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Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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

AGENDA ITEMS 39 to 57, 133, 136, 138 and 139 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. CHANANA (India): Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to offer you, the representative of friendly Ghana, the sincere felicitations of my delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee for the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your long and close association with India has been a matter of pride to us. I have no doubt that with you at the helm we shall be able to achieve important and concrete results during the course of our work in the next few weeks.

I should like also to congratulate all the other officers of the Committee who have been elected to assist you in your difficult assignment. My delegation pledges its full support and co-operation to you and the other officers of the Committee in the discharge of your responsibilities.

The pursuit of the noble goal of disarmament over the past several decades, in particular since the dawn of the age of nuclear weapons, has owed much to the contributions of a handful of dedicated and sagacious statesmen and thinkers.

Lord Noel-Baker was one such towering personality. His passing away is a great loss to the cause of disarmament.

On a happier note, however, I should like to express the great pleasure and satisfaction of my delegation at the fact that two well-known apostles of peace and crusaders for disarmament, Mrs. Myrdal of Sweden and Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I should like to take this opportunity to extend to them, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, our warm and sincere congratulations. I am particularly happy to see Ambassador Garcia Robles amongst us at this session. There is no doubt that his presence in this Committee will be a source of inspiration and encouragement to all of us gathered here in the service of peace and disarmament.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

A pervasive sense of anxiety and apprehension plagues our countries and peoples today. In her address to the nation on the occasion of India's Independence Day on 15 August this year, the Prime Minister of India said:

"Today all countries are worried; and the greatest worry is about the direction in which the human community is heading, after having extended its limits of knowledge and ability. Are we heading for suicide and annihilation of this beautiful earth of ours? This is the question which is facing more and more people today."

Who can doubt that we are indeed heading towards total and unmitigated disaster? Who can dispute the tragic fact that human survival is in unprecedented peril? The feverish accumulation of the most lethal and destructive weapons of mass destruction by the major nuclear-weapon Powers continues at an accelerated pace, threatening the security of all nations and the survival of people the world over. Nuclear weapons pose the greatest threat to the survival of mankind.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

The use of such weapons would recognize no national or regional boundaries; belligerents and non-belligerents alike would perish. In the aftermath of a nuclear war, human civilization would cease to exist. And yet, unfortunately, the nuclear-weapon Powers insist on their right to acquire and use such weapons in the pursuit of their narrow security concerns. In pursuing security for themselves, they create unlimited insecurity for others and threaten the extinction of this planet of ours. We ask them: who gave you this right? Is it permissible for a handful of powerful nuclear-weapon Powers to determine the fate of the entire world? Could the right of individual and collective self-defence enshrined in the Charter be cynically interpreted to sanction the annihilation of the entire human species? What could be more absurd? And yet, we are today faced with the grim spectacle of a disastrous nuclear arms race and a refusal on the part of the major Powers to accept any multilateral discipline on their actions and policies.

We are all familiar with the reasons for the dismal failure of the second special session devoted to disarmament. Although on the streets outside hundreds of thousands of ordinary people were demonstrating against nuclear weapons and demanding an end to the threat of a nuclear war, their voices, unfortunately, did not carry to the negotiating chambers within the United Nations building. The major Powers refused to accept any restraint on their decisions concerning armaments, despite the spirit of flexibility and accommodation displayed by members of the non-aligned group, who made several important concessions to them. But in the end we agreed with the representatives of non-Governmental and popular organizations who said simply and forthrightly: survival is not a matter of consensus. It is for this reason that India disassociated itself from the concluding chapters of the Concluding Document of the second special session on disarmament, since in our view, the session had failed to respond to the deep anxiety and concern of people all over the world who feel their survival is threatened by the very existence of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

It is imperative that the present session of the United Nations General Assembly adopt concrete and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war. The peril we face is immediate. We cannot afford to wait, since in this age of nuclear weapons every day is, in fact, a borrowed day.

At the second special session devoted to disarmament India had put forward a number of proposals designed to reduce the threat of an outbreak of nuclear war and to clear the way for the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. In accordance with a decision taken by the second special session, these proposals have now been submitted to the United Nations General Assembly at the current session for consideration and necessary action. Let me briefly recapitulate these proposals for the benefit of members of this Committee.

In document A/S-12/AC.1/L.1, now reissued as document A/C.1/37/L.1, India has called upon all nuclear-weapon States to agree to a freeze on nuclear weapons which would, inter alia, provide for a simultaneous total stoppage of any further production of nuclear weapons and a complete cut-off in the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes.

In document A/S-12/AC.1/L.4 which is now before the First Committee as document A/C.1/37/L.4, India has recommended the adoption of an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, pending nuclear disarmament. The text of a draft convention is annexed to this document for consideration and adoption.

