

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
FORTY-SECOND SESSION
*Official Records**



FIRST COMMITTEE
16th meeting
held on
Friday, 23 October 1987
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman, Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

CONTENTS

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF
GENERAL DEBATE, AS NECESSARY.

Statements were made by:

Mr. Pugliese (Italy)
Mr. Taylhacdst (Venezuela)
Mr. Pawlak (Poland)
MC. Franco (Panama)
Mr. Meisster (Hungary)
Mrs. Uribe de Losano (Colombia)
Mr. Muntasser (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

*This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC-2 750, 1 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/42/PV.18
30 October 1987
ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 48 TO 69 (continued)

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF GENERAL DEBATE, AS NECESSARY

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French) : In accordance with the programme of work and the timetable adopted by the Committee, this morning the Committee will begin the second stage of its work, that is, statements on specific disarmament agenda items and continuation of the general debate, as necessary.

Mr. PUGLIESE (Italy) : Before turning to business I should like to express most sincere condolences to the United Kingdom delegation at the untimely death of Ambassador Ian Cromartie. He was not only a very close friend but also a man of very distinct intellect and great charm, a man whose contributions to our work were of particular relevance. We will miss him.

May I congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the Italian Government and on my own behalf, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the Committee. I can assure you that the Italian delegation will provide you with its full co-operation in the fulfilment of your high responsibilities with a view to contributing to the further strengthening of the positive trends characterizing the present international situation in the field of disarmament.

The Permanent Representative of Denmark has already expressed the views of the 12 member States of the European Community on the main issues on the agenda of the Committee. Italy fully shares those views. In addition I wish to express some views on a few specific features of the disarmament process that in my Government's opinion are of particular relevance at the present juncture.

When speaking last year at the forty-first session of the General Assembly, we pointed out that some positive signs were emerging in the trends of disarmament negotiations, although in a general context they were still characterized by the

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

lack of concrete achievements. In the past 12 months we have noticed a remarkable intensification of negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear armaments and space issues, together with some significant progress following long years of stagnation.

After the meeting between President Heagan and General Secretary Gorbachev last year in Reykjavik we expressed the opinion that a new phase in the disarmament process could begin. In this perspective the Italian Government has sought every appropriate occasion to encourage the search for effective solutions which, in a framework of strengthened security conditions, could favour a drastic reduction of nuclear arsenals.

In line with these considerations, we have welcomed with deep satisfaction the agreement in principle reached last September in Washington between the American Secretary of State and the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs towards the global elimination of intermediate nuclear forces. For the first time in history two countries have come to a common understanding on the elimination of an entire category of very destructive armaments, a development that will have enormous significance for the disarmament process and for the security of the whole world.

As a result we are confident that other arms-control negotiations will also gain now momentum and that the intensified talks between the United States and the Soviet Union will soon give rise to further significant understandings. The expected summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev could be a crucial occasion for the achievement of new results both in the full spectrum of disarmament issues, and in the field of East-West relations in general.

In this context, I wish to stress the particular importance that the Italian Government attaches to a decisive move towards agreements on the drastic reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals, that is, of the most offensive and threatening armaments, in a framework of increasing strategic stability.

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

We consider that there is good reason to hope that break throughs in disarmament negotiations are potentially at hand, such prospects in our view might be strengthened by an improved sense of confidence and by an increase in the openness and transparency of military activities. This is particularly true for a continent such as Europe where the concentration of arms is high and where it is most necessary further to reduce opportunities for secret military measures and surprise attacks.

In our view, however, security is a multidimensional concept which encompasses political, economic, social and humanitarian aspects, all of which contribute to the general situation of international relations and to the degree of stability. For this reason we are convinced that the debate at present under way in Vienna for the review of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) is playing an important role for Europe. We are encouraged that in Vienna we have witnessed a number of constructive developments which could result in general progress for the CSCE process in all its dimensions.

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

With **the** prospect of an early elimination of all **intermediate-range nuclear missiles and of further progress** in the field of **nuclear disarmament**, the problem of reaching a **more stable balance of conventional armaments in Europe** becomes for **us a matter** of high priority.

In fact, imbalance in **the conventional field** has been a **source of instability** and **suspicion** on the **European continent for more than 40 years**. It is therefore **obvious** that, given the interrelationship between **conventional** and **nuclear weapons**, the problem of conventional disarmament **will** become, or rather is becoming, **increasingly crucial** when significant agreements in the field of **nuclear arms reduction** are at hand. In fact, only conventional stability at lower **levels** can progressively diminish reliance **on nuclear weapons** in a **context of** stability and peace. Italy feels that offensive capabilities **and capabilities for surprise attacks**, large-scale **attack** in particular, will have to be **drastically reduced** in the **conventional field**.

We attach great importance, in this context, to the talks currently **under way** in Vienna with a view **to** establishing a mandate **for** negotiations, within the **framework of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE)** on conventional stability **at lower levels in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals**. In our opinion, these talks hold the **promise** of favourable **developments**, given the constructive attitude shown by both **sides** and the **reciprocal recognition** of the need to eliminate **imbalances** and reduce **those capabilities that are most threatening** for European stability. Indeed, we want these **objectives** to be **pursued** with the utmost sense of urgency.

Conventional disarmament, however, is **a universal problem** and the **General Assembly** will certainly have to **confront it in a more serious and concrete way** than it has done so far if it wants to make a substantive contribution to world security and stability and to the reduction of the appalling burden of military expenditure.

(MC. Pugliese, Italy)

This will also be in line with the conclusions of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. In particular, we think that new efforts to bring about successful developments in this field should be sought on a regional basis.

But above all we are convinced that restraint and a greater openness with regard to the transfer of conventional arms should be promoted with a view to keeping these armaments at the lowest possible level. As far back as 1978, and again in 1982, Italy proposed the establishment, on the basis of Article 24 Of the Charter of the United Nations, of a commission divided into regional sub-commissions in which the major arms suppliers of each region would participate. We think that this issue deserves to be pursued further and we shall introduce new proposals in this regard. Any constraint would obviously have to be established in a framework agreed upon by all interested parties. But we must be mindful of the consequences of indiscriminate transfers of weapons.

I have described so far some of the most relevant developments that have occurred during the past year in the field of disarmament, while at the same time stressing some of the main objectives that my Government wishes to see attained. It is in this promising international climate characterized by increasing expectations that the work of this Committee is being carried out: we should like to see our agenda discussed in a pragmatic and effective way, focusing our attention on its crucial points with a view to expanding the area of concern in the Committee.

If the main responsibilities vis-à-vis the disarmament process fall on the United States of America and the Soviet Union, nevertheless we remain convinced of the essential role that multilateral negotiations can play in achieving generalized progress towards new frontiers of peace and international stability. Disarmament

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

and its acquisitions are a collective asset of the international community: it thus seems appropriate that the United Nations should increasingly be seen as the focal point of the debate on the various issues related to the process of arms control.

In this perspective, some important progress was made this year in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament on a global verifiable ban on the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. Interesting developments have also occurred with regard to the crucial aspect of verification procedures: this is a promising sign. Of the common willingness to reach the positive conclusion of a draft treaty.

The recent visit to the chemical weapons facility at Shikhanj in the Soviet Union should also be mentioned in this context for its positive value.

However, it seems necessary to intensify the process further and to make a collective effort to agree on the terms of a global ban on chemical weapons within the next year. Let us work together to overcome the last political and technical difficulties, in a spirit of mutual understanding and with the common perception of the impact that an agreement on the elimination of such lethal weapons would have on world public opinion and on the general confidence in the effectiveness of disarmament talks.

The repeated use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq conflict, which my Government strongly condemns as a serious violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, is evidence of the urgency of this problem. Italy is firmly convinced that such hideous and cruel weapons as chemical weapons should be eliminated immediately.

Especially attention should also be paid to other constructive signs that might have a positive impact on the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

In this connection, a favourable development is represented by the understanding reached at Washington by the American Secretary of State and the

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

Soviet Minister for *Foreign* Affairs to resume **negotiations** on nuclear testing before 1 December.

Such an understanding **is** in line with the gradual approach that the Italian Government **has** always favoured towards the final objective of a total **ban** on nuclear tests. We attach great importance to such an **objective**, and are determined to promote its achievement within the framework of the work of the Conference on **Disarmament**. **This** forum, in our view, has an important role to play in **this** regard. We regret **that** **once** again, at the last session, it did not prove possible to establish the **necessary** procedural arrangements for undertaking work on the substantive **issues** related to a comprehensive test ban.

