of the work done in the Working Group, what had been in the past merely the proposals of individual delegations has now been upgraded to the views of the Committee on Disarmament, thus laying the foundation for the future elaboration of treaty language.

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

My Government hopes that the elaboration of a convention can begin in the Working Group on Chemical Weapons that we hope will be set in session of the Committee on Disarmament, based on the work undertaken this year.

Japan also wishes to appeal once again to the Soviet Union and the United States that, in response to the strong hopes of the international community for the realization of a chemical weapons ban, they speedily conclude their bilateral negotiations and present the results - their so-called joint initiative - to the Committee on Disarmament at the earliest possible date.

With regard to the reports suggesting the possibility that poisonous gas or certain other chemical weapons may have been used in Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Laos, I have to say that, if such reports prove to be accurate, these acts would be extremely regrettable challenges to our efforts towards the prohibition of chemical weapons.

My Government welcomes the adoption, at the recent second session of the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, of the Protocols on incendiary weapons, landmines and booby-traps and non-detectable fragments, as well as a General Treaty embracing those three Protocols, and regards this development as constituting concrete progress in the field of conventional weapons disarmament.

Japan also welcomes the ongoing test of the proposed standardized instrument for the reporting of military expenditures, and the presentation by the Secretary-General to this session of his report on the implementation of the relevant resolution (33/67) adopted at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly. We consider it desirable that more countries take part in the test and that the proposed reporting instrument be improved upon.

As we have pointed out on several occasions, the prerequisite for achieving a reduction of military expenditures is a fair method of calculation and international comparison of these expenditures; any attempts which are not accompanied by such a prerequisite would have to be termed unrealistic.

Japan has supported the idea of establishing a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean as a means of reducing international tension and contributing to the attainment of general and complete disarmament, and has been an active member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean from its inception. It welcomes the start of the enlarged Ad Hoc Committee which now includes the five permanent

members of the Security Council as well as the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean in accordance with the resolution (34/80 B) adopted at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Regarding the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean as provided for in the said resolution, however, Japan is of the view that, before deciding the dates for such a conference, adequate preparatory work is essential, including the consideration of such fundamental matters as the delimitation of the Indian Ocean, questions related to the control of military activities, and so forth. Taking stock of the present state of consideration of these matters in the enlarged Ad Hoc Committee, we therefore cannot help feeling that the holding of a conference on the Indian Ocean next year would be premature.

We should also like to point out that, for the realization of a zone of peace, it would be indispensable that all States concerned refrain from any action that would run counter to the provisions and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and that they exert all efforts towards maintaining and promoting peace and stability in the area in question.

No one will dispute the fact that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, achieved meaningful results. The Final Document, adopted by consensus, sets forth the objectives of our future activities in the whole range of disarmament issues, and important improvements have been made in the institutional set-up for both deliberations and negotiations in the disarmament field. The mere gathering in the same room of ministerial representatives from so many countries to discuss disarmament surely contributed to mutual understanding and confidence-building among nations. One can readily understand the importance of the Final Document of the special session when one considers the frequency with which we quote from that instrument.

A second special session devoted to disarmament is scheduled for 1982. Its main task will be to discuss the various objectives contained in the Final Document of the first special session and to consider ways and means of achieving those objectives. It goes without saying that very thoroughgoing preparations will be needed if the second special session is to accomplish this difficult task.

My Government expresses the hope that, beginning next year, all Member States will initiate constructive deliberations, free from unproductive propaganda of a political nature, in preparation for the forthcoming special session with a view to ensuring its success. Japan intends to play a positive role from that preparatory stage.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania)(interpretation from French): I should like to begin by expressing to you, Sir, our profound satisfaction at your election as Chairman of this Committee and to pledge the full co-operation of the Romanian delegation in the fulfilment of the important task entrusted to you. We wish also to extend our sincere congratulations to all the officers of the Committee, as well as the Committee's secretariat, for the excellent organization of our work devoted to the major imperatives of our time, namely, halting the arms race and disarmament.

