



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. Roche (Canada)

CONTENTS

- General debate on all disarmament items

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 52 to 69, 139, 141 AND 145

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will introduce the report of the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of the President of the Conference.

Mr. MASHHADI (Islamic Republic of Iran): We are very happy, Sir, that you have been elected Chairman of the First Committee. We greatly appreciate your visit to the Conference in Geneva, and the valuable exchange of views that took place between you and its members.

I am speaking today on behalf of the President of the Conference on Disarmament, to introduce the report of the Conference on its work during the 1988 session. Unfortunately the President was denied a visa and therefore is not able to present the report in person. The report, which appears in document CD/875, has already been issued as a supplement to the official records of the General Assembly (A/43/27).

The 1988 session of the Conference was held from 2 February to 29 April, and from 7 July to 20 September. The agenda for the annual session and the programme of work of the Conference are contained in paragraphs 6 to 9 of the annual report. I should like to note that during the session the Conference prepared a special report on the status of its negotiations and its work, and that that report was submitted to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament. It was issued as document CD/834 and, later, in Supplement No. 2 (A/S-15/2) of the official records of the General Assembly.

Chapter II of the annual report contains, in addition to the text of the agenda for the year and the programme of work for the two parts of the annual session, a summary of the activities of the Conference dealing with the

(Mr. Mashhadi, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

participation of States not members, in the work of the Conference, expansion of the membership, its improved and effective functioning, and measures relating to the financial situation of the United Nations.

Chapter III of the annual report deals with the substantive work of the Conference during the 1988 session. It reflects the discussions held in the Conference and in its subsidiary bodies, and also provides information on the positions of various groups and delegations at the annual session.

During the 1988 session the Conference considered the question of adopting appropriate organizational arrangements for dealing with the first three items on its agenda, which related to nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, it was not possible to agree on the procedural framework for the consideration of those items, entitled, respectively, "Nuclear-test ban", "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament", and "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

The Conference did agree to establish ad hoc committees to deal with the following items: item 4, "Chemical weapons"; item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space"; item 6, "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons"; item 7, "Radiological weapons"; and item 8, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament".

Progress continued to be made in the negotiations on a complete ban of chemical weapons, though unfortunately it was not possible to proceed at the expected pace. Appendix I to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons represents the present stage of elaboration of the provisions of the draft convention, and Appendix II contains papers reflecting the results of work undertaken so far on issues addressed under the Convention. The text of the Ad Hoc

(Mr. Mashhadi, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Committee's report is contained in paragraph 77 of the annual report of the Conference. I should also like to point out that the Ad Hoc Committee will hold open-ended consultations between 20 November and 15 December 1988, and a session of limited duration from 17 January to 3 February 1989.

The discussions held in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space appear in its report, which is reproduced in paragraph 80 of the Conference's annual report. Paragraph 49 of the Ad Hoc Committee's report refers to future activities under the agenda item, and it notes the agreement that no effort should be spared to assure that substantive work on the item will continue at the next session of the Conference. It is recommended therein that the Conference re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee, with an adequate mandate, at the beginning of the 1989 session, taking into account all relevant factors, including the work of the Committee since 1985.

Paragraph 83 of the annual report of the Conference contains the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on "Effective International Arrangements to assure Non-Nuclear-Weapons States Against the Use or threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons." Paragraph 21 of that Ad Hoc Committee's recommends that ways and means should continue to be explored to overcome the difficulties it encountered in its work in carrying out negotiations on that question, and accordingly it was generally agreed that the Ad Hoc Committee should be re-established at the beginning of the 1989 session.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons is contained in paragraph 86 of the annual report of the Conference. The conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee are contained in paragraph 12 of its report, which states that the work conducted by that subsidiary body during the 1988 session was useful in contributing further to the clarification of different

(Mr. Mashhadi, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

approaches that continue to exist with regard to both important subjects under consideration - that is, the prohibition of radiological weapons in the traditional sense, and the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. It is recommended that the Conference should re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee at the beginning of its 1989 session and that that subsidiary body should draw upon the annexes to this year's report as a basis for its future work.

Paragraph 90 of the annual report of the Conference reproduces the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. Paragraph 8 of its report states that the Ad Hoc Committee agreed that it should resume work at the outset of the 1989 session with the firm intention of completing the elaboration of the Programme for its submission to the General Assembly, at the latest, at its forty-fourth session.