While hoping that the next **rounds** of negotiations between the United **States** and the Soviet Union will **soon** pave the way to concrete results, we **trust** that the Conference on **Disarmament** will also be able to work with increasing effectiveness on **this** problem.

The debate carried out in Geneva, both in the Ad Hoc Committee, which Italy had the honour to chair, and in plenary **sessions**, on the sensitive **issue** of the prevention of an **arms** race in outer **space**, is still at a preliminary stage, but **it** has made it possible to come to a closer examination of various relevant aspects, mainly as regards the existing legal regime; it has also made it possible to note a general **readiness** to contribute to that common objective. Outer space is an area in which a number of political, strategic and technological factors interact, sometimes in a contradictory way.

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

In **this respect**, we **should** not refrain from evaluating the **various** implications of the current research into new technologies.

For these **reasons**, we believe that extensive reflection **should** take place on the many **facets** of the problem of outer **space before** we **draw** any final **conclusion**. **Furthermore**, at **this** preliminary stage we **should** not overlook the consideration that new technologies may in future help to secure better **conditions of security** through a **lower** level of offensive **weapons**. To this **end**, major **space Powers** may find it useful to agree on a common approach to research-related issues.

Let me now briefly address **another item on our agenda**: the United Nations Conference on **Disarmament and Development** and its conclusion. The Conference **has** given us the opportunity to **discuss within** the United **Nations** problems of high priority for the future **of** mankind and for the progress **of our societies**.

Increasing attention will have to be given in coming **years to** the problem of development in the **perspective** of the establishment of conditions **of more stable** peace and also of **an** increased **understanding** of mutual security **needs** among all **members** of the international community.

In **view of** this **and bearing** in mind the interrelationship between disarmament and development, we consider it **appropriate that the United Nations and its** competent **organs** find ways **and means to** improve their control over the level of armaments in the different regions of the world.

It is expected that disarmament and development, **together with the other** relevant issues **I** have been referring to, will be the subject **of** an **extensive** debate next year on the occasion of the third **special session** of the **General Assembly** devoted to disarmament. Italy has taken an active part in the work of the Preparatory Committee. **We** look forward to the coming special **session as a**

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

significant opportunity for widening the mutual **understanding** among Member States on all the main **questions related to** the **disarmament** process. In order to avoid the constraints which weighed heavily on the second special session in 1982, we **hope that our** dealings next year will be based on a forward-looking yet **realistic approach**.

Italy is prepared to give **its** utmost contribution with the aim of carrying **the** third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to a fruitful **conclusion**; the **betterment** of world **conditions** of peace and security remains one **of** **our highest** political priorities.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish) : Mr. **Chairman**,

I wish to congratulate you on your **election**. I also extend congratulations to the other officers **of** the Committee. I **assure you** that my delegation will give you **our** complete co-operation in **order to** ensure the success of **OUR work**.

The premature death **of our** distinguished colleague Mr. **Cromartie** of the United Kingdom has filled us with sadness. We should like to offer our sincere **condolences** to the United Kingdom **delegation**, and we hope our condolences will be conveyed to his widow.

This session of the First Committee is taking place at a time in **which** there exists a hopeful atmosphere in the disarmament area. After the disarray that was caused by the failure of the controversial summit meeting at Reykjavik a year ago, **the** world is beginning to have some hope that important events **may** occur in the disarmament field if the super-Powers manage to conclude the agreements on which they have been negotiating in recent months. The pessimism that prevailed at this time last year, precisely when this Committee was **discussing** the **agenda** items we are now considering, a pessimism that continued to prevail **during** the first **months** of this year, has given way to a feeling of optimism, bolstered by the signs that

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

finally we are seeing a genuine desire and a real will to achieve concrete results in the field of nuclear disarmament. This morning's news from Moscow gives us greater cause for optimism, and we hope that an agreement on short-range and medium-range nuclear forces will be brought nearer,

However, although we may feel some optimism, we should not allow ourselves to lapse into euphoria. We believe that this is Only a first step, the first specific sign in the extensive disarmament agenda. The first thought this positive development brings to mind is that when the political will exists everything is possible. When it exists, headway may be made in the disarmament field because there is a readiness to overcome obstacles, even the most delicate and difficult ones related to the question of verification.

If agreements were to be concluded for the elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces, that would be the first genuine measure on nuclear disarmament to be adopted in the history of mankind, consisting of the physical elimination of a major category of nuclear weapons whose presence in the stockpile of the countries possessing them has so far only served to contribute to keeping mankind under a constant threat of nuclear holocaust.

We trust that no unforeseen events will occur to frustrate the realization of these agreements. We hope that the wisdom of the political leaders of countries directly or indirectly concerned will prevail over any attempts to thwart through unjustifiable technicalities the prompt concluding of a Soviet-United States treaty for the elimination of intermediate-range nuclear weapons. This first measure in the field of nuclear disarmament should facilitate the adoption of the next step, the concluding of agreements designed to start a gradual process of reducing the arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons, which would pave the way for their total

(Mr. Taylorhardat, Venezuela)

elimination and attainment of the final objective, general and complete disarmament. The world is following with interest the evolution of the bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations on nuclear and space issues and trusts that they will follow a meaningful and productive path, as was the case with those relating to intermediate-range nuclear forces. Those negotiations should also make headway in the sphere of space weapons with the object of diminishing the fears aroused by the prospect of the development of space systems for strategic defence. The two Powers concerned should intensify their efforts to devise formulas that will ensure strict respect for the Treaty on anti-ballistic missiles, while at the same time, within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, effective measures are arrived at on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

The elimination of intermediate-range nuclear weapons is obviously not a magic solution to nuclear disarmament but it is, nevertheless, an achievement which should make possible a favourable evolution in other areas and other disarmament forums. This is particularly valid in an organ such as the Conference on Disarmament, which is so sensitive to the outside climate and the international scene.

As regards the Conference on Disarmament, we would like to refer briefly to certain aspects of its work which we consider of special importance. During the first part of its session three years ago, its work was seriously affected by the disquiet caused by the failure of the Reykjavik summit meeting. With the exception of the progress that had been consolidated over the past year in the negotiations on chemical weapons, the first three months of this year were marked by a lack of mobility which was frustrating for the Conference on Disarmament. During the second part of the session we began to perceive the beneficial effect in the constructive change which was being observed in the relations between the two super-Powers.

In the area of chemical weapons the two main military Powers have been demonstrating a political will which has enabled them to overcome many of the difficulties that had heretofore existed, and that had been thwarting the negotiations. Although there are difficult and delicate questions to be solved, I think it should be recognized that major progress has been made and it would appear also that in this area the super-Powers wish to attain concrete results in the more or less short term.

Without doubt one of the most important aspects in the ongoing negotiations is that of verification. We recognize that the instrument to be concluded must contain effective provisions to guarantee its effectiveness and to prevent breaches and violations. The acceptance of the concept of on-challenge inspection is an

(Mr. Tayihardat, Venezuela)

important step in this direction. Nevertheless, we have the impression that because we seek perfection in the matter of verification, we are moving towards the accession of an unnecessarily unwieldy and costly institution. Mention has already been made of the establishment of an international body for the prohibition of chemical weapons as an internationally independent legal entity which would be charged with the task of ensuring verification and compliance with the convention. Those of us in the developing world, who already have serious difficulties in meeting our financial obligations to the existing international bodies should view this, or any other such idea, with great caution. A convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, to be effective, should have universal participation, but if, in order to become a party to that convention it is necessary to be a member of an international organisation with the ensuing financial implications, the most probable result is that the objective of universality would be very difficult to attain. If the creation of such an organisation were to be inevitable, it would be necessary to ensure that the structure should be simple and to establish an equitable system for the distribution of the financial burden that would take into account the situation of those countries that, like mine, do not have chemical weapons and have no intention of acquiring them, and whose accession to the convention would be more symbolic than anything else, as a gesture in support of international efforts to bring about the abolition of these abominable instruments of war.

No progress has been made at all this year on the agenda items concerning nuclear disarmament.

Efforts to ban nuclear testing are still bogged down as a result of the position taken by one of the main nuclear Powers, which looks on this objective as a kind of long-term project, so that this can be contemplated only when that country and its allies do not have any further need to base their own concepts of

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

security on the controversial doctrine of nuclear deterrents. In accordance with this position, the prohibition of nuclear testing, which should be a first step towards nuclear disarmament, would become the last step in that process, to be arrived at only after achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Only then, according to this viewpoint, could we begin negotiating a limitation on the test-ban treaty as a step towards eventual total prohibition.