The general debate in the plenary Assembly highlighted the profound concern felt by all States and all peoples at the great tension that pervades international life and which seriously endangers détente, peace and the national independence of peoples.

The course of events, the aggravation of the political situation and the open conflicts that exist today throughout the world bring out very strongly the extremely serious consequences for international peace and security of the continued stockpiling of weapons and, first and foremost, nuclear weapons, which have acquired colossal dimensions in no way justified by reasons of defence. In addition, those accumulations constantly promote recourse to force in international relations and hamper the aspiration of peoples to co-operation, understanding, and economic and social progress.

While so many burning questions await resolution with a view to ensuring the economic and social progress of each country and the elimination of underdevelopment, military expenditures have not ceased to grow. The \$500 billion to be spent this year for weapons represent an unpardonable waste of human and material resources, a burden weighing ever more heavily on the shoulders of all peoples. As emphasized recently by the President of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu:

"No people in the world will be able to bear the gigantic increase in military expenditures, the unproductive use of hundreds of millions of dollars, material and manpower, of the conquests of science and of everything that man produces, which, instead of serving progress and well-being, is devoted to the destruction of life and the annihilation of men."

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

It is in the light of those considerations that the Romanian delegation will now deal with the questions included in our Committee's agenda. We believe that the efforts of the United Nations aimed at putting an end to the arms race and at encouraging disarmament should be integrated in an organic manner in strong action aimed at halting the aggravation of tension, eliminating from international life the policy of force and threat of force, and promoting the settlement by peaceful means alone of all problems which might divide States.

History bears witness to the fact that what was built on force in relations between States has complicated the search for solutions, poisoned the international climate and, in the last analysis, proved unavailing.

We could not define the objectives to be achieved by our deliberations without taking into account the fact that the year that has elapsed since the previous debate has witnessed especially disquieting evolutions as regards the arms race as well as stagnation of negotiations on disarmament.

In fact we have witnessed a recrudescence of armaments policies. Programmes aimed at developing even more sophisticated nuclear weapons are being elaborated and implemented, thus giving new impetus to the unbridled arms race. Europe, which already has an excess of weapons and military forces, finds itself on the threshold of a new escalation of the arms race as a result of measures for the deployment of new medium-range missiles and increases in military budgets.

Talks and negotiations on disarmament have not succeeded in influencing in any way this course of events and have led to virtually no concrete results as regards the substance of those problems.

We are obliged to note that, despite the efforts made by some States, the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, that negotiating body created with such difficulty by the first special session devoted to disarmament and which aroused hope for more effective activity, has not recorded any substantive progress. The recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty showed the seriousness of the impasse in which international dialogue in the field of disarmament between the major nuclear Powers, on the one hand, and non-nuclear-weapon States, on the other, finds itself.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

This is the case, too, with the negotiations undertaken outside the United Nations on specific questions of disarmament which are making no headway or have even been suspended.

We consider that what is urgently required now is an urgent evaluation of the situation and the necessary political will on the part of all States, in the light of the gravity of the danger which threatens the life of peoples. It is more than ever necessary for the United Nations, for every State in the world, to act resolutely to prevent the arms race from entering a new, even more dangerous stage.

We believe that it is especially important for this session of the General Assembly to set the dialogue in the field of disarmament on new, more effective bases in order to relaunch and continue the policy of détente. It is undeniable that the present tension is also the result of the lack of decision on the adoption and implementation of effective disarmament measures, added to other crucial problems affecting mankind that remain unsolved. All of this demands a constructive approach and much greater initiative on the part of all States and, first and foremost, from the nuclear States. It is in this spirit that we welcomed the proposals advanced by the Soviet Union at the present session concerning "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war". We believe that their implementation, concurrently with other equally urgent measures proposed by States over the years, would be such as to relaunch the negotiations on disarmament. In that same spirit, the Romanian delegation will support any other constructive initiative which may be presented at the current session.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