The proposal contained in document A/S-12/AC.1/L.6, reissued as document A/C.1/37/L.5 in this Committee recommends certain urgent measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for nuclear disarmament, namely, the adoption of

"(a) A convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

"(b) Cessation of the testing of nuclear weapons pending the conclusion of a treaty banning the testing of nuclear weapons;

"(c) A complete freeze on the development, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, along with a cut-off in the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes;

(A/C.1/37/L.5 para. 1)

In addition, India had the privilege of being a co-sponsor, along with Mexico, of a draft resolution contained in document A/S-12/AC.1/L.2, now reissued as document A/C.1/37/L.2, wherein the Secretary-General was requested "to appoint a representative group of public persons of great eminence ... for the purpose of advising on special measures and procedures ... designed for the collective control, management and resolution of critical or confrontational situations which could escalate to nuclear war, in addition to those already provided for in the United Nations Charter". (A/C.1/37/L.2, para. 3)

I need hardly add that in the view of my delegation, none of these proposals have lost any of their topicality or urgency. In fact, we believe that developments since the conclusion of the second special session on disarmament render their consideration and adoption even more pressing. We trust that members of this Committee will seriously study and reflect upon these proposals and give them their full support. We are ready to engage in consultations with other delegations so as to take into account the views of as wide a spectrum of countries as possible.

In this context, I should also like to draw the attention of the Committee to a proposal made by India in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva for the setting up of an ad hoc working group to undertake negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on appropriate and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war. The proposal has received widespread support in the Committee and it is our sincere hope that, with the support and encouragement of the General Assembly, such negotiations can begin immediately after the Committee on Disarmament begins its 1983 annual session.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

While the danger of nuclear war and the disastrous consequences of the nuclear arms race continue to engage the attention of the international community, a new and sinister peril is rearing its head - the danger of an arms race in outer space. Space has rightly been called the last frontier of human endeavour. The exploration of space, the mastering of the technology of sending rockets to distant planets, the launching of sophisticated man-made satellites, are all elements of an exciting new chapter in the history of human achievement. Yet, like so many of man's achievements in the past, this emerging mastery of space too is subject to attempts to pervert it by using it in the service of death and destruction. Vast sums of money are being allocated for research into the military uses of outer space and for the development of weapons that would be deployed in outer space. In the first category are activities such as the development, testing and deployment of satellites that would support so-called nuclear deterrence by providing information and communications which would enable more accurate targeting of missiles and better co-ordination among widely separated nuclear forces. It is also argued that such activities would provide vital information for waging a so-called protracted nuclear war. A new and more dangerous dimension would thus be added to the already alarming threat of an outbreak of nuclear war. The military use of outer space is invoked to buttress the arguments - dangerous arguments - that a nuclear war can be fought and won. This is a clear prescription for disaster.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

In the second category, which consists of the development and deployment of advanced weapons in outer space, alarming scenarios are being readied for implementation. We are all familiar with the so-called anti-satellite weapons. The familiar action-reaction process, which is a hallmark of the arms race, has already commenced as far as this category of space weapons is concerned. One leading space Power is alleged already to have tested such a weapon. The other is busy trying to harden its satellites against possible attack and at the same time is developing its own anti-satellite weapons, which would consist of a miniature homing device to be carried high into the atmosphere by a fighter plane and then boosted further into space by a two-stage rocket. Such an anti-satellite weapon would use infra-red sensors to close in on and then explode near its target. Historical experience shows that once such weapons have been developed, their deployment is only a matter of time.

Several other sophisticated weapons are being developed for deployment in outer space. Considerable research and development activity is concentrated in the potential space application of lasers, both as anti-satellite weapons and as anti-ballistic-missile weapons. Another potential weapon at present in the exploratory stage is the particle beam weapon, which would use streams of charged particles to destroy targets in space. Unless urgent action is taken by the international community to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space, there is little doubt that the last frontier of human endeavour will soon turn into a new battleground for the powerful nations of the earth.

While India is a developing country, it has taken a keen interest in the exploration of space and has achieved modest progress. India's achievements in this field are the result of its own scientific and technical endeavours, as well as of the close co-operation it has enjoyed with several countries, including the Soviet Union, the United States, France and the Federal Republic of Germany. We are convinced that beneficial international co-operation in

(Mr. Chanana, India)

the exploration of outer space can only continue to develop if outer space is preserved as the common heritage of mankind and used for the benefit of all mankind. We wish to ensure that developing countries such as India can continue to benefit from the immense possibilities that we see in the development of space technology for economic and social development. It is for this reason that my country, along with other members of the Non-Aligned Movement, has repeatedly expressed serious concern and apprehension at the growing evidence of an imminent arms race among the major Powers in the realm of outer space. In the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, the group of non-aligned and neutral countries has recommended the setting up of an ad hoc working group of the Committee to undertake negotiations with a view to reaching an agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. It is our hope that this approach will be able to obtain consensus at the current session of the General Assembly and pave the way for meaningful negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament during its next annual session.

The issue is urgent not only because of the need to preserve outer space as a common heritage of mankind but also because an arms race in outer space would further exacerbate the already grave danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war on earth.