Faced with this prospect, we attach great importance to the agreement reached between the Soviet Union and the United States that negotiations would begin before 1 December this year with a view to the limitation, and finally the banning of nuclear tests. We trust that these negotiations will open up the way, within the Conference on Disarmament, for the resumption of negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Our position concerning this question is clear and firm. Venezuela considers that the banning of nuclear tests is a measure that should receive the highest priority. It is necessary, therefore, to start as soon as possible substantive multilateral negotiations for the preparation of a comprehensive treaty completely banning all nuclear tests of all types in all environments and for all time as the most effective means of putting an end to the development of more sophisticated nuclear weapons and new types of such weapons, and others that are being devised to become a part of strategic defence systems. We have maintained this position within the Conference and we think it useful to reiterate it here. We trust that once again this year the Assembly will unequivocally express the feelings of the international community and will give the Conference on Disarmament the guidelines that will enable it at last to break out of the stalemate in which it has been locked for more than seven years now.

With regard to the items on the agenda of the Conference concerning cessation of a nuclear-arms race and the prevention of nuclear war, it is regrettable that

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

yet again it has been impossible to make progress in the substantive consideration of these issues. We are happy, however, that informal meetings have taken place on the substance of the subject of nuclear disarmament, and that the discussions during those meetings have benefited from the initiative taken by the Chairman of the Conference for the month of June to prepare a list of questions to give the debate a more structured character than in the past.

Nuclear weapons are the most serious danger to mankind because they are a real and permanent threat to life on the planet and to civilization. Today it has been clearly shown that the possession of nuclear weapons does not help strengthen the security of States that have them, but rather makes them more vulnerable and leads them to accelerate the technological competition which fuels the nuclear-arms race and increases mutual mistrust.

This year, the Conference on Disarmament received from the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United States more abundant information about the progress of their bilateral negotiations. We consider this fact very important. It constitutes recognition of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole, multilateral negotiating forum and of the close link that all negotiations, including bilateral negotiations, should maintain with it. We hope that this flow of information will continue on a regular basis within a structured and institutionalized system.

The most effective way to prevent the danger of a nuclear war continues to be the total elimination of nuclear stockpiles. Nuclear weapons cannot be considered as instruments of war. They are, in actual fact, genuine instruments of genocide. Their use, as has been reiterated on many occasions, would constitute a crime against mankind. The leaders of the main nuclear Powers have recognized that a nuclear war cannot be won by any country and that, therefore, it should not be waged.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

On the basis of this **fact**, the nuclear Powers **should undertake**, through a binding international instrument, **the commitment not to resort to the threat or the use of nuclear weapons**. A commitment of that kind, in times which are **conducive** to the **favourable conclusion** of negotiations on the elimination of intermediate nuclear forces, would **help to consolidate a climate of confidence and gave the way to the attainment of concrete results in other areas of nuclear disarmament**, particularly that of **strategic nuclear weapons**.

In the **area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space**, although no spectacular **results have been recorded**, it must be admitted that **some progress** in the right direction has been **made**. The consideration and examination of the existing legal order governing outer space has led to the **conclusion that that Order is insufficient and that it must therefore be consolidated and strengthened in order to improve its effectiveness**.

The discussions in the **Conference on Disarmament have enabled us to make progress in delimiting the scope of the subject of preventing an arms race in outer space**. There is a **convergent opinion that preventing an arms race in outer space does not mean demilitarizing space**. Space has **already been considerably militarized**. It is considered that 75 per cent of space objects are carrying out military missions. **Many of them have at the same time functions which are useful from the civilian point of view**. The other 25 per cent of space objects, which are of a civilian character could also **easily carry out military activities**. This very morning the press informs us that **photographs taken by a private satellite seem to reveal construction work on a laser station in the Soviet Union which may be designed to serve as part of a space-weapon system**. If **that is not true, perhaps the Government of the Soviet Union might invite members of the Conference On Disarmament to visit the site in order to dispel any speculation**. That **would be a further tangible demonstration of that country's policy of glasnost**.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

This duality of space weapons makes it almost impossible to try to demilitarize space. We think, therefore, that the task of preventing an arms race in outer space should be directed towards preventing any outer-space deployment of weapons per se, and more specifically those weapons whose deployment has not yet been expressly banned by international treaties now in effect - that is to say, space weapons.

As this is a new category of weapons, totally different from other weapons, we think that a first task should be to elaborate a precise definition of space weapons. That would give us a better delimitation of the object of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

During the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament we have highlighted the fact that the main legal instrument relating to space - that is, the 1967 Treaty - contains a partial prohibition on the placing of weapons in space, since article IV expressly establishes the prohibition on the placing in orbit around the earth of objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other type of weapons of mass destruction and of deploying such weapons in any form on celestial bodies or in outer space. The outer-space Treaty does not mention other categories of weapons that could be deployed in space. The ARM Treaty is a good supplement to the outer-space Treaty in establishing provisions relating to certain types of weapons which would fall into the category of space weapons. That Treaty is, however, of a bilateral nature and is therefore, as we know, subject to controversy with regard to the interpretation of some of its provisions.

It is clear, therefore, that the international legal order does contain a major juridical void which must be filled as soon as possible if we wish effectively to prevent the arms race moving into space.

In the past, various interesting proposals for attaining that objective have been made. Examples are the draft treaty banning the use of force in outer space

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

and from space against the Earth, proposed by the Soviet Union, and the draft additional protocol to the space Treaty, proposed by Italy. In the Conference on Disarmament we have raised the idea that as the space Treaty already establishes a partial prohibition on the placing of weapons in outer space, a step towards the prevention of an arms race in outer space could consist in transforming that instrument into a treaty totally prohibiting the placing of weapons in space. For that it would suffice to introduce an amendment pursuant to the simple procedure for that purpose envisaged in the Treaty,

A similar initiative in relation to the partial test-ban Treaty is before the Assembly now - and has been for some time - for consideration. The resolution, recommending the parties to adopt practical measures to convene a conference to consider amendments designed to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive treaty, was adopted last year by 100 votes to 3, with 25 abstentions. We believe that an arms race in outer space can be prevented only by a general and complete prohibition of the deployment of space weapons, that term being understood to mean any weapons designed to operate in space from space towards the Earth or from the Earth towards space. That, in our view, is the task which the Conference on Disarmament has before it and towards which it must direct its efforts.

Referring once again to the work of the Conference on Disarmament as a whole, we agree with the many speakers who have expressed concern at the fact that the results so far attained are not very satisfactory. That does not mean, however, that the Conference as such, because of its nature, its form or its present composition, is inadequate. The lack of results in the activities of the Conference is not due to intrinsic factors. As we have said before, the Conference is very sensitive to the international climate, particularly the atmosphere

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

prevailing in **relations between the two main nuclear Powers. When those relations are subject to** tension it **is hopeless** to think that **substantial headway** can be made in disarmament negotiations, whether bilateral or multilateral. Therefore it **cannot** be hoped that in the **tense atmosphere** which **has** prevailed until recently in **East-West** relation.⁸ the **Conference** could have achieved **results** on any of the **items** before it **for consideration**,

Now that there **is** the beginning of a **constructive** and harmonious climate in **relations between the two super-Powers** and there **seems to be a** genuine will to **overcome obstacles** and facilitate the attainment of **results in the** field of disarmament, it **should be possible also** to undertake **substantive work** in the Conference on Disarmament oriented **towards the** elaboration of concrete measures **concerning the various items** on the Conference's agenda. **We hope that during next year's session** of the Conference **its work will indeed benefit** from the signs of **political** will that we have **seen** in bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations. **The best contribution that could be made towards improving the effectiveness and productivity of the Conference consists** precisely in facilitating the progress of its work by making efforts to overcome the artificial obstacles **which frequently hinder its activities.**

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

Another important **contribution** would **be** to strengthen **■** with the support of all **States**, both members and non-members of the Conference **■** the general negotiating mandate which **it** has been given, **by** recognising that all its **work is** Part of the same negotiating process, the sole **purpose** of which is to identify and concert concrete measures of disarmament.

It is necessary to strengthen **the** role of the Conference, **the sole** multilateral negotiating **forum on disarmament, and to** guide its activity towards the effective implementation **of** the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document of the first special session **devoted to** disarmament.