As a European country, Romania, as is only natural, attaches the highest importance to the strengthening of security, peace and co-operation in Europe, which no doubt would have a positive effect on the general climate throughout the world. Like other European States, Romania is deeply concerned at the fact that it is precisely in Europe that the most powerful means of mass destruction have been accumulated, and that it is there that it has been decided to emplace new weapons, which increases insecurity and the danger of war. We also feel that everything should be done to halt this dangerous course. It is in the interests of all peoples not to admit new nuclear missiles to Europe, to halt the deployment of new medium-range missiles on the continent. We have always spoken out in favour of the opening of negotiations on the subject, and we should like to hope that the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States to begin such negotiations will lead to the results the peoples of the world expect.

Since we attach great importance to the careful preparation and the good performance of the Madrid meeting, we believe we should do everything in our power to ensure that that Conference will give a new and strong impetus to the policy of détente and to the implementation, as a single unit, of the documents signed in Helsinki. The Madrid meeting should reaffirm the principles embodied in the Helsinki Final Act and work towards their implementation, while giving special attention to disarmament questions, and it should also decide to convene a European conference devoted to the strengthening of confidence and to disarmament on the continent.

We hope that acceptable agreements will be reached on all questions connected with the preparation for the November meeting, so that that Conference may give a new impetus to the implementation of the documents signed in Helsinki, and that it will decide on a new meeting to be devoted to the problems of European security. As is well known, Romania has proposed that the next meeting be held in Bucharest.

We are, of course, aware of the fact that disarmament is a complex process and a lengthy one. We therefore think that it would be especially important to move on to the adoption of partial measures, such as the

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

dismantling of foreign military bases, the withdrawal of all troops and armaments behind national boundaries and the abolition of military blocs. Such measures would help to strengthen confidence among States and would make it possible to move on to general and complete disarmament.

Like all other countries, Romania considers that the ratification of the SALT II agreements and their entry into force as early as possible would have a very positive influence on the initiation of the disarmament process.

At the same time, we hope that good faith and the will to arrive at tangible substantial results will in the last analysis prevail in all negotiating bodies, in order that concrete measures may be taken to halt the arms race and move towards effective disarmament measures.

In the context of this energetic action designed to bring the disarmament negotiations out of the dead lock in which they are now, the United Nations should pursue and intensify its activities aimed at mobilizing more broadly world public opinion, the masses of the population and all progressive political circles, while informing the peoples of the development of the arms race and the dangers it entails. The updating, as provided for in the Final Document of the tenth special session, of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the economic and social consequences of disarmament, which has already reached its second edition, would inter alia serve such purposes.

Now I should like to refer to the position of the Romanian delegation concerning some of the specific questions which appear on the agenda of the Committee.

One of the urgent tasks to which Romania attaches particular importance is that of halting the growing increase in military expenditures and adopting resolute measures to reduce them. The continued increase of military budgets has become a heavy burden on all peoples, a great obstacle on the path to economic and social development, and a permanent threat to peace and civilization.

The interests of peace and progress of all peoples demand that the military balance, the guarantee of the security of States, be effected, not through the escalation of the arms race, the increase of military

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

expenditures and the stock-piling of weapons, but quite on the contrary, through the reduction of military budgets, military forces and weapons, through effective disarmament measures. Thus we would save important material and human resources which could be used for the economic and social development of each nation and, in particular, the more rapid development of the developing countries.

Faithful to its position and its proposals on the subject, Romania recently decided for the third successive time to reduce by 16 per cent its military expenditures for the current year. The funds thus released will be diverted to the implementation of programmes aimed at ensuring the well-being of our people. It is however obvious that disarmament cannot be carried out by a single country and, in any event, not first and foremost by small and medium-sized countries, or by developing countries. Disarmament must begin with the large, powerfully armed countries, those States which possess nuclear weapons.