(Mr. Mashhadi, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

Finally, on behalf of the President of the Conference, I should like to express our sincere thanks to all the members of the Conference, the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees and the Secretariat for their untiring efforts towards the actualization of the lofty goals of the Conference and for their assistance in the task of preparing the annual report of the Conference to the present session of the General Assembly. It is our sincere hope that at its 1989 session the Conference will be able to conclude a global, total, comprehensive and effectively verifiable convention eradicating chemical weapons from the face of the earth. This would restore the shattered hopes of the peoples that disarmament negotiations can be fruitful, serving the interests of mankind.

Mr. BADAWI (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, it was my intention to begin by congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau. But in accordance with your appeal I shall adhere to rule 110.

Egypt understands the importance attached by delegations to the general debate in the First Committee. At this is the first stage of our work, the debate provides an opportunity for us to be informed on States' positions on the various matters. However, we consider that the challenges that must be met by disarmament efforts, in particular at the multilateral level, require that we redouble our efforts to engage in further consultations and negotiations among the various delegations in order that this Committee's resolutions should provide the international community with clear guidance.

Egypt's position on most international issues, especially in the field of disarmament and international security, has not changed because it is based on firm fundamental principles, deriving from its Arabic, African and Islamic heritage as well as its membership in the non-aligned movement. Among the most important of those principles are the non-use of force in international relations, the settlement

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

of conflicts through peaceful means and, in particular, our desire to reverse the arms race, to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, and to prevent an extension of the arms race to other environments, such as outer space. Therefore I shall confine my comments during the general debate to a limited number of topics dealing with recent international events.

This year we have for the first time witnessed the actual destruction of an intermediate-range nuclear missile in accordance with the bilateral agreement concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union which is aimed at destroying an entire category of nuclear missiles. This is an historic achievement that has made us all optimistic and raised hopes that further progress will be made on the many other forms of the arms race. The recent progress has been made because there is now increased awareness that the formidable destruction capacity of nuclear weapons does not guarantee security. On the contrary, the world has realized that those weapons represent a great danger and are therefore harmful to stability.

We also consider that this historic step, although limited, will bring the world gradually to abandon those doctrines proclaiming that security can be guaranteed through armed force. More important still, we believe that this was a step towards more mutual assistance and international co-operation in the area of international security and disarmament.

It was in this favourable atmosphere that we went to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament filled with cautious optimism. We were optimistic because of the achievements made at the bilateral level between the two super-Powers and the re-establishment of a constructive dialogue between them, an essential condition for any bilateral or multilateral action. We were cautious, however, because we are convinced that we were still at the beginning of a long and

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

difficult road filled with difficulties and obstacles that we must overcome to reach our goal.

The third special session was held and we are familiar with its results. It seems to me that among the most important objectives of our Committee, which is holding its first session since that special session, is to assess the results of the special session and the prospects for multilateral efforts in the disarmament sphere. Over the last few months Egypt has taken stock of the results of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and I should like to share our conclusions with you and to be frank.

First of all the special session did not achieve the anticipated results. Efforts in the area of disarmament in all its forms - nuclear, conventional, bilateral and multilateral - therefore suffered a setback. The special session was not able to build on the basis of past achievements. It was not even able to state that all delegations reaffirmed the principles, articles and procedures set out in the Final Declaration of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was that session's major achievement. The results were not even at the level of those achieved at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament which some already regarded as fairly meagre. There are several explanations for this failure.

First of all, certain delegations saw a kind of contradiction between multilateral efforts in the field of disarmament, that is, efforts made in various United Nations bodies and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, on the one hand, and bilateral actions of the super-Powers or the East-West bloc, on the other. Those delegations believed that multilateral efforts were likely to exert a negative influence on bilateral negotiations. Thus the session was not able to

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

give a new impetus to bilateral negotiations or to take advantage of the favourable political climate created by the progress achieved in bilateral negotiations to give a new impetus to multilateral negotiations. Indeed, efforts were made to block the session on the pretext of trying to avoid any negative repercussions on any future bilateral negotiations.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

We also felt that other delegations at that session were pessimistic and were satisfied with the lowest common denominator; they essentially wished to protect gains already won and strictly to defend their positions and national interests instead of trying to work for common interests and positions in a positive spirit and reach a consensus reflecting the present international situation. Thus there was no serious initiative nor was there a spirit of innovative negotiation, which is essential for the success of any international action, such as the agreement on the Final Document of the first special session, the Document of the Stockholm Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.