We are not considering, **as** some have suggested, **the revision** of the Final **Document** of the **first special** session devoted to disarmament. That **Document**, which many of us consider **to** be the "**Disarmament Bible**", continues **to have** full effect. It is still valid. It has the invaluable merit of **being an instrument** adopted by consensus. To try **to** revise it could lead **to** weakening **it**, whereas our aim must rather **be** to strengthen the efforts to achieve fully **its** objectives.

This, in our view, is the fundamental task of the third special **session** of the General Assembly devoted **to** disarmament. It is to this end that we shall direct our participation in the Preparatory Committee, as well as in **the** special session itself.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland) : Allow me, Mr. Chairman, **to** convey my **delegation's** and my own personal condolences to the United Kingdom **delegation** on the **untimely** passing of Ambassador Cromartie, a well-known and respected personality **in** the field of disarmament efforts. **His important contribution to** the preparation of **the** draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons has **been widely recognized** and **pr ized**.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

Mr. Chairman, as this is the **first** time I am speaking in this Committee, allow me to offer you my **sincere** felicitations and best wishes for **your** election to this high office. My congratulations go also to other officers of the Committee.

In my statement today I wish to **focus** the Committee's attention on matters which have **for** years been on the disarmament agenda and in which the international community is showing increasing **interest**.

Poland, like many other **countries**, welcomes with satisfaction the obvious **progress** towards the prohibition of chemical weapons made during this year **at** the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. We are however deeply convinced that much more could have been achieved. We **regret**, for instance, that the proposal by the Soviet Union **to** hold an additional session of the Conference devoted exclusively to the drafting of the convention was not supported by the Western delegations. **Even** the modest period **of** intersessional work of the Ad Hoc Committee this fall was not acceptable to some States. These are facts that should not be forgotten in the assessment of the results of the Ad Hoc Committee's work. They should also be taken into account in the preparations for the Committee's session next year and in the elaboration of its mandate.

The Conference on Disarmament **is** fully independent **in** the sharing of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, but the **General** Assembly has the right and the responsibility to **urge** the Conference to improve that mandate with a view to speeding up the process of negotiation. The time has come to do so in a convincing way. The mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee for its **1988** session could include an obligation to complete the text of a draft agreement so as to enable the Conference on Disarmament **to** present the **draft** convention to **the** General Assembly at its forty-third session. There is an adequate **basis** for the achievement **of** this goal. The existing draft **of** the convention **is** to a **great** extent written in **treaty** language; this language has to be developed and improved.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

At the current stage of negotiations it is of the utmost importance to maintain a favourable political climate for the convention on chemical weapons. There is also a danger of the proliferation of these weapons. Having this in mind, the General Assembly should urge States not to take any action that might complicate or in any other way delay the preparation of the draft convention. My delegation considers such a move necessary because of the emerging danger of a new generation of chemical weapons.

We are firmly convinced that States preparing for the production of binary chemical weapons should reconsider their positions. The manufacture of these deadly weapons cannot be regarded as anything but detrimental to the negotiating process of the Conference on Disarmament, to overall disarmament negotiations, and to international peace and security.

The production and stockpiling of binary weapons are much safer and easier - provided, of course, that the necessary technology is available - than the production and stockpiling of traditional chemical weapons and, at the same time, much more difficult to control and verify. Such features could easily provide incentives to non-chemical-weapon States to acquire binary weapons and this could lead to the unchecked proliferation of chemical weapons and to the increased possibility of their use, even in minor local conflicts.

At the final stage of the negotiations the importance of confidence-building measures has increased dramatically. The Soviet Union's demonstration of standard chemical munitions and of the mobile destruction facilities at Shikhany is a good example of the kind of action that is necessary. On the other hand, the convention itself could provide a significant contribution to the building confidence, in particular in the military field, and would set an example of means to find solutions to the complex problems of disarmament.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

It would also serve as clear confirmation of the viability of a multilateral approach to disarmament and would greatly enhance the position of the Conference on Disarmament, which bears the major responsibility for negotiations on disarmament.

We have noticed some encouraging signs here in the Committee, which could contribute to the effectiveness of a future chemical-weapons ban, such as the United States proposal to develop further technical guidelines and procedures for the investigation of allegations of the use of chemical and biological weapons. We look forward to a more detailed elaboration of this subject by the United States. But to be truly effective, the future convention on a chemical-weapons ban must, first of all, be universal. It would be helpful to know in advance how many States possess chemical weapons and whether they are ready to subscribe to the convention.

Poland, for its part, is not a chemical-weapons State. We do not produce, possess or intend to acquire chemical weapons. We are doing our best to contribute to the speedy finalization of the convention and will be ready to subscribe to it from the very beginning.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

Prevention of an arms race in outer space remains one of the most urgent questions on the world disarmament agenda. Its importance comes not only from the need to prevent a new sphere of competition in weaponry but also from the fact that failure to find a solution to this problem could effectively frustrate efforts in other fields of arms control and disarmament and introduce an unprecedented degree of uncertainty and unpredictability into the stable relationship between East and West.

For 30 years mankind has refrained from deploying weapons in space, even though the achievements of the space age have been used for military purposes. With the prospect of the Strategic Defence Initiative, however, we are approaching a qualitatively new stage in which diverse effects of the militarisation of outer space, as described in the study by the United Nations Disarmament Research Institute (UNIDIR), could promptly materialize.

But the Strategic Defence Initiative programme's harmful effects on disarmament efforts are evident even prior to the final decision on whether or not the initiative as a whole is feasible; these are not limited to the political sphere. Partial technologies and various spin-offs are fueling the creation of new weapons and the improvement of existing ones, thus tending to speed up the arms race.

This situation requires urgent action both by the General Assembly and by the Conference on Disarmament. The task assigned by the General Assembly to the Conference on Disarmament is unequivocal: the Conference was expected to answer the question how the danger of an arms race in outer space can be averted and to work out the instrument or instruments necessary for its prevention,

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

with that in mind, let us take a sober look at the work of the Conference in this field. There is no doubt that the Conference has behind it much serious, though sometimes controversial, discussion and three years of concrete work by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Conference's agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". Many issues have been explained and new ideas have been accumulated. In our opinion, this has not been a futile exercise. The Conference today has a far clearer picture of the problem and a deeper understanding of the ways to resolve it - and the difficulties connected with its resolution. Unfortunately, no concrete work towards preventing an arms race in outer space has been undertaken,

It is Poland's strong conviction that necessary premises and conditions for such concrete, goal-oriented work have been created and that such work should be urgently undertaken by the Geneva Conference. A number of valuable suggestions for both comprehensive and partial arrangements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space have been presented to the Conference. Poland is open to any constructive solution in this field, although our preference is clearly in the direction of comprehensive agreements. That is why we express our strong support for the ideas contained in the Soviet draft texts on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space and on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. We noted also with attention and interest the idea of widening the scope of existing agreements, in particular the 1967 outer-space Treaty.

Various proposals for practical solutions have been presented. In particular, there seems to be increased understanding of the idea of an agreement on the immunity of artificial satellites, combined with a ban on anti-satellite weapons.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

An outline of the basic provisions of such an agreement was submitted to the Conference by the German Democratic Republic and Mongolia. Such an agreement would be an important step in the creation of a comprehensive legal régime for the peaceful use of outer space. It would also introduce an important element of confidence and could establish the basis for necessary co-operation in cases of satellite collision, at a time when the risk of such collisions is constantly increasing because of continued tests and growing space traffic.

The work of the Conference has not only led to ideas for possible international agreements but also has helped to outline crucial elements of such agreements. This applies in particular to the problem of verification. The Soviet idea of an international inspection is the most valuable contribution to the practical solution of this problem. Poland welcomes that bold and far-reaching new proposal. We sincerely hope it will be the subject of serious discussion at the Geneva Conference and a key element of a future agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Our knowledge of remote-sensing techniques has been enhanced by the Canadian space programme PAXSAT.

The progress made in the discussion of problems concerning the verification of agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space is the best proof that possibilities exist for taking concrete action towards drafting such an agreement or agreements.

What is necessary is the redirection of the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament from general discussion to concrete and goal-oriented work. The General Assembly should clearly state that the Conference is expected to concentrate its efforts on the main task entrusted to it: the elaboration of an

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

agreement or agreements preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects and guaranteeing that outer space will be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

As we try to establish new forms, we need to make further efforts to preserve and strengthen the existing legal régime applicable to outer space. What is required first of all is good-faith interpretation of accepted obligations in both bilateral and multilateral agreements.