We are happy to note that the United Nations has of late begun to pay greater attention to the question of military budgets. Romania has taken part in such efforts and considers that the question of the freezing and reduction of military budgets should become one of the main concerns of States and of international deliberating and negotiating bodies dealing with disarmament. As stressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania in his intervention before the General Assembly, it would be of great importance to achieve international agreements under which States, particularly those heavily armed, would commit themselves, until new agreements on the freezing and reduction of military budgets had been concluded, to show self-restraint with regard to increases of military expenditures.

At its last session, the United Nations Disarmament Commission began an in-depth consideration of the question of military budgets. The General Assembly should, in our view, confirm the recommendation contained in the report of the Commission concerning its subsequent activities in the field of the freezing and reduction of military budgets. By virtue of the mandate to be

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

entrusted to it the Commission should, in accordance with the consensus that emerged at the last session, proceed in the next stage to the identification and elaboration of principles that should govern the activities of States on this subject. Thus it would contribute to the achievement of progress towards the conclusion of specific agreements on the reduction of military expenditures. The Romanian delegation intends to submit at this session, together with other delegations, a draft resolution which includes that task among the more active concerns of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Any resolute action in the field of disarmament should at all times take into account the priority that should be given to the nuclear field in the context of efforts undertaken to halt the arms race.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

The Second Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty highlighted the growing concern of mankind at the gigantic power of nuclear destruction that has accumulated on our planet and that places the world in a serious state of insecurity. It was thus right that severe criticism was levelled at those States that, despite commitments undertaken by virtue of article VI of the Treaty, have not fulfilled their obligation to negotiate in good faith on nuclear disarmament measures. Equally justified are the demands of non-nuclear-weapon States which, by their adherence to the Treaty, have renounced the production or acquisition of nuclear weapons for firm guarantees from the nuclear Powers that they will never in any circumstances be the victims of the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons or recourse to force in general.

Profound concern is also aroused by the increasing number of restrictive measures, artificial barriers, and by the monopolistic policy practised in the field of the transfer of nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes, at a time when the conquests of science and technology should be placed at the service of the economic and social progress of all States, above all the developing countries.

During the Conference in Geneva it was not found possible to adopt a document acceptable to all on the evaluation of the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, a fact which demonstrated the firm opposition of most States of the world to the present nuclear policy. The balance of obligations and responsibilities on which the Treaty is based has become even more unstable as a result of the increase in the initial gaps in and of that instrument.

For its part Romania has always considered and still considers that to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and guarantee the viability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty it is necessary to adopt strong and real measures of nuclear disarmament to give security guarantees to non-nuclear States and to provide unrestricted access for all countries, and first and foremost the developing countries, to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. At the two Review Conferences on the Non-Proliferation Treaty the Romanian delegation supported the urgent need to meet this threefold demand and it will continue to do so strongly in all competent international forums.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

The safeguarding of the Treaty calls for the urgent solution of these problems. In that connexion we consider that the next review conference of the parties to the Treaty should take careful note of the lessons to be drawn from the failure of the recent Geneva meeting.

While stressing the absolute priority of nuclear disarmament, Romania also supports the adoption of non-nuclear measures aimed at banning chemical weapons, radiological weapons and new weapons and systems of mass destruction, as well as all partial measures likely to lead to the strengthening of confidence among States and to general and complete disarmament.