Therefore, there was a considerable divergence of views on some topics - for example, the non-use of outer space for military purposes, regional disarmament initiatives, such as the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones or zones of peace, nuclear disarmament and the disarmament-development relationship. Those differences undoubtedly reflected fundamental differences between the positions of States, differences which cannot be taken lightly or underestimated.

However, we must be honest here. The world has already overcome complex difficulties, at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. The setback of that session did not result from the fact that the idea of holding a session devoted to disarmament was wrong. One such session has already been successful. The truth is that that session had no possibility of succeeding. Why? It was because of the position of those delegations that believed that its success would effect and negatively influence what their countries consider to be their highest interests. If we add the lack of active and innovative participation by a number of delegations there is no reason for surprise at the failure.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

The special session showed that there was active opposition to a global philosophy of disarmament efforts, with the participation of all countries. There is similar opposition to questions of disarmament being considered globally in all their forms - that is, a linking of negotiations on different types of weapons. That gives reason for both concern and surprise. How can we say that armed confrontation in one region would not have repercussions on others while the armed forces of the two major blocs are deployed on the seas and oceans, when all scientific studies affirm that the use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction would have devastating effects on the environment and the planet's resources? How can we allege that regional conflicts are limited by their very nature and would have no effect on the rest of the world? Can we believe that the sea lanes, the crossroads of the five continents, would remain safe if an armed conflict were to break out in the Middle East? Can we believe that the security of the Mediterranean and Europe would still be guaranteed and that they would remain stable and far from the conflict? Can we believe that markets and international trade would remain stable and prosperous if a world war broke out, or even if regional conflicts broke out? We are all aware that raw materials are produced in one continent, used for manufacture in sold as finished products in others.

Can a reasonable person accept the statements made by some, particularly the nuclear States and their allies, that only certain categories of weapons should be the subject of negotiations, while they state during negotiations between the two blocs that there is a fundamental, essential relationship between the various types of weapons and their launching vehicles?

Although a limited number of delegations bear the greatest responsibility for the final outcome, we all bear the responsibility for the failure of the special session.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

As I said at the beginning of my statement, I frankly consider that the positions and practices that emerged during the third special session were indeed very serious. They were in clear contradiction of the Charter, which is based on a clear philosophy - that we share a joint present and joint future and that we must work together to preserve international peace and security.

When we considered the work and the results of the special session, to learn from our experience, we found no structural or organizational defects. Experience has shown that the idea of holding such conferences is indeed valid, as are its objectives. Therefore, any attempt to correct our errors from a procedural or organizational point of view would not be very useful. We have no other course but strictly and fully to respect the Charter, Article 1 of which states that the purposes of the United Nations include:

"To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace".

To achieve that purpose, the Article says, the United Nations must:

"be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

Article 2 states:

"The Organization is based on the principle of sovereign equality of all its Members."

Those are purposes and principles to which Egypt subscribes and which it fully supports.

The first true test of the intensions of the members of the international community and of its ability to act in concert in the field of disarmament is whether the international community can cope with the urgent problems of disarmament

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

during the next stage. Let me explain. We expect the General Assembly at its forty-third session to adopt a resolution to prepare for the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That is a decisive stage in the Treaty's life. The parties to the Treaty can show the whole world whether they are acting seriously and effectively and demonstrate whether the Treaty's objectives are still valid and that the Treaty can cope with the dangers of the present and the challenges of the future.

Egypt supports the Treaty's objectives, and has done so since the first day since it was opened for signing, despite our reservations about the validity of the philosophy of non-proliferation as a disarmament instrument. We supported it because we were convinced that it was not possible to overestimate the danger of nuclear weapons and that the international community had to treat it in a special way, which cannot be imitated or applied to other types of weapons. We supported it despite the warnings of some who thought that it would legitimize a fait accompli, carried out by the nuclear-weapon States, on the one hand, and by those States that had abandoned the idea of acquiring nuclear weapons, on the other. We did so because we are convinced, first, that reason will finally triumph, even if we have to wait a long time, and, secondly, that the whole world will work to take nuclear disarmament measures.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

While we agree that preparations for this fourth conference should begin, we must also say that the conference will not succeed merely because there have been good preparations in the sense of the adoption of organizational and procedural measures. The success of the conference will not be ensured merely because the parties to the Treaty meet to try to produce a final declaration reflecting their agreement on the legal interpretation of the articles of the Treaty and their desire that the Treaty be implemented in the distant future. Success will be ensured only if the conference is prepared correctly, if positive and specific measures are taken to reaffirm the dedication of all parties to the spirit of the Treaty and the determination to see it implemented in the near future.