Today we live in a world which technology has reduced to a small neighbourhood. The fate of each nation is bound up with the collective fate of the whole world. The security and well-being of each country are inseparable from collective security. Interdependence in all aspects - security, economic well-being, social progress and cultural advancement - is an established fact of contemporary international life. It is for this reason that India has consistently called for an overall perspective - a global perspective - within which disarmament must be pursued. I might add that my country takes a similar approach to problems relating to the international economic system as well.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

In the field of disarmament and international security, we proceed from the premise that partial solutions or measures of a limited nature cannot bring us nearer the goal of general and complete disarmament unless conceived of within an overall perspective that lays down clear-cut objectives, priorities and methods of implementation of disarmament measures. If all the elements of an overall plan - a global strategy - are not scrupulously observed, the entire system of international security will be grossly distorted, ultimately resulting in international anarchy. Let us look at the facts. Pursuit of the goal of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries has a rationale only if it is conceived of in the context of the reduction and eventual elimination of existing nuclear-weapon arsenals. However, while non-nuclear-weapon States have remained committed to using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only, the nuclear-weapon States have continued to develop, produce and stockpile more sophisticated arsenals of nuclear weapons at an accelerated pace. This is one example of the kind of distortion that can occur if a global approach is not strictly adhered to.

Let us take another example. The setting up of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world would be relevant only if such measures were conceived of as integrally linked with the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons in those parts of the world where they are already deployed. Yet, over the past several years, what have we actually witnessed? A nuclear weapon-free zone has been established in Latin America. There are proposals for setting up similar zones in other parts of the world, enthusiastically supported by nuclear-weapon Powers and their allies. Yet, during the same period, the accumulation of nuclear weapons on the territories of the nuclear-weapon States and their allies has continued to grow at an ever-increasing pace.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

This development has made the very concept of a nuclear-weapon-free zone irrelevant. And in this context, one should also not lose sight of the fact that the nuclear-weapon Powers have been extending their military presence, including the nuclear-weapon aspect of that presence, into various regions of the world. The Indian Ocean is a case in point.

In any event, if a nuclear war were to break out, nuclear-weapon-free zones would not escape from the effects of radiation and fall-out, as well as from the consequences arising from a total breakdown of the life-sustaining economic and social links that bind our fragile world together.

The regional approach to disarmament is unacceptable to my delegation for the same reasons. The security of certain regions cannot be isolated from overall global security. In the present-day world, threats to a nation's security may as easily emanate from a Power separated from it by vast oceans as from its neighbours. For the major Powers, the entire world has become an arena for rivalry and confrontation. And this fact has rendered the concept of regional disarmament obsolete.

(Mr. Chanana, India)

It is in pursuit of this line of reasoning that India has called for multilateral negotiations on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In her message to the second special session on disarmament the Prime Minister of India recommended:

"... towards this objective, disarmament negotiations must once again revert to the task of achieving a treaty on general and complete disarmament, within an agreed time-frame, as was discussed between the United States of America and the USSR in the agreed principles and draft treaties of the early 1960s - although the problems involved have become far more complex, the basic approach and the principles then formulated could still provide a basis for meaningful negotiations." (A/S-12/PV.9, p. 92)

It is our hope that when the Committee on Disarmament resumes negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament during its 1983 session, it will bear in mind this aspect of the problem.

Let me add that in pursuing this global approach to disarmament, we must also bear in mind the close link which exists between disarmament and development. International peace and security cannot be sustained in a world where pockets of affluence are surrounded by oceans of poverty. Equally distressing is the fact that the economies of the major industrialized countries are becoming increasingly militarized and the aggressive marketing of sophisticated weapons in developing countries has become closely linked with the policies of domination and extension of political influence by the major powers. The patterns of investment and economic development in the developed countries have become increasingly distorted as a result and, in many instances, the rationale for continued production of sophisticated weaponry and its sale to the developing world is simply to avoid unemployment and short-term economic dislocation. This is an extremely dangerous trend and must be reversed if enduring international peace and security is to be achieved. It is only through restructuring the economies of the industrialized countries, particularly of the major powers, towards productive civilian production, which would in the long term provide

(Mr. Chanana, India)

greater employment opportunities and more constructive economic relations between the developed and the developing worlds, that the pursuit of disarmament can be underpinned by progress towards the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

In conclusion I would like to refer to the very thought-provoking report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization on which several speakers have already made comments during our general debate. The Secretary-General referred to what he called a "crisis in the multilateral approach in international affairs". (A/37/1, p. 3)

In our view, this crisis is directly traceable to the refusal on the part of the major powers to rise above their policies of rivalry and confrontation and to discharge their responsibility for the preservation of international peace and security. The multilateral approach, and along with it the health of the United Nations, can only be nurtured and strengthened if the major Powers accept a degree of multilateral discipline and temper their pursuit of national security with a genuine concern for the collective security of all nations, and more than that, the survival of mankind. It is our hope that the current session of the General Assembly will at least begin the process of realigning the international situation with the original aspirations and ideals of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to wish you every success in carrying out your important and responsible work. It is a great pleasure for me to see presiding at this Committee an outstanding diplomat from a friendly country that has made a considerable contribution to the struggle for peace, equality and co-operation among the peoples. I would also congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation and on my own personal behalf, to congratulate most warmly the representative of Mexico, Mr. Garcia Robles, on the well-deserved award to him of

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

the Nobel Peace Prize. We know Mr. Garcia Robles very well and highly appreciate his activities over many years in support of peace and disarmament. We wish him many more years of continued dedication to these noble objectives.

I would also like to congratulate, through the Swedish delegation, Mrs. Alva Myrdal, a very well-known person and militant, on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.