At present, in order to translate disarmament measures into reality it is essential to use with determination the most democratic debating and negotiating body, which was created by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Geneva Committee on Disarmament, as the only multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament, should become an authentic negotiating body and work energetically and independently of other negotiations being carried on elsewhere. Disarmament is a vital problem for all States and should be carried out with the participation of all; the negotiations in different forums should be not contradictory but complementary. At present this is the fundamental problem with which the Committee on Disarmament has to deal and on its solution depend in the last analysis the Committee's effectiveness and even its *raison d'être*. While welcoming the progress made in the field of the organization of its work, in particular through the creation of working groups on specific subjects - a method of work that Romania has supported for many years - we cannot fail to stress that the effectiveness and results of the Committee must lead to negotiations on substantive questions with the participation of all its members and of other States which may wish to be associated with such negotiations. To keep the Committee on the sidelines of other negotiations on substantive matters of disarmament would undermine its authority. On the other hand, to involve it frequently in lengthy procedural debates could well plunge it into obscurity.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, too, confirmed its importance and usefulness as the deliberative body within the disarmament system while highlighting the authority it draws from the participation of all States Members of the United Nations in its work. That is one of the reasons that lead us to request that it be used even more to go more thoroughly into specific disarmament problems, and to state that States should take initiatives likely to contribute effectively to the formation of the political will that would make possible progress towards real disarmament negotiations.

The year 1981, which will mark the beginning of the Second United Nations Disarmament Decade, will be decisive in laying the foundations for a new stage in the efforts that the United Nations must make to mobilize States in favour of the cause of disarmament.

It is obvious that the major event in that year will be the preparations for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which should break new ground by associating the United Nations more closely with that problem and offer a clearer and surer prospect for efforts aimed at halting the arms race and at disarmament.

The Romanian delegation will have occasion to speak on those questions in the context of a separate statement. We wish to state now, however, that the success of the second special session will depend to a very large degree on its ability to achieve a new, broader and more authentic consensus on practical actions to be undertaken in order to halt the arms race and achieve disarmament, first and foremost nuclear disarmament. Therefore we feel that the committee envisaged for the preparation of the special session should provide all States that wish to make a constructive contribution to it with the possibility of participating directly in all its activities.

I should like to emphasize by way of conclusion that in putting forward these considerations the Romanian delegation has had constantly in mind the role of the United Nations in ensuring the democratic and equitable solution of the problems confronting mankind and the success of the policy of peace and détente. Among those problems, and we cannot repeat this too often, the halting of the arms race and the achievement of disarmament hold pride of place.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

It is incumbent upon the General Assembly at the present session to help to unite the efforts of all States in order to overcome the problems caused by the present international situation and contribute constructively to the adoption of decisions that can open up real prospects for the initiation of genuine negotiations on disarmament, and above all on nuclear disarmament. The Romanian delegation is determined to do its utmost to achieve that objective, in close co-operation with all other delegations.

Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, I should like first of all to assure you that my delegation will do everything possible to help you in performing your tasks in your responsible post of Chairman of the First Committee.

Turning to the discussion of the broad range of disarmament questions in the First Committee of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Czechoslovak delegation would like first of all to express its appreciation of the valuable contribution to our negotiations embodied in the new proposal of the Soviet Union with regard to the adoption of certain "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war". The need for this initiative was certainly dictated by the current international situation, one in which the policy of détente is being severely tested as a result of attempts on the part of certain Western forces, particularly in the United States, to halt this process and to disrupt the existing military balance.

The proposal of the Soviet Union makes it possible to discuss comprehensively the implementation of at least four important partial measures in the area of easing international tension and disarmament precisely in the light of the urgency of these questions and from the standpoint of the need for the earliest possible reduction of the danger of war.

Firstly, one particularly urgent and relevant requirement today is for States members of military alliances to decide henceforth not to expand these alliances and, at the same time, for States not now members of military and political groupings to refrain from joining such groupings. Furthermore, all States should avoid any action which might lead to the creation of new military and political groupings, and this applies within the framework of existing regional organizations which do not at the present time have any military functions.

The observance of these principles would promote the stabilization of the necessary status quo in Europe and in other continents. At the same time, it would represent a genuine step towards doing away with a system of relations among States which is sometimes known as the "bloc policy". The members of the Warsaw Treaty in the declaration of their Political Consultative Committee dated 15 May this year once again confirmed their unambiguous attitude to the proposal

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

to the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with regard to the simultaneous dissolution of both groupings beginning with the possible dissolution of their military organizations.