This applies in particular to the bilateral Soviet-United States anti-ballistic-missile Treaty of 1972. Strict adherence to that agreement is today an indispensable condition for any successful work in the field of preventing an arms race in outer space and halting the arms race on Earth. The basic philosophy behind that Treaty - that the arsenal of offensive nuclear missiles can be successfully limited only if anti-missile systems are strictly constrained - continues to be entirely valid. The existing arms-control régime could not survive the collapse of that crucial Treaty. Despite this, threats to the ABM Treaty exist. They include the possibility of its abrogation or reinterpretation, in violation of its spirit and intent.

That is why Poland fully supports the Soviet proposal that this crucial and open-ended agreement should be reaffirmed and strengthened, inter alia, through a commitment by the parties not to withdraw from it within a certain period of time and through the establishment of a clear understanding on prohibited and permitted activities within the framework of the Treaty. This would be an important confidence-building measure.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

Attachment to and compliance with the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1967 should imply full respect for all obligations and principles established by that Treaty. They include, inter alia, recognition of the common interest of all mankind in exploration and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes as well as the obligation to explore and use outer space for the benefit and in the interest of all countries and of the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of international co-operation and understanding. Poland is firmly convinced that the introduction of weapons into outer space, objected to by so many States party to this Treaty, would mean violating these general but clearly established legal obligations.

I have been elaborating on two items of our agenda. It is, however, the clear understanding of my delegation that disarmament, as a means of achieving a secure world, is indivisible and should be dealt with in a comprehensive manner. In concentrating our attention on the most technologically advanced, the most lethal and hence the most transparent kinds of arm - whether already deployed or still locked up in laboratories - we must not forget that new technology is also used in the modernization of conventional weapons.

The gap between arms of mass destruction and conventional arms with regard to their respective death-inflicting capabilities has already been significantly reduced. That is why so much attention has been devoted to conventional disarmament in the "Jaruzelski plan". The memorandum of the Government of the Polish People's Republic on decreasing armaments and increasing confidence in Central Europe, which is contained in document A/42/413, reads as follows:

"The plan envisages . . .

"The gradual withdrawal and/or reduction of specified, mutually agreed kinds and quantities of conventional weapons. The first to be considered

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

should be weapons of the greatest destructive power and accuracy, which could be employed in offensive operations including surprise attacks; for example, strike aircraft, tanks, armed helicopters and long-range artillery, including rocket artillery. An exchange of the lists of weapons considered by each State to be particularly threatening and offensive might prove helpful."

(A/42/413, para. 2)

There are more urgent and less urgent questions concerning disarmament, but there are not more important or less important ones since, in every case, when dealing with disarmament we are dealing with human life. We must remember that,

Mr. FRANCO (Panama) (interpretation from Spanish) : Mr. Chairman, at the outset I wish to express the satisfaction of the delegation of Panama that a son of the African continent should be presiding over our work this year. I am sure that your broad diplomatic experience and your far-reaching knowledge of the subject our Committee is considering will guarantee excellent results for our work.

To preserve present and future generations from the scourge of war is, in keeping with the United Nations Charter, the highest objective of and the justification for the existence of the international Organization. Consequently, the elimination of the threat of a world war, particularly a nuclear war, is the most essential and urgent task before the Organization.

As the General Assembly's deliberative body on matters of disarmament, it falls to the Committee each year to consider the situation regarding international peace and security and therefore, as proposed in the Final Document, to concentrate on all matters pertaining to disarmament.

The year that has passed since our last session has been rich in events pertaining to disarmament and arms control. Some of these events have widened the path of hope, and others remind us that we cannot postpone finding a solution to the problems that continue to disturb the world.

(Mt. Franco, Panama)

In the first category of events - those furthering the disarmament process - pride of place must go to recent developments in bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations on nuclear and space weapons, particularly those on the conclusion of an agreement on the elimination of short- and medium-range missiles.

That first step, although quantitatively limited since it affects only some 5 per cent of the nuclear arsenals of both super-Powers, is of historic importance, for it is the first step towards achievement of the international community's highest priority, nuclear disarmament.

My delegation shares the opinion that the imminent agreement on the elimination of two categories of nuclear weapons will have a major impact if its attainment is interpreted as a sincere change in the values and psychology that guide the conduct of the leading circles of the main nuclear Powers.

Real headway towards a world in which war is no longer the way in which international disputes are solved and in which force or threat of its use ceases to exist will be made when there is a change in the mentality of today's statesmen and when security is asserted through neither the accumulation of weapons nor the precarious balance of strategic stability but rather through application of the collective security system envisaged in the Charter,

States and their leaders should understand that the maintenance of world peace and security cannot continue to depend on the number, quantity and degree of sophistication of weapons systems, or to be based on doctrines that feed on fear or on the threat of nuclear annihilation.

To achieve a more stable and secure world in which the risk of the use of force has decreased, it is necessary to reverse the prevailing trends and to seek the demilitarization of international political relations. There is no more effective means of achieving this end than significantly reducing the volume of armaments and military facilities and unswervingly seeking disarmament.

(Mr. Franco, Panama)

The statement by the leaders of the two **most** heavily armed nations in the world that a nuclear war cannot be won and **must** never be fought **is** a **first** step **towards** recognition of the need **for** such a change of direction. This one statement, unthinkable to many **just** a few years ago, shows that our efforts to create international awareness of the need **for** disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, not only has not been in vain, but **has** even penetrated the structure^s of the military establishments of the main nuclear **Powers**.

The world **today** has before it important proposals for the complete elimination of nuclear **weapons**, **proposals** with fixed deadlines. There are **initiatives** that my delegation welcomes and **supports**, but they demand the necessary political will on the part of all the **nuclear** Powers and the active support of the whole international community.

It **is** well known that reaching agreement on intermediate-range nuclear weapons will have real **significance** for international security only if it **is** **part** of a coherent and comprehensive disarmament programme,

It **is** to be hoped that that achievement will not only stimulate and accelerate progress in the talks on strategic nuclear weapons and on **space** matters, now being held in Geneva, but will promote the strengthening of **confidence** and the beginning of a **sustained** process of detente.

At the **same** time, there **must** be an intensification of the efforts to bring **about** a balanced reduction of armed **forces** and conventional weapons, **with** a view to promoting the **security** of all **States** at a lower level of armaments, with an intensification of the work at the Conference on Disarmament to produce a convention for the prohibition of chemical **weapons** and an increase in all the efforts, both bilateral and multilateral, to solve regional conflicts that threaten international peace and security.

(Mr. Franco, Panama)

That is a task in which all nations have an overriding interest and therefore have the duty and the right to participate actively. Consequently, alongside the bilateral efforts there must be a strengthening of the multilateral activities and negotiations.

In that connection, my delegation views with dismay the fact that, with the exception of the progress made on chemical weapons, the Conference on Disarmament has once again found it impossible to make substantive progress in shouldering the responsibilities entrusted to it as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, in contravention of the clear mandate given it by the General Assembly.

The Conference has once again been unable to reach a consensus on its mandate to establish an ad hoc committee on the first item on its agenda, entitled "Nuclear-test ban", as well as on the second and third agenda items.

However, the most worrying matter is that the Conference has not only shown constant immobility in discharging its mandates, but in some cases, such as the comprehensive programme of disarmament, has markedly gone backward in its work. The detailed and enlightening account of this matter given by Ambassador Alfonso García Robles of Mexico in his statement at the beginning of our general debate testifies not only to the inconsistencies and abrupt turns in the behaviour of certain nuclear Powers bearing the main responsibility in those areas, but also to lack of respect for decisions and mandates of the General Assembly.

In my delegation's view, all disarmament measures - whether global, regional, subregional or national - contribute to the creation of conditions favouring disarmament and international peace and security. For that reason we noted with pleasure the significant progress made in the European region since the successful conclusion of the Stockholm Conference on Security- and Confidence-building

(Mr. Franco, Panama)

Measures and Disarmament in Europe. The resulting agreement, in the achievement of which 35 European States with different economic and social systems participated, is a praiseworthy example that should be taken into consideration in the formulating of political solutions to the tensions afflicting other regions.

We are optimistic that that significant step towards building and furthering confidence in that over-armed region will help give a new impetus to the talks on mutual and balanced force reductions in Central Europe, which have been going on for nearly 15 years in Vienna. At the same time, it offers a good climate for the talks on a mandate for conventional stability, which began in February this year in the Austrian capital with the aim of seeking reductions of conventional weapons in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.