The general debate at this session ended just a few days ago. From the rostrum of the General Assembly representatives of the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations quite rightly expressed their deep concern at the deterioration of the international situation. Particularly anxious about the future of their peoples and the human race as a whole, they emphasized that the situation is fraught with serious dangers that could lead to the outbreak of a devastating thermo-nuclear conflict.

The international situation has clearly deteriorated these past few years, following the policy adopted by the most aggressive imperialist circles, based on a position of strength and diktat, the intensification of tension and confrontation, and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

The main danger to international peace and security stems from the fact that these forces intend to carry out their plans for establishing world hegemony by acquiring military superiority at the global level, relying primarily on nuclear weapons. That was why such adventurous military doctrines as the first nuclear strike, limited nuclear war and, most recently, protracted nuclear war, were elaborated.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

A new spiral in the arms race, particularly that relating to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, has begun at breakneck speed, and now greater attention is being given to further sophistication of these weapons. This feverish activity which consumes every possible resource, including the most recent achievements of science and technology, can be described only as attempts to find the most effective way of waging a nuclear war, with all its fatal consequences for the future of the human race.

Some States Members of this Organization try to underestimate the extent of this real threat, with the obvious intention of trying to maintain a climate that is favourable to the unhampered continuation of the arms race. They also seek to detract from the importance of any initiative specifically designed to strengthen peace, prevent war and avert the danger of a nuclear catastrophe.

The considerable deterioration in the international situation and the obstacles to efforts for concrete and real disarmament measures are such as to make one lose sight of any hope of controlling the arms race.

In the view of my delegation, the situation is indeed a serious one. Objectively speaking, the danger of a nuclear war does exist, but it is not inevitable. There is a real possibility that the arms race can be halted, that the nuclear holocaust can be averted. But, to that end, it is essential that all States actively undertake to promote practical measures. That is what world public opinion and the popular mass anti-war movement, a movement unprecedented in its size and scope, insists upon.

A historically important step in this direction was the unilateral undertaking by the USSR, not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The peoples rightly expect the other nuclear Powers to make the same commitment, that would in practical terms mean a common refusal to use the most dangerous weapon of mass destruction.

The fight against the threat of war must be waged on the broadest possible front: limiting the nuclear arms race in all its aspects, limiting and reducing other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, with simultaneous measures to strengthen international guarantees for the security of States. The conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would be the best way to bring this about.

The general and concrete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is one of the primary objectives of the overwhelming majority of States in the world, and has been so for decades. Solving this problem would be an extremely important step forward towards limiting the quantitative and qualitative arms race and would create real obstacles to the manufacture and subsequent further refinement of new types and systems of such weapons. In this way too, the régime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons would be further strengthened and made more stable. For this reason, we feel that the Soviet Union's proposal for an immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests which has been submitted at this session, is working towards this very goal. Carrying out this proposal is a necessary and realistic objective. It is well-known that the tripartite negotiations between the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom on this question, held during the period 1977-1980, led to important results. A complete text of the future treaty had almost been agreed upon, but it was at that very moment that the negotiations were unilaterally suspended by the United States. This decision led to a feeling of deep disappointment and anxiety within the international community.

Disarmament was dealt another blow following the decision not to resume the suspended tripartite negotiations and not to ratify the agreements with the USSR that had been signed in 1974 and 1976 on limiting nuclear-weapon tests and peaceful nuclear explosions. It was quite clear that a new policy was emerging, a policy contrary to the objectives of the treaty on banning nuclear-weapon tests, a policy contrary to the idea of disarmament in general, a policy aimed at the implementation of an enormous long-term programme for developing and further refining strategic and other nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The People's Republic of Bulgaria, along with the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations, firmly supports the view that the problem of a general and complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests must and can be resolved without further delay, and we believe that a solution depends only on political good will for a final agreement to be reached.

A major advantage of the new Soviet initiative is the flexibility of its approach. The basic provisions proposed for a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests offer the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva vast possibilities for fruitful negotiations and guarantee all the necessary conditions for monitoring and verification of its implementation.

We also welcome the proposal calling on all nuclear States to institute a moratorium on nuclear explosions of whatever kind, which would help to establish a truly constructive atmosphere of tranquility for the negotiations.

It is increasingly evident that nuclear energy is in many countries considered as one of the most basic ways of moving towards the objectives of socio-economic development. In my country, because of the lack of any other sources of energy, we attach great importance to this matter. In 1982 nuclear power in Bulgaria accounted for 25 per cent of the total output of electricity and in 1990 it is expected to provide 40 per cent. According to forecasts from the International Atomic Energy Agency, in 1990 the total output of nuclear power plants in the world will be three times the figure for 1982, and it is expected that the number of countries with such power plants will increase from 24 to 34.

Under these circumstances, the question of guaranteeing nuclear power development in all security is becoming increasingly important. However, on several occasions it has been said that there is much ground for concern. The destruction of nuclear installations used for peaceful purposes, even by conventional weapons, would entail the emission into the atmosphere of enormous quantities of radioactive material, and also the radioactive contamination of vast regions, with catastrophic consequences for the civilian population and the environment.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

That is why the Soviet proposal on this subject, which is a new item on the agenda of this session, is particularly timely and important.