Among the elements that will be decisive for the success and validity of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we would list the following.

First, the nuclear States parties to the Treaty must take quickly - before the convening of the fourth conference - measures of disarmament, particularly in regard to strategic nuclear weapons and a comprehensive prohibition of nuclear tests, thereby reaffirming their commitment to the objectives of the Treaty and encouraging States that are not parties to adhere to it. Indeed, it is inadmissible that 20 years after the entry into force of the Treaty its objectives have still not been attained.

Secondly, a close examination of the various articles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is required in order to eliminate any gaps or contradictions that have become evident over the years. The most obvious contradiction seems to be the lack of guarantees for the concrete and effective security of the non-nuclear States, guarantees that would protect them against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. Egypt emphasizes that the practice whereby parties to the Treaty that are

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

members of military alliances and are protected by the nuclear umbrella of those alliances are placed on a equal footing with the other nuclear States prevents the adoption of practical measures to guarantee the security of the latter group of countries.

Thirdly, the parties to the Treaty must engage in consultations on the two elements of the Treaty: disarmament and co-operation, to ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy; the objective is a greater synthesis of those two elements, which can lead to the fulfilment of the purposes of the Treaty, thereby making it more attractive to those States that have definitely given up the nuclear option but that are not yet parties to the Treaty. To that end, perhaps States that are not parties to the Treaty should participate in those consultations at an appropriate stage.

Fourthly, the parties to the Treaty, and in particular the depositary States, should study ways and means of entering into discussions with States that are believed to have undeclared nuclear programmes, in order to prompt them to adhere to the Treaty or to subject themselves to the International Atomic Energy Agency's system of safeguards and international inspection of their nuclear installations. Indeed, if the parties to the Treaty continue to disregard the gravity of the position of those States, the credibility of the non-proliferation system as well as the serious intention of those parties to face the true nuclear dangers will be placed in doubt.

Fifthly, all of us, whether or not we are parties to the Treaty, should take advantage of the opportunity provided by the process of preparation for the fourth conference of parties to review the Non-Proliferation Treaty - the last such

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

conference before the Treaty must be renewed, in 1995 - to give new impetus to international efforts to put an end to the arms race and achieve disarmament in the the near future.

Egypt invites the two groups at opposite extremes on this question - one group exaggerating the advantages and the other, the drawbacks of the Treaty - to stop engaging in these exaggerations and to participate with us in making practical, constructive efforts to protect the world from the dangers of nuclear weapons and to achieve nuclear disarmament.

In our continuing efforts to maintain international peace and security, and in accordance with our aspiration to achieve world disarmament measures, particularly in the nuclear sphere - which is an important stage in the achievement of disarmament - we must adopt measures to prevent a worsening of the arms race in various regions, especially the Middle East, which is the most dangerous region since it has experienced bloody wars over the past 40 years, involving great human and material losses.

I emphasize that Egypt is a peace-loving country. It has been working constantly and tirelessly for the achievement of a climate of security and stability and a just peace in the region, so that the peoples of the region, including the heroic Palestinian people, can live in freedom and dignity, in peace and security. In that regard, in order to reduce tensions in the region and protect it from nuclear dangers, Egypt has endorsed the General Assembly resolution, adopted unanimously in 1974, calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That initiative must pass from the stage of deeds. In that connection, I would draw attention to the recent dangerous events in the region, which threaten to start a new spiral in all forms of the arms

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

race - nuclear, technological and conventional. For no aspects of the arms race should be examined in isolation. Security is in fact indivisible. Egypt intends to maintain the security of its people as well as its sovereignty.

I should like to quote here from the statement made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt on 13 June 1988, during the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament:

"... I wish to state before this Assembly in all frankness that Egypt will never allow a nuclear arms race in the Middle East in which one State would become superior to another, a situation which would threaten security in the area and in the world at large. Nuclear technology is not the monopoly of a few; it is accessible to all. Egypt will not remain complacent and will take all necessary measures to ensure its security and the security of the region once it is convinced that nuclear weapons are being introduced into the region.