There is no doubt that carrying out the proposal not to expand military alliances contained in the Soviet Union document we are now discussing would have a very favourable effect on the international atmosphere as a whole. Therefore, we consider that the General Assembly should back this appeal with all its authority.

Secondly, we should pay the utmost attention to the initiative advocating that, with effect from next year, all States - and primarily all the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and countries associated with them in military agreements - should not increase their armed forces and conventional armaments. In our view this proposal combines two clear merits: one that it is easy to carry out and the second that its favourable political effect would be very great.

There is no doubt that freezing the strength of armed forces would create, without the slightest detriment to the principle of equal security of all contracting parties, favourable conditions for subsequent reductions of armed forces and would promote progress also in the field of nuclear disarmament and, what is more, free resources for purposes of economic and social development.

It is precisely in this spirit that we should view the results of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament - and all States Members of the United Nations voted unanimously for this by adopting the Final Document.

Hence, in order to implement the Soviet proposal, one thing alone is required - political determination, primarily on the part of all permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and their allies, to come to agreement on a specific date. As far as my own country, Czechoslovakia, is concerned - and this is shown by our tireless efforts to bring about agreement at the Vienna talks on mutual and balanced force reductions in Central Europe - this political determination exists and will not be failing in the future either.

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

Thirdly, a step of extreme importance would be the effective strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear States. As long ago as 1978 Czechoslovakia supported the proposal to conclude a comprehensive international convention on this subject. We continue to believe that the adoption of such a convention with the participation of all nuclear and non-nuclear States would be the most reliable and effective means of solving this important problem.

We also welcome another constructive idea that all nuclear States should make solemn declarations, identical in content, to the effect that they will not use their nuclear weapons against States which have renounced the manufacture or acquisition of such weapons and have none on their territories. We share the view that these declarations could be backed by the full weight and authority of the United Nations Security Council.

(Mr. Hlulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

There is no doubt that it is precisely steps such as those, in the present circumstances, that would go a long way towards reducing the danger of war and helping to extend the process of détente to the military field. Such measures are entirely realistic and feasible in practical terms, provided that States Members of the United Nations, including in the first place the permanent members of the Security Council, take a constructive approach to the measures and demonstrate the necessary political will.

Fourthly, last but not least, we have the problem of concluding a treaty on the complete and total prohibition of the testing of nuclear weapons. The importance of such a treaty is undoubtedly paramount.

As a member of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament, Czechoslovakia has been taking an active part in talks on this subject held on its soil. and we have come to the conclusion that the progress achieved, particularly in the trilateral talks among the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain, has created a basis for believing that that treaty could very well be produced successfully in a very short time. The present initiative of the Soviet Union, in our view, represents a new and valuable stimulus for a final decision to be taken on this problem, particularly since it provides that agreement be reached on the adoption on a reciprocal basis of a one-year moratorium on any nuclear explosions. That in itself would represent a very important step towards the reduction of military tension and the creation of an propitious atmosphere for effective and fruitful talks.

That is why we believe that that proposal should meet with a broad and constructive response both in our Committee and in the General Assembly.

The proposals contained in the new item on the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly on urgent measures for reducing the danger of war indicate to us the right approach to overcoming the difficulties of the present international situation. In our view, those proposals represent a kind of minimum programme, with the objective of constituting urgent but very clear-cut and entirely realistic measures. The implementation of those measures would have a direct and favourable effect on improving the international climate and would make it possible to take a step towards disarmament and the strengthening of international security.

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

For our part, therefore, we whole-heartedly support the Soviet initiative announced at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly by the Foreign Minister of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mr. Andrei A. Gromyko, and the draft resolution on the subject contained in document A/C.1/35/L.1. We are thus ready, in close co-operation with all interested delegations, to finish work on it and put it into effect.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.