The continued nuclear arms race is seriously prejudicial to the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear power. Considerable resources are being wasted on the development and manufacture of weapons of mass destruction, and this is increasing distrust among States, creating an obstacle to co-operation and the exchange of information relating to peaceful uses of nuclear power, and hindering scientific and technical progress and its dissemination throughout the world.

The Bulgarian delegation believes that taking specific measures on the basis of the above-mentioned new proposals would create conditions favourable to the solution of all the complex issues relating to halting the arms race and strengthening international security, a solution which would make it possible to divert the vast resources now used for destruction to the service of development and the well-being of mankind.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I wish to assure you that the Bulgarian delegation will do its utmost to make a constructive contribution to the adoption of decisions that will promote disarmament and preserve world peace.

Mr. SHELDON (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, it gives the delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic great pleasure to welcome you as the Chairman of the First Committee. We wish also to congratulate the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur on their election to these important posts. We wish you all every success in carrying out these responsible and important duties.

Our delegation joins others in congratulations to Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles and Mrs. Alva Myrdal on their having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

An analysis of the main problems of the world today - preventing nuclear war, halting the arms race, achieving disarmament, and finding solutions to similar tasks facing the international community in this area, all of which are the subject of our general debate in the First Committee - cannot be considered in isolation from a carefully thought-out and well-founded evaluation of the overall political situation. Unless there is a correct evaluation of that situation, we cannot draw the correct conclusions.

(Mr. Sheldov, Byelorussian SSR)

It is indisputable that the situation in the world has developed in a very dangerous way. However, an objective analysis of the reason for this is not always given. We are convinced - and the day-to-day political realities confirm this - that the root-cause of the dangerous developments is that the aggressive forces of imperialism, primarily American imperialism, are pushing the world to the brink of nuclear catastrophe and entering into an unprecedented spiralling of the arms race, which is now being devoted to the crusade they have proclaimed against socialism and the liberation struggle of peoples. Those forces are threatening the security and independence of the peoples and cynically interfering in their internal affairs, attempting to present themselves as mentors teaching everybody everything.

Today many are quite justifiably asking the question: What do the peoples expect - do they expect peaceful development of the world, to ensure better living conditions, which is work that is not easy but is noble, or do they expect the madness and nightmare horrors of nuclear annihilation? The policy of the most aggressive forces of imperialism in the world today forces us to put the question in those terms. This places a heavy responsibility on those who hold peace dear and who are not indifferent to the future of the human race. It is essential first of all to remove the threat of nuclear war, because that is the threat created by the adventurist actions of those who, in their mindless desire to achieve world domination, are simply intensifying the arms race and whipping up war hysteria.

Now more than ever before, specific action is needed in order to put an end to this unlimited licence of the aggressive forces, stop the human race from slipping down into the nuclear abyss and ease international tension, so that the peoples can confidently move forward along the path of peace and social progress. It is towards the attainment of these noble goals that the foreign policy activities of the Soviet Union are directed - and this is an important anniversary year for us. Indeed, six decades ago, for the first time in the long history of the human race, qualitatively new relations between nations and peoples were established - relations imbued with a spirit of friendship, brotherhood and mutual assistance. From the experience gained in the way the national question was solved in the Soviet Union, we draw the conclusion that good-neighbourliness and agreement can and must become the inviolable norm of relations between peoples and States.

(Mr. Sheldov, Byelorussian SSR)

To that end, it is essential that these noble principles not only be proclaimed but that they also be translated into specific action by parliaments, Governments and political parties.

The Soviet Government has always done everything in its power to defend peace, and it is now doing everything in its power not only to contain the nuclear danger and reverse the arms race, but also in other areas. Our specific proposals to that end are well known. Moreover, the Soviet State is not only willing to enter into just and honourable agreements based on equal rights, but is also prepared to take, and is in fact taking, practical unilateral steps in a spirit of goodwill, and to set a good example.

For instance, there was the voluntary commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, an act of historic significance, bearing witness to the constantly peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union, the deeply defensive approach of its military doctrine and the absence of any desire for military superiority. The peace-loving forces now expect the nuclear Powers that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to follow the example of the Soviet State. Such a "chain reaction" would in practice amount to a complete ban on the use of nuclear weapons.

In order to improve the atmosphere of trust, the Soviet Union has reduced the number of troops and armaments in Central Europe and halted the deployment of medium-range nuclear weapons that could hit targets in Western Europe.

Proceeding on the premise that the military confrontation is felt particularly acutely not only in Europe but in other parts of the world, and that peoples are endeavouring to ease the tension, the Soviet Union recently proposed that the governing bodies of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty should make a statement that their activities would not be extended to Asia, Africa or Latin America. In a message to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, said:

"In general, the Soviet Union is in favour of moving ahead in all areas where opportunities exist for limiting and radically reducing armaments, be it in nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction or conventional armaments. There is no type of weapon which the Soviet Union would not be prepared to limit or ban on the basis of reciprocity." (A/S-12/AC.1/10, p. 3)

That policy is opposed by that of the militaristic, aggressive circles of imperialism in the United States and its allies in NATO. The arms race that they have started and the establishment of new types of weapons of mass destruction are the main source of the intensification of the military danger.

Washington has supplemented its doctrine of a "limited war" with the concept of a "protracted" nuclear war from which it would hope to emerge the victor, relying on making the first nuclear strike. All this proves once again, if there were any need for further proof, that those who attempt to place the Soviet Union and the United States on the same footing and talk about the super-Powers being equally responsible for the arms race are closing their eyes to the real state of affairs.