"From this rostrum I wish to call on Israel to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency's system of inspection and verification, so that the peoples of the region may be sure that its nuclear programmes are not oriented towards military purposes." (A/S-15/PV.19, pp. 27 and 28)

We must avoid the horizontal proliferation of the arms race to additional regions, but we must also prevent the vertical proliferation of the arms race to new horizons, which would make the problem still more complex and serious.

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

Each year Egypt, in collaboration with Sri Lanka, submits to the First Committee a draft resolution aimed at ensuring that outer space shall be used only for peaceful purposes and at preventing the extension of the arms race to that area, which is of such vital importance to mankind. Here, I should like to share Egypt's keen concern with regard to the extension of the arms race to outer space. The results of the bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers in this matter are not encouraging. The endeavours made within the Geneva Conference on Disarmament have not yet borne fruit. The international community is still far from achieving its goal of an international convention preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space. Furthermore, we are now seeing new members being admitted to the "space club", if I may use that expression, while no appropriate international regulations exist to guarantee that space will not be used for activities that violate the security of other States and of the international community as a whole. Egypt will continue to co-operate fully with the delegation of Sri Lanka in submitting to the First Committee a draft resolution reflecting this position, which remains unchanged and which is also in line with the position adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We hope that other delegations will show flexibility and that the draft resolution will enjoy greater support, so that, together, we may avoid opening a new chapter in the arms race.

I cannot conclude my statement without referring to the growing danger facing the African continent. Certain international corporations have been attempting to dump nuclear or toxic waste materials on that continent, materials neither created in Africa nor emanating from African industries or activities. Those who commit such crimes do so in the belief that acts forbidden in other regions of the world are legal in Africa and that the value of human life in Africa is less than in the developed countries. Are such actions acceptable? Can the international community

(Mr. Badawi, Egypt)

accept such a division of the world into one that claims to be developed and civilized and one to which those qualities are denied? The Organization of American States (OAS) has acted in unity and with a new vigilance to safeguard the safety and security of the African peoples by adopting a resolution condemning such actions and calling upon the international community to make sure they do not recur. The OAS has called upon the international community to establish a legal basis for prohibiting the dumping of dangerous nuclear and industrial wastes in such a manner as to endanger human health and human life. Egypt welcomes the African proposal that this subject be discussed at the forty-third session of the General Assembly. It supports international efforts designed to establish an international régime for the treatment and transportation of nuclear and toxic industrial wastes. Egypt believes that the Cairo declaration on the dumping of toxic waste materials and the protection of the environment is a positive step in that direction. We also welcome the OAU resolution of the Organization of African Unity on the subject. Egypt calls upon the States and Governments of the world to give high priority to this subject and to establish a consistent international régime to deal with toxic nuclear and industrial wastes.

Mr. TAVERAS GUZMAN (Dominican Republic) (interpretation from Spanish):

Allow me at the outset, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Government, people and delegation of the Dominican Republic, to congratulate you on your election to preside over the First Committee.

Although the Dominican Republic is a small developing country, peaceful and peace-loving, without any pretensions or any aspirations to become a leading actor in the insane arms race, it is a fervent defender of peace and international security and a vigorous champion of the prohibition of both the use and the abuse of trade in, and production of, biological and chemical weapons. Accordingly,

(Mr. Taveras Guzman, Dominican Republic)

we condemn, both legally and morally, the merchants of death and the arms traffic itself, the sole purpose of which is to profit from the extermination of peoples.

The industrialized countries, and in particular the two super-Powers, which account for approximately 80 per cent of military expenditures, bear the primary responsibility for reaching agreements on the limitation and gradual reduction of nuclear and highly sophisticated conventional weapons.

Therefore, our Government welcomes any progress related to the recent accord on the reduction of nuclear weapons by the two super-Powers. However, we believe that the United Nations, the universal symbol of multilateralism, must play a principal role in the achievement of international security through disarmament.

Our delegation, which represents a developing country, finds it regrettable, indeed unconscionable, that we should still hear ignorant, irresponsible or - even worse - self-interested voices arguing that there is no link between disarmament and development.

As an example, one need only note the figure of over \$900 billion a year in military expenditures, a figure that represents some 20 times the sum total of the assistance allocated to development in all its forms.