Panama, which has played an active part in the peace efforts of the Contadora Group for a political, regional solution to the Central American conflict, underestimates the magnitude of the task facing other geographical regions and the risks and the attacks confronted by their leaders. As the *Foreign Minister of Panama*, Mr. Jorge Abadía Arias, told the General Assembly:

"We have had to pay a high price for our perseverance and insistence on achieving a Latin American solution to this Latin American problem. As we overcame the obstacles one by one, obstacles created or fostered to a large extent by the United States Government, and as prospects of peace began to emerge more clearly, pressures mounted on the Panamanian Government to leave the Contadora group and to withdraw its support for the cause of peace in the region." (A/42/PV.19, p. 66)

(Mr. Franoo, Panama)

My country, along with the concert of nations, welcomes the agreements reached in the region that has suffered so much - Esquipulas II, the Guatemala agreement - and shares in the rejoicing of all the people of Central America. It can finally be said that their right to live in peace and to build their own destiny is now within reach. This progress has cost many sacrifices, both intellectual and political.

It is a secret to no one that the United States sees the Panama Canal as a geopolitically and strategically central consideration with regard to the so-called Central American conflict. Nor is it a secret that United States military circles have expressed special interest in keeping the facilities that my country granted them - for a set period that is about to end - for the sole and exclusive purpose of defending the Canal.

That special interest was expressed in the mandate that the United States Congress recommended to the President of the United States in Public Law 96-70:

"... the best interests of the United States required that the President enter into negotiations with the Republic of Panama for the purpose of arranging for the stationing of United States military forces, after the termination of the Panama Canal Treaty on 1977 . . . and for the maintenance of installations and facilities, after the termination of such Treaty".

That is the origin of a whole series of actions designed to bend the will of our people and Government to move ahead with the calendar of decolonization established in the Panama Canal Treaties of 1977. Senior officials of my country have on many occasions denounced the conspiracy to hinder implementation of those Treaties and the handing over of the Canal to full Panamanian control within 12 years and the simultaneous scheduling of the end of the military presence in our territory.

(Mr. Franco, Panama)

Addressing the General Assembly on behalf of the Government of Panama, our Minister of Foreign Affairs denounced the fact that prominent members "and representatives of the United States military establishment have said, with an insistence that is significant, that the problem of the military presence, which will end in twelve years with the coming into effect of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties, requires that the United States Government make decisions and take actions that must be begun at the latest in 1984 - that is, within 15 months."

My Minister of Foreign Affairs further stated that, for some years now, "with growing frequency and at the highest level, as time goes by, civilian and military officials of the United States have been saying that the approach of the date set for the final implementation of the Canal Treaties and the end of the United States military presence in Panama is a problem demanding immediate attention." (A/42/PV.19, p. 68)

My Government, reflecting public opinion in my country, has on many occasions expressed its resolute political will to fulfil the provisions of the aforementioned instruments. This firm position has met with a clumsy campaign of smear and destabilization aimed at the constitutional Panamanian authorities. That campaign has caused disquiet in many national sectors, and also threatens national security and peaceful coexistence. With the same rectitude and probity that governs its international conduct in meeting its commitments, my country requires firm respect for treaties that are entered into with it. Obligations freely entered into by States are not clay to be moulded as one fancies but marble for they perpetuate the will of the people.

Mr. MBISZTER (Hungary) : I should like to convey the condolence of my delegation to the British delegation, The untimely death of Ambassador Ian Cromartie shook us. The memory of his intelligent, charming and always friendly figure will remain with us. We ask the United Kingdom delegation to convey our condolences to its Government and to the family.

I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your accession to your responsible post. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

Our disarmament philosophy is based on the need to assess past developments and the present situation dispassionately, trying to avoid both the "hurrah" optimism and unwarranted scepticism. Therefore, we deem it advisable to approach the whole complex of disarmament issues with realistic expectations rather than dreams and to observe and analyse ongoing processes matter-of-factly - or, to put it quite simply, to take realities into account.

Viewing the situation from such an angle, I can say with conviction that this year the First Committee is working under much more favourable conditions than in the past. There are several reasons.

First, I would mention a process that is developing on the basis of an initiative taken last year: both the disarmament community and, in a wider sense, political public opinion, are about to be engaged in a discussion on the raison d'être of the policy of nuclear deterrence vis-à-vis the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security capable of effectively replacing it. I refer to this result in the first place because the course taken by the debate and the making of a choice may be decisive in the entire question of the arms build-up and disarmament.

(Mr. Meisster, Hungary)

As is known, there are views that suggest that nuclear deterrence has for the last four decades been, and continues to be, incremental in preventing a world-wide confrontation. without subscribing to or questioning the correctness of this contention, I feel it is indisputable that deterrence, if viewed as a guarantee, is a guarantee of the era of total lack of confidence, with all the negative consequences that that entails. A policy of deterrence based on total distrust ipso facto results in an arms race which, growing into a self-inducing process, leads to the emergence of enormous and sophisticated military arsenals giving rise, in turn, to ever-increasing distrust. The well-known vicious circle is there.

(Mr. Melester, Hungary)

Furthermore, from a technical point of view, armaments reach a level of sophistication which makes them - if I may put it this way - "counterproductive", turning them into a source of absolute uncertainty and threat even for those States which possess them. That is how deterrence becomes a "guarantee" which by itself generates dangers, with no compelling need for presuming hostile intentions on the part of States. A misinterpretation of action, an accidental misunderstanding or an act of terrorism might be sufficient in these conditions to precipitate a catastrophe. This is why we attach paramount importance to the continuation of the debate now under way on a comprehensive system of international security and to its development in the direction of practical steps for the gradual establishment of such a system.

Secondly, I would refer to the fact that in the wake of Reykjavik the two major military Powers, moving away from the rigid postures of confrontation of the previous decades, have started a dialogue seeking agreement in general and on the military aspects of disarmament in particular and have succeeded in drawing their respective positions closer together in several areas, an achievement which gives encouragement also to the continuation of disarmament efforts within multilateral frameworks.

Similarly, we regard it as a favourable development that, following the notable progress made in respect of confidence-building measures, a certain kind of institutional contact is being established between the two military-political alliances, with a view not only to the further development of the said confidence-building measures but also to dealing with comprehensive disarmament questions. I shall return to a special aspect of this at a later stage.

It is also a favourable development that the Geneva Conference on Disarmament has made notable progress this year in the process of elaborating a treaty text on

(Mr. Meisater, Hungary)

the **comprehensive** prohibition of **chemical weapons**, weapons extremely dangerous both **because of their indiscriminate effects** and **because of their character as weapons of mass destruction**.

Lastly, but not least in order of **importance**, I wish to refer to the agreement in **principle** on medium-range and shorter-range nuclear **missiles** and to deal more **extensively** with the **consequences** it entails or may entail.

A **cursory** glance at the **statements** made in the **Plenary meetings** of the General **Assembly reveals that** out of about 140 **speakers**, 115 felt it necessary to refer to the intermediate nuclear **forces** agreement and, apart from literally one or two **speakers**, they all did so in unconditionally **positive** terms, the **assessments** ranging through a wide **spectrum** from qualifying **words** like "**important**" Or "**significant**", through **phrases** like "**historic agreement**", to statements **saying** that it was the "**most important political event of this decade**". Rather than add to **attributive** full of praise, I wish merely to point out **that** the agreement in principle on intermediate **nuclear forces**, once it **takes effect**, will be the first real joint reduction of one part of the existing nuclear **arsenals instead of a partial limit and control on their extension, as** earlier. I would add that the agreement in **principle**, if duly concluded in treaty form, will open for the **first** time the **possibility of** testing on a real **scale** how the destruction of **arms** can be effectuated and how **an elaborate verification system** works. Detailed **agreement in these two fields and its successful operation could have a tremendous psychological impact on the whole process of disarmament negotiations.**

This is why my delegation attaches great importance to the agreement in principle and is looking forward with satisfaction and hope to its implementation. If the Chinese proverb that "**even the longest journey starts with the first step**" holds true, it surely does in this connection. I have dwelt on this aspect so

(Mr. Meister, Hungary)

extensively because I have observed that some referred to the agreement in principle with, so to say, a certain nuanced appreciation.

There were voices of alarm, too. Some feared that "a treaty on intermediate nuclear force might be misread as a sign that peace has broken out". Although that is not the case for the moment, I wonder why somebody should be afraid of the outbreak of peace. Furthermore, during its Oslo meeting the North Atlantic Assembly warned members of the alliance that the process that had begun with the agreement on intermediate nuclear force could take Europe toward a triple zero, meaning the elimination of all nuclear arms. They really meant a warning and not a positive appreciation of a possible outcome. I raise this point not because of the absurd character of such statements but because that kind of approach carries in itself dangers which are by no means negligible.