In these circumstances it is exceptionally important urgently to place an effective obstacle in the path of the establishment of new, more lethal and more sophisticated types of such weapons. The appearance of new types of such lethal weapons in the arsenals of States could make the balance of forces wobble very dangerously. Moreover, it could lower the threshold of nuclear war and seriously further complicate the possibility of verification. Therefore, we believe that the concrete Soviet initiative on the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is extremely timely. A moratorium on nuclear explosions and a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests could help prevent the dangerous development of the nuclear arms race, raise the level of trust between States and open up real prospects for further steps towards nuclear disarmament.

Another extremely important factor in progress in this area is the Soviet Union's willingness, which has just been reconfirmed, immediately to ratify on a reciprocal basis the treaties already concluded with the United States on limiting underground nuclear-weapon tests and underground peaceful nuclear explosions, and its willingness to resume the tripartite talks with the United States and the United Kingdom, talks which were suspended through no fault of the Soviet Union's, on a complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests. Clearly, it is now up to the other side.

In addition to reducing the nuclear danger we must prevent the destruction of peaceful nuclear installations. This question has been discussed broadly in the United Nations in connection with the notorious Israeli aggressive action. It has also been discussed in the Committee on Disarmament. The Soviet Union proposes a declaration by the General Assembly that the deliberate destruction of peaceful nuclear installations, even by means of conventional weapons, is essentially equivalent to an attack using nuclear weapons - that is, equivalent to an

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action of a kind that the United Nations has already described as the gravest crime against humanity. We believe that implementation of that proposal would be an important obstacle to such actions, and thus ensure safer conditions for developing nuclear power.

Now that it is becoming increasingly important to unite the efforts of States to solve a whole series of global problems, such as energy supplies, preserving the environment and food problems, no one but the apologists of the nuclear Apocalypse can doubt that the main obstacle to solving them is the arms race, and primarily the nuclear arms race. It is essential that urgent, effective steps be taken to remove this threat hanging over the human race, so that work can begin on solving the problems of the peaceful development of the planet. Such steps would include the freezing by the nuclear Powers of the production and deployment of nuclear warheads and delivery systems, as well as a ban on the production of fissionable materials used to build various types of nuclear weapons, as proposed by the Soviet Union. Such a freeze would prevent a further dangerous spiralling of the nuclear arms race and provide the impetus for further measures to reduce and finally eliminate all nuclear arsenals. Attainment of that goal would be significantly helped by adoption of the Soviet Union's proposal that we draft, adopt and implement step by step a programme for nuclear disarmament.

One of the first stages would be to stop work on new nuclear-weapon systems. It is important that the Committee on Disarmament, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/92 K, start work immediately on drafting a convention on the prohibition of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of nuclear neutron weapons.

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Among the many problems relating to nuclear disarmament, one that stands out clearly is the limitation and reduction of strategic and nuclear weapons in Europe. These matters are of particular significance today. Talks are now under way on both these problems in Geneva, and this is something which we, along with other delegations, welcome with particular satisfaction, especially in the light of the difficulties involved in bringing one well-known party into the talks. However, it is important that the talks on these problems should be carried on in a proper manner, with a constructive attitude, and in full accordance with the principles of equality and equal security, and that they should not be used as a cover for continuing the arms race or attempting to disrupt the existing military-strategic parity.

We must also proceed from the premise that what we need are not negotiations for the sake of negotiating but real, tangible results from negotiations, taking the form of the agreements which peace-loving human beings have long been awaiting. The Soviet proposals on the negotiating table, if considered objectively, do offer us a way of moving towards effective agreements on radical reductions of arsenals in both the areas mentioned.

An integral part of the task of curbing the arms race and consolidating international security is the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is a particularly acute problem at a time when there are more and more plans to deploy on the territories of other States new types of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, when there is a widening group of "would-be" nuclear States, and when the blood-soaked hands of some régimes are grasping for the nuclear weapon in unstable and explosive regions of the world. In the complex international situation today the appearance of nuclear weapons in even one more country could lead to a chain reaction of proliferation and to the destruction of the existing military-strategic stability, and could further complicate the attainment of agreements on nuclear disarmament.

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All this shows that there is a need for further strengthening of the non-proliferation régime. A useful contribution was made by the Soviet Union at the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, when it stated that it was willing to place under the monitoring of the International Atomic Energy Agency part of its peaceful nuclear facilities. The non-nuclear countries are naturally interested in ensuring that their security is not weakened and in ensuring appropriate guarantees from the nuclear Powers. We continue to believe that the best way of strengthening such guarantees would be through conventions. At the same time, when some of the nuclear States are, to put it mildly, not willing to participate in such guarantees, an important step would be for other nuclear States to make statements to the effect that they would refuse to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States which have renounced the production and acquisition of such weapons and do not allow nuclear weapons on their territories. Such statements could later be confirmed by an authoritative decision of the Security Council. It is gratifying to note that this approach proposed by the Soviet Union has been echoed in various countries.