Our delegation is firmly convinced that intellectual exercises at the multilateral level, such as the recent third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, albeit inconclusive, have demonstrated the ability of the countries of our planet to meet peacefully to analyse and discuss all matters connected with world peace. I am sure that, given a little more effort, openness and political will, we can achieve our objectives.

(Mr. Taveras Guzman, Dominican Republic)

Our delegation, representing a country which signed the Tlatelolco Treaty, urges other Member States to follow the example set by the Latin American countries in creating nuclear-weapon-free zones. Accordingly, our delegation supports all efforts to create a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic.

Neither nuclear weapons nor highly sophisticated conventional weapons provide any security to the world as a whole. The theory of the balance of terror, of one nation being stronger than another as a source of security, is fallacious. These deadly weapons bring fear, not security, and fear is not security. Security is synonymous with peace. And there will never be peace if there is no development.

Mr. ZAPOTOCKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The discussion taking place in our Committee on disarmament questions provides the international community with an opportunity to strengthen and develop the positive tendency which is already making itself felt in this key area of international relations. Therefore, it is particularly necessary that we make full use of its fruitful potential, of the consistent application of the principle of multilateralism, and strengthen the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field.

Our work should conclude with the adoption of agreed upon conclusions reflecting the political will to resolve disarmament questions through joint efforts on the basis of a balance of interests. In so doing, moreover, we should be guided more and more consistently by approaches embodying new thinking, enabling us effectively to carry out negotiations and come to mutually acceptable agreements useful for all.

We are beginning our work soon after the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The experience of that session should make possible a more effective co-ordination of efforts aimed at a business-like

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

and productive resolution of disarmament issues. At the same time it has shed light on the major obstacles. The session, although it did not produce an agreed-upon final document, became an important forum at which constructive approaches emerged, and proposals were made on all aspects of disarmament problems. Our work today should make rational use of all the various ideas stated there.

It is encouraging that during the general debate the wish to adopt a business-like attitude and a substantive approach to problems has clearly prevailed. Concrete proposals are being heard and there is a growing degree of openness in the interests of consensus. This has been demonstrated, for example, by the substantive and stimulating statement of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Vladamir Petrovsky, and by representatives of a number of other countries. A realistic and effective approach to disarmament questions is being demonstrated in the Soviet-American dialogue under way and, in particular, of course, in its most important result, the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) which was ratified during the meeting between the leaders of both countries, this year in Moscow. We see its significance in the fact that for the first time in the history of civilization the idea of disarmament was in fact implemented.

As one of the eight States which participated in producing this Treaty and the means for its verification of it, we clearly feel its favourable impact on the strengthening of general security and stability. The signing of the Treaty was a crucial moment opening the way to further fundamental measures in the nuclear disarmament field. We believe that the possibilities for the conclusion of a Treaty on 50-per-cent reductions of strategic offensive weapons will not be undermined by delays in the negotiations.

Discussion at the present session of the General Assembly has compellingly demonstrated the extensive and broad support existing for the adoption of that

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Treaty. Here we fully share the view regarding the need for strict compliance with the ABM Treaty during the agreed-upon minimum period . Thus, we could ensure that a reduction of military arsenals will be carried out in conditions of stability and equal security. This naturally is the fundamental prerequisite for any disarmament measures.

At the present and crucially important stage, which is also an encouraging one, the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the disarmament field is making itself felt with ever growing determination and purposefulness. Today we cannot evade priorities laid down by the entire international community. Indeed, there is a need to step up efforts to implement them and, first and foremost, to internationalize the solution to problems of nuclear disarmament as a whole, which indeed is the common cause of mankind.

Overall plans for the gradual elimination of nuclear weapons and all other means of mass destruction are in keeping with this demand and the spirit of our time. First and foremost of these plans is that put forward on 15 January 1986 by the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. Another is the proposal made at the third special session by the Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. These are proposals which can free the world once and for all from the fear of mass annihilation and can allow it to enter into the third millennium in totally new conditions, when everything will serve the peaceful development of civilization.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

In so doing they are in keeping with fundamental universal interests and requirements. Because that is so we cannot be satisfied with a situation in which such a fundamental and urgent matter as the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament has for years now been discussed only at informal plenary meetings of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. The goal of the Conference after all is to produce concrete agreements. In so doing it has to strengthen the international legal order of which a number of treaty obligations on the prevention of nuclear war and the elimination of the nuclear threat must be the most important elements.