It is to be feared that behind the real worry such statements are not about the denuclearization of Europe but essentially about the future of certain plans for the development of strategic nuclear forces, which will be jeopardized by a successful agreement on intermediate nuclear forces and, as a positive impact thereof, by an agreement between the two major military Powers on the reduction of strategic weapons, by the imminence of such an agreement and by the inherent implication that it will be followed up.

It is another source of concern that, according to some views, implementation of an agreement on intermediate nuclear forces will not reduce but rather will increase the dangers for Europe, since it will leave Europe, so to say, mortgaged to the Soviet Union, which is superior in conventional forces. At the same time, those concerned are rather silent on the Soviet proposal regarding conventional weapons and on the Appeal issued at Budapest on 11 June 1986 by the States members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization to the States members of the North Atlantic

(Mr. Meisater, Hungary)

Treaty Organisation (NATO) and to all European countries for a Programme to reduce armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe, a programme which suggests possible quantitative aspects, phases and time-limits for such reductions. That Appeal was upheld and reinforced by the communiqué of the Warsaw Treaty member States issued at Berlin on 29 May 1997, which reads, expressis verbis, that the Warsaw Treaty member States,

"aware of the asymmetric structures of the armed forces maintained by the two sides in Europe ..., state their preparedness to have the imbalance that has arisen in certain elements redressed in the course of reductions, proposing that the side which has an advantage over the other side make the appropriate outbacks".

I do not mention at this point the Soviet side's repeated announcements of its readiness to discuss disproportions.

I wanted to mention this aspect in view of the danger that the spread of such a mood would make a case for filling the vacuum in the arms race or switching armaments to conventional types of weapons, whereas the development and modernization of these weapons carries great inherent dangers. Recalling the planned long-range advanced cruise missiles with high-explosive non-nuclear warheads and advanced targeting systems is sufficient to make us realize the dangers this would raise on the road to military security and the heavy burdens it would impose on national economies.

Such a perspective causes us serious concern for several reasons. First, we are fully aware that a switch to conventional armaments would be extremely dangerous and would seriously impede the creation of military security, if only for the reason that new modern systems of conventional weapons are much more likely to proliferate. We need only point out that all armed conflicts of the present world

(Mr. Meisster, Hungary)

are "conducted" with conventional weapons. Secondly, we are equally aware of the nsyative effects of conventional armaments on national economies. I am not speaking about the spiralling costs of ner types and systems of conventional weapons or about the growing burden they place on both developed and developing States. That is self-evident. What are involved here are not only economic burdene, diversion of significant resources from areas of development and diversion of the process of research in a coastly and economically unreasonable direction but also a distortion of economic cateyoriee, the suppression of ooneideratione of profitability or economic expediency, which is, after all, the only objective guide to the operation, good or bad, of every national economy,

(Mr. Meisster, Hungary)

It is perhaps understandable that when my country is making every effort to ensure that our national economy functions in an environment governed by objective economic categories it has a vested interest in seeing the national economy freed from the burdens and distorting effects of a conventional arms build-up. I am convinced that all States eager to embark on restructuring their economy - and there are many in need of it - have the same vested interest in earmarking the resources of their national economy for these aims instead of wasting them on conventional armaments.

These are the security, political and economic reasons behind Hungary's will to exert every effort to curb conventional armaments. We are ready to discuss this issue in any forum, be it of a global character, such as the United Nations Disarmament Commission or the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, of regional scope, such as the Vienna follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe or on a bilateral basis with any State which is willing to be our Partner in this endeavour. We are convinced that the full potential of the United Nations must be utilized in order to achieve the necessary progress in this noble aspiration to reduce armed forces and conventional weapons.

Mrs. URIBE de LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish) : Our delegation also wishes to join in the words of condolence expressed to the United Kingdom delegation at the passing of Ambassador Cromartie.

Likewise, Mr. Chairman, through you I should like to pay a tribute to the African continent, to your country Zaire and in particular to you, Sir, who very much deserve the honour placed in you. We should also like to congratulate other officers of the Committee and wish them every success in their endeavours to reach a successful conclusion to their work.

Today I shall just refer to a few items on our agenda. Later on we shall deal with other matters, which are also vital issues for us.

(Mrs. Uribe de Loeano, Colombia)

Our era could perhaps be qualified as the era of a collective fear, the fear of entire societies faced with the development of political forms, faced with the development of science and technology, and faced with the unforeseeable. Therefore, the problem of the man of today is that he wants a change and yet he cannot offer any assurance that what might happen would be good. He understands and reasons about the horror of the present threat and yet, in wanting to pacify the rebellion against it, he is nevertheless perplexed. He perceives the paradox that his life and death are tied to the threads of an international policy that are not in his hands to manipulate. Global and naturally absolute interpretations of the historical process seem to him irrational, alien to the invincible complexity of life and to the status of man who is, in the final analysis, the sole protagonist of history. The decision he might take is oriented towards the future because it enables him to glimpse the political process of the present-day world, but he cannot distinguish the horizon except as that line along which the giant States move with their providential leaders and their disdainful apparatus of intimidation. Man therefore seems to be a lilliputian and helpless in a land of giants.

The noble ideal which inspired the creation of the United Nations was to bring together all those who were lovers of peace. In principle, there was agreement on their full equality; and the acceptance of coexistence and co-operation among countries governed by different economic and social systems seemed to enshrine recognition of an awareness of a sort of common interest of all mankind, an interest in peace and in orderly development. Even the acceptance of an exceptional privilege of veto in favour of some major Powers - against which Colombia withheld its vote in San Francisco - seemed to confirm the assurance that the interests of the great human community would find formulae for harmony at a higher level than that of pluralism. But the right of veto and the privilege

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

granted to certain countries to be permanent members of the Security Council should not exclude - and this was the clear and original thinking - the participation of all in maintaining peace and therefore in disarmament, which would enable us to channel appropriate resources for the dual task of reconstruction and development.

In Colombia we cannot conceive of disarmament without the active, firm and vigilant participation of multilateral organs of disarmament, nor can we emanate the tendency shown in the control of armaments to believe that although prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons requires the broad participation of States, control of strategic Soviet-American relations is an undertaking that is incumbent upon the two super-Powers themselves, and that there should be as little interference as possible from other States. We believe that it is up to everyone to decide to make general and complete disarmament the firmest purpose of international policy that it is the indispensable function of multilateral organs of disarmament, particularly the Conference on Disarmament, as the negotiating body, to see to the interests of the international community and guarantee its security.

The items before the First Committee of the General Assembly at the current session are not completely new, nor do they deal with subjects that have been exhausted or with means that have up till now contributed concrete solutions to the armaments problem.

This year, nevertheless, there are facts and circumstances that could modify former approaches and orient the work of the First Committee towards new ways of dealing with the same problems.

It is very significant that at a historic moment in political and economic turmoil, of growing danger for peace and ominous forecasts in the financial scene, the leaders of the United States of America and the Soviet Union share the vision of a peaceful future, and practical means of attaining it.

(Mrs. Uribe de Loaano, Colombia)

Beyond their ideologies, their successes and failures, the world is hoping that the United States and the Soviet Union will direct their actions towards the building of confidence, raising hopes and breaking down the barriers of the old order that prevent the achievement of new aspirations.

The world is fervently seeking a denuclearized future within a process that will culminate in general and complete disarmament. The responsibility for achieving that end is incumbent primarily on those two States that have nuclear power. We have been patiently waiting for more than 40 years to be freed from this threat that is more than enough. It is obvious that the world cannot continue to be subjected to the threat of nuclear weapons; it is obvious also that the Powers cannot continue to be committed to the old model of nuclear deterrence at the price of everyone's safety.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

Even those who believe in the durability of the present system realise that the development of technology does not always respect theories concerning a desirable future. They know that the future of world politics are as unpredictable as the development of technology and that, although perhaps nuclear stability can be kept isolated from political vicissitudes and geo-strategic competition between the super-Powers and perhaps caution could mitigate the strategic effects of technological innovation, nevertheless what is at stake in the question of nuclear war and peace is too valuable for us to permit ourselves to seek refuge in reassuring assumptions.

The situation of the past 20 years cannot last indefinitely. The variables of the nuclear equation have become so numerous, so mysterious and so complex that the nuclear Powers will have to accept the fact that they cannot manipulate the nuclear components of world politics if they do not co-operate among themselves and if there is no impetus to act in the common interest.