An effective factor in strengthening the security of non-nuclear States would be the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Treaty of Tlatelolco is a very good example of that. The desire to create non-nuclear-weapon zones has been expressed by other countries in other parts of the world, such as northern Europe, the Balkans, Africa and the Middle East. The Soviet Union has frequently stated that it has a positive approach to these proposals, and it would be an important step for other nuclear Powers also to state that they are willing to promote a search for generally acceptable arrangements for the establishment of nuclear-free zones.

An international agreement prohibiting the deployment of nuclear weapons in those countries where they are not at present located would also help to strengthen the security of non-nuclear countries and create further favourable conditions for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. It is important that no further action be taken to deploy nuclear weapons in the territories of other States in the meantime.

Chemical weapons are a subject of increasing concern. The conscience of mankind has never accepted this monstrous offspring of militarism but has always demanded and still demands a complete prohibition. The socialist countries have always advocated the halting of this dangerous aspect of the arms race and have stated that there should be no place on earth for chemical weapons. A further confirmation of that position was the proposal by the Soviet Union entitled "Basic provisions of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction". We are glad to note that this proposal by the USSR, containing important new and constructive elements, elicited great interest in the Committee on Disarmament. However, it is time to move on to the specific drafting of the agreements. The USSR has been calling for this for a long time, and it is to be hoped that some other countries which so far, in a manner that has been detrimental to the practical work of the Committee on Disarmament, have been engulfed in a whirlpool of attempts behind the scenes to blacken the position of the USSR, will return to the right road of commonsense.

During the negotiations States must avoid actions that could further complicate the situation. It is particularly important, in this connection, that States should refrain from deploying chemical weapons in other countries. The time has come to move forward to the practical aspects of the work in the Committee on Disarmament and to the conclusion of an international treaty on the prohibition of the deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind. Those who like to talk about war in outer space on the screens of United States television and so forth are rather dangerously providing food for the imaginations of the strategists in the Pentagon, and we have witnessed attempts at the military penetration of space, something which is fraught with the most serious consequences. There must be an effective international barrier to prevent this.

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The abuse of scientific progress creates problems in other areas also. Swift and far-reaching changes have occurred in military technology, and qualitatively new types of weapons are being developed - primarily weapons of mass destruction. These must be controlled, and there must be agreed limitation and prohibition of such activity. In this connection it is important to ban the development and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. An important step in that connection would be the achievement of comprehensive or separate agreements with a view to having statements made by members of the Security Council and other States that are militarily important to the effect that they refuse to develop and produce new types of weapons of mass destruction, and these statements would then be confirmed by decision of the Security Council.

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The time has also come to deal with an even broader problem - how to achieve renunciation of the use for military purposes of new discoveries and achievements of science and technology. Life itself dictates the need for a joint solution to this, although it is not a simple matter. Otherwise, there is a danger that military technology could at a certain moment - clearly, not so very far off - move so far forward that it reaches the point of no return.

In addition to these problems relating to the curbing and reduction of conventional weapons and armed forces and the limitation of naval-military activities and the reduction of military budgets, there are many other problems involved as well. However, for all their varied nature they have a common denominator: the problem of strengthening the principle of the non-use of force and of excluding the possibility of nuclear war and of war in general. It is essential to secure a renunciation of the use of force in any form, whether it be the use of nuclear or conventional weapons. Against this background there has long been a need to solve the problem of the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. It is essential that we move forward from the deadlock in considering this issue in the various bodies of the United Nations.

There are no peoples not interested in disarmament. Preventing the danger of the elimination of the human race in another world war, strengthening détente, expanding it to all the continents of the earth - these are things that cannot be achieved unilaterally. Today, in order to defend peace, what is needed more than ever before is the joint action of all States, large and small, of all peace-loving forces regardless of their ideological views and political convictions.

These are the observations which the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR felt it necessary to make at this stage of the discussion in the Committee.

Mr. NUNEZ MOSQUERA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a source of pleasure for me to express to you, Mr. Chairman, the congratulations of the Cuban delegation on your unanimous election to preside over the work of this important Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session. Through you, Sir, I should like to congratulate the representatives of Argentina and Norway, Mr. Carasales and Mr. Vraalsen, who will be acting as Vice-Chairmen, and we should also like to congratulate the representative of Mongolia, Mr. Erdenechuluun, who will be acting as Rapporteur. Needless to say, they can constantly count on the support and collaboration of the Cuban delegation during the difficult work ahead.

It is practically obligatory to repeat that this session is taking place in the midst of a complex international climate. However, that should not prevent efforts being made for disarmament and peace, as some would claim. On the contrary: today it is more necessary than ever to redouble our efforts and promote disarmament negotiations in all forums and, in particular, on the subject of nuclear disarmament. The imperialist, colonialist, neo-colonialist and racist forces which are sworn enemies of peace are bent on fomenting international tension and obstructing efforts on behalf of disarmament which are being made in various forums.

The arms race, in spite of the attempts by some to deny its existence and to act with impunity in the international arena, is a reality which is brought home to us day by day when we see the qualitative and quantitative build-up of weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, and when we hear about the "virtues" of nuclear deterrence.

Some States, far from facilitating the implementation of the commitments that the international community entered into by adopting by consensus the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978, which was aimed at putting an end to the arms race and preventing a nuclear war, are trying to convince us of the acceptability of a limited nuclear war and of the possible use of nuclear weapons. They have even worked out and propagated all kinds of very dangerous doctrines based always on a policy of nuclear deterrence and they have made these doctrines the cornerstone of their foreign policy on disarmament.

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Far from facilitating the implementation of effective action on disarmament which would remove the economic gap between the developed and developing countries mentioned in the Final Document, these States are not only acting contrary to the norms which strengthen the close links between disarmament and development, they are also adopting and strengthening measures of economic coercion against other States, in particular developing countries, and that, of course, makes even dimmer whatever hopes we might have had for peace and prosperity for all the peoples of the world.

It is undeniable that if there are no resources for development, there will be no peace. Those who are fomenting the unbridled arms race that we are witnessing today bear a dual responsibility. On the one hand they are jeopardizing the very survival of mankind with their arms policies, which increase the likelihood of a nuclear catastrophe, and on the other hand they are obstructing the necessary co-operation for development which is needed for universal, indivisible and lasting peace, which is so sorely needed today.

In later statements we shall be discussing at greater length various items on our agenda, but we should like to refer now to the implementation of the fundamental decisions and recommendations which we adopted in 1978 in an unprecedented act in disarmament negotiations.

The Final Document which the special session of the General Assembly adopted four years ago contains a Programme of Action with concrete measures and clearly defined priorities to be adopted as a matter of urgency, as was stated at the time. However, the urgent measures set forth in that Programme have not been implemented to date; not a single one has been implemented.

The nuclear-test ban and the cessation of the arms race and nuclear disarmament are, for example, top priority items on which negotiations have not yet even begun. Attempts are being made to defer a nuclear-test ban, to include it in the more general context of nuclear disarmament. That is in open defiance of the international community and the obvious intention is to erase over 30 years of progress on the subject.

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Of course, just a few weeks before the beginning of the second special session on disarmament and after the Committee on Disarmament had long been prevented from beginning negotiations on the subject, a working group was set up and it did have a fruitful exchange on questions of verification and has concluded its work.

It is quite clear that all technical aspects of the problem have already been considered and all that remains is a political decision to negotiate the text of the treaty.

The invention of new obstacles is simply contrary to the interests of the majority of the members of the international community and world public opinion.

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As regards the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, the Committee on Disarmament was not even able to set up a subsidiary body to carry out its functions, and we also noted during that period the emergence of increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons and plans to place those weapons in various parts of the world.

We cannot close our eyes to such matters, because they have had an adverse effect on the implementation of decisions that we ourselves adopted in 1978.

The recently concluded second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which we found disappointing, made these facts stand out in all their harshness. The objectives of the special session were not carried out; but in particular, adoption of the comprehensive programme of disarmament was postponed and is now in jeopardy.

On the eighteenth of this month, Ambassador Garcia Robles, whom we congratulate on the Nobel Prize which he was awarded for his efforts in disarmament negotiations, gave us a detailed analysis of the status of the comprehensive programme. His speech deserves careful consideration by us all.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament did not become a fact because of the attitude assumed here as well by those States possessing nuclear weapons which did not allow the Committee on Disarmament to perform its functions as a negotiating body.

In spite of the fact that the validity of the Final Document of 1978 is recognized, in the document resulting from the second special session, the fact remains that it has been ignored and, in particular, its objectives, principles and priorities have been violated.

We must all keep this uppermost in our minds, because if those States continue their obstructionist actions and do not allow concrete negotiations on a nuclear-test ban and nuclear disarmament to get under way, the comprehensive

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programme of disarmament will not be adopted next year either. We must not forget that these are precisely the two areas of top priority to be covered by the programme and, in respect of those areas, concrete action must be prepared for implementation early in the first stage.

This Committee must recommend to the General Assembly, keeping in mind the foregoing considerations, the adoption of a resolution which unequivocally calls on the Committee on Disarmament to begin forthwith concrete negotiations aimed at a nuclear-test ban.

The delegation of the Soviet Union has presented us with a document containing the basic principles which the treaty should contain. We believe that this is a valuable document because, among other things, it basically presents certain matters which have already been agreed upon in trilateral negotiations on the subject and will be very useful for the work of the Committee on Disarmament.

Another question which brooks no delay is the adoption of concrete measures needed to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war. Here again, we note efforts by some States to shirk the obligations they entered into during the past decade.

At the ministerial meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana from 31 May to 4 June of this year, three days before the second special session devoted to disarmament began, the ministers adopted a communiqué calling on the special session to adopt urgent measures to avert a nuclear war. In that same document, the ministers were at pains to point out that no doctrine regarding the use of nuclear weapons can be justified regardless of the circumstances.

However, we saw how the special session was unable to adopt even a single recommendation on one of those urgent measures.

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Here too, the First Committee must adopt a resolution calling on the Committee on Disarmament, in accordance with the wishes of the majority of countries represented here, to begin urgent negotiations on concrete measures to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war.

These aspirations may be realized if the use, including first-use, of nuclear weapons is renounced; if States possessing these weapons freeze nuclear arms at their present levels, and if rejection of the use of force in international relations, among other measures, is given concrete legal form.

What we need is the political will to negotiate and that will, as has been made clear over the past few years, exists on the part of the vast majority of the members of the international community.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.