Despite the properties of stability which are attributed to the present nuclear peace, this could deteriorate also because for the strategic planners it would be a totally ungovernable situation to have a strategic medium in which nuclear weapons were spreading rapidly or in which there would be an environment of multiplying technical options open to strategic planners.

Although the technical aspects of proliferation are inherently complex, the political aspects are not; but a renewed preoccupation with so-called nuclear prestige, added to the already unstable technical conditions, could bring about a turmoil of major proportions.

Each important State that ratifies the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons helps to refute the idea that the act of setting of a fission device proves that a nation has managed to become a major Power. Considering the

(Mrs. Uribe de Losano, Colombia)

problem of proliferation in itself, the crux of the question lies in the fact that a number of important States have refused to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty. The acquisition of nuclear weapons, presumed or real, by any of these States would cancel the positive effect produced by the ratification of the terms of the Treaty by other non-nuclear States. If more States acquire nuclear weapons, although it may be for vague reasons of prestige, the feeling of insecurity at the regional and local levels would not only increase instability and create other grounds for fear but also add a new dimension to our already disquieting concern for world security.

Among the formulae for avoiding nuclear war, the establishment of denuclearized zones forms part of the measures designed to attain general and complete disarmament under international control.

In actual fact, up to now only the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, that is, the Tlatelolco Treaty, has been conceived on the basis of establishing a denuclearized zone in a populated region, such as that of our hemisphere. The philosophy of the Treaty is quite straightforward. It seeks not only to avoid the movement of nuclear weapons, as is established in the non-proliferation Treaty, but something more: it is intended to prohibit and prevent in Latin America any testing, use, production, stockpiling or deployment of any type of nuclear weapon, that is to say, any device that, according to the Treaty, could release nuclear energy in a controlled form and that would have a series of characteristics pertaining to the use of that form of energy for hostile purposes. It is a ban that extends not only to the contracting States but also to non-Latin American nuclear-weapon States that undertake to respect the denuclearized zone under the Treaty.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

The use of nuclear energy is the subject dealt with by many of the provisions of the Treaty, but the ban on the use of nuclear weapons does not exclude the peaceful use of this form of energy.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco, like other international machinery established to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, would be seriously jeopardised by the adverse political effects of proliferation. Unfortunately, there are still Latin American States which, for various reasons, have not fully acceded to that Treaty. We hope that, in a spirit of hemispheric solidarity, they will overcome national positions and fully accede to it.

Moreover, we should like to see France ratify Additional Protocol I, so that the application of the Treaty would cover the territories of French Guiana, Martinique and Guadeloupe. However, the Treaty of Tlatelolco has guaranteed that Latin America will be free from nuclear weapons and nuclear war, and it undoubtedly constitutes a factor favourable to the achievement of a negotiated peace in Central America.

It goes without saying that the countries of Latin America, and in particular those belonging to the standing organization of the South Pacific, are greatly concerned about the radioactive contamination of the Pacific. Certainly in the near future there will have to be some concerted action among the organs of the Rarotonga Treaty and the South Pacific Commission to include in their protection all the denuclearized areas in the Pacific area.

As we hope for disarmament, the possibility exists that, if we adopt a consistent approach to the world of the future, there will be a gradual conversion from an arms-race economy to a consolidated and sustainable world order. A prerequisite for this approach, however, would be universal recognition of the need to match disarmament with development, not only in the third world but in the world as a whole. By means of gradual alleviation of the situation, the arms race could

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

be decelerated and détente restored. This would have to be accompanied at the same time by a conscious and rapid movement towards a stable economic, social and political order.

Thus, the challenge is to take up the objective of the Charter of the United Nations in the collective and general struggle for a better world. Here, in our fear, in that dark shadow on our political and social life, despite the intentions of those who foster that fear, we can find an additional starting point that will motivate us to persist in the quest for disarmament and development and to turn fear into hope.

Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (interpretation from Arabic) :
 Sir, as this is the first time I have spoken in the First Committee, I am pleased to extend to you my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Through you I should like also to congratulate the other officers of the Committee. I wish to reaffirm that my delegation will co-operate with you for the successful completion of the Committee's work.

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The question of disarmament, from the very outset of the United Nations, has been one of the essential concerns of the international community, particularly nuclear disarmament, which is one of the most urgent tasks it faces and which has become the topic of absolute priority in the field of disarmament. This year our deliberations are taking place in an atmosphere of some optimism which augurs well for an international agreement that will mark a step in the right direction towards disarmament.

The importance of that initiative comes from the fact that it is taking place after a long period of stagnation and failure in disarmament negotiations. Doubtless the improvement in the international political situation and increased co-operation among States will result in the consolidation of peace, confidence and security. It will also reinforce the efforts made to bring about disarmament. Thus, it is important to make use of this initiative with great determination to reach other agreements leading to progress in our efforts to avert once and for all the danger of war and put an end to the arms race and thereby achieve general and complete disarmament. We support any proposals and constructive initiatives aimed at attaining those objectives.

It is generally recognised that the accumulation of arms has led to insecurity instead of gaining the primary objective, namely, the consolidation of security. We believe that international peace and security can indeed be consolidated through justice and dedication to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular those which ban the use of force in international relations, through non-interference in the internal affairs of States, through the peaceful settlement of disputes and through the halting of the irrational tendency of the arms race and of the build-up of weapons.

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

We stress here the importance of the efforts being made in various multilateral forums in the international sphere and attach absolute priority to reaching agreements concerning the problems raised. Since disarmament in this nuclear age is an important question for all peoples, the responsibility devolves on all States, and we should not ignore the special responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States regarding the production, accumulation, stockpiling and development of weapons. These countries must make a positive contribution to efforts aimed at achieving measures guaranteeing the world's peace and security.

Nuclear disarmament is unquestionably the heart of the disarmament problem. The objective of disarmament can be achieved only by adopting effective and tangible measures within the context of a programme aimed at eliminating nuclear-weapon stockpiles and by halting the production and development of weapons in order to achieve, in the last analysis, general and complete disarmament.

The conclusion of an agreement banning nuclear tests in all environments would be one of the most effective contributions to halting the arms race. Thus, the production and development of nuclear weapons could be limited.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the globe would be one of the most important measures to limit the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and would contribute to consolidating international peace and security.

Beyond question, the acquisition by the racist régime in the Middle East and the racist régime of South Africa of the capability to produce nuclear weapons endangers efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and in Africa. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by these two régimes would undoubtedly increase the dangers to Arab and African peoples. Those régimes, as we are well aware, are pursuing policies based on discrimination, aggression,

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

occupation, refusal to recognize the legitimate right of peoples to self-determination, and continued violation of United Nations resolutions regarding the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in these two regions.

There is yet another question which is of the highest priority and importance and which deserves special attention: the arms race in outer space. The possibility of the use of outer space for military purposes is a cause of international concern and constitutes a new round of escalation of the arms race which seriously threatens international peace and security, for the existence of weapons in outer space is an obstacle to disarmament. It is therefore urgent to take measures which could prevent an arms race in outer space and would limit its uses to peaceful purposes. The arms race is not only a threat to the peace of all peoples but is an unacceptable waste of international economic resources. It is one of the major obstacles to the economic and social development of countries.

We should like to express our indignation at seeing human resources used to make weapons at a time when most countries of the world are facing urgent problems, such as poverty, famine, illness, illiteracy, unemployment and foreign debt. Expenditures for armaments by developing countries hamper development plans and deprive those States of hospitals, schools and factories.

(Mr. Muntasser, Libyan Arab
Jamahiriya)

The Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development explains the negative results of the rise in military expenditure when it states:

"The opportunity cost of military expenditures over the past 40 years has been and continues to be borne by both developed and developing countries, as there is a pressing need for additional resources for development in both groups of countries. In developing countries, it has been estimated that close to 1 billion people are below the poverty line, 780 million are undernourished, 850 million are illiterate, 1.5 billion have no access to medical facilities, an equally large number are unemployed, and 1 billion people are inadequately housed." (A/CONF.130/39, Final Document, para. 26)

Thus there is an ever more urgent need today to discover means that could allow us to reorient the human and financial resources which are now being used to consolidate military armaments towards efforts to find solutions to the economic and social problems facing the world, and in particular the developing countries.

In the light of the facts I have mentioned, it will be necessary to give the United Nations a greater role in the field of disarmament, one which is consonant with its obligations under the Charter. We attach great importance to the holding of a third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1988 and we hope that the session will contribute to the elimination of tensions and consolidate international peace and security. At the present stage we must translate good intentions and declarations into action aimed at achieving the objective of general and complete disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.