We continue to be firmly convinced that the first agreement in this area must be that of a full and complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests, in other words a measure that, without threatening the security of any State, rejects the logic of the nuclear arms race, the negative results of which are ever more horrendous means of mass destruction.

A top priority in our view should be active work on preparations for a multilateral treaty to that end at the Conference on Disarmament. Therefore at the present session of the Conference, bearing in mind the positions of all groups of States, Czechoslovakia has submitted a compromise draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban, which should be established without further delay. We propose that such a Committee, as a first step towards producing a treaty on a nuclear-test ban, should begin substantive work on concrete interlinked questions of the treaty including its structure and scope, as well as on verification and compliance. We hope that this realistic compromise approach, which does not prejudice the position of any State on these issues, will receive the unanimous support of the United Nations General Assembly this year.

We attach great importance to the bilateral negotiations under way between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of nuclear tests and the

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

ultimate goal of a complete cessation of them. The joint verification experiments carried out this year in both countries are a positive result of the new atmosphere of openness and constructive co-operation. We hope that in the very near future the bilateral Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests and the Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes will be ratified. That would be the first concrete step and it could be followed by further measures.

The initiative of convening a conference of States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty submitted by Mexico and some of the non-aligned countries we consider to be a manifestation of political determination to reach a decision on this problem. We are convinced that the problem of a nuclear-test ban and other issues of nuclear disarmament at the present stage require the participation of all nuclear Powers. If today they were to take a positive stand here that would be a significant contribution towards speeding up positive developments.

Among the most important objectives of efforts to limit arms and to ensure general security we also see the strengthening of the régime of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nearly 20 years have elapsed since its conclusion. We are convinced that in future there should not be an increase in the number of members of the nuclear club but rather that it should be dissolved as a consequence of the elimination of nuclear weapons, as is being proposed by the Soviet Union. The forthcoming fourth review conference on the implementation of the Treaty in our view should become a means first for seeking a new impetus to universalize it and, in particular, the unequivocal need for consistent and full implementation of all its provisions, including those which bind parties to the Treaty to make efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

One high priority of the negotiations on disarmament is the prevention of the arms race in outer space. The overwhelming majority of Members of our Organization and of the entire international community have spoken in favour of that. The

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

dangerous policy of seeking to justify the benefits of Star Wars projects is of great concern to the United Nations. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva should do all in its power to decrease the threat from outer space. Here we favour the beginning of practical negotiations on questions which, during preliminary discussions, have been defined as relevant to this sphere. We believe that among such questions is that of the establishment of an international space inspection agency, a ban on anti-satellite weapons and ensuring the inviolability of space objects. The General Assembly at its present session should reach unanimity regarding the need for stepping up negotiations in that area.

The attention of the international community is now focused on a particularly important objective, that of working out a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. That objective is all the more urgent since more data is coming to light on the extreme dangers of these weapons. We welcome the fact that this year also significant results have been achieved at the negotiations, bringing closer a solution of the remaining problems and the conclusion of the work of preparing a convention.

A major contribution to the work of the Conference was the Soviet memorandum on a multilateral exchange of data on chemical weapons and the proposal to conduct experimental inspections at chemical facilities at both national and international levels. In this connection Czechoslovakia has declared that it does not possess or produce chemical weapons. We are preparing further measures through which we hope concretely to promote clarification of questions dealing with verification. We believe that mutually acceptable forms must be found for including in the verification system of the convention verification both of laboratories and of the production of extremely toxic chemical agents which in future might be used for military purposes.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

We believe that the adoption of the Convention will be facilitated by the position of France, which was stated by President François Mitterrand in the general debate of the General Assembly. We have always believed that security must be achieved through political measures and not through increasing the numbers of weapons.

We have no doubt that within the framework of the convention on chemical weapons we will also be able to achieve unanimity on the question of the means for reliably ensuring the security of all the parties at all stages of chemical disarmament. A serious obstacle to the conclusion of the convention, in our view, is the beginning of the production of binary chemical weapons. We are concerned with the possibility of their deployment in Europe. In trying effectively to promote a global ban on chemical weapons, and, at the same time, to strengthen stability in our region, we have proposed, together with the German Democratic Republic, to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the establishment of a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. It would be possible to carry out within that zone comprehensive tests of the verification régime proposed by the global convention. That proposal continues to be relevant and we believe that its constructive nature will be correctly understood.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I should like to give an assessment of the useful work of the trilateral negotiations between the delegations of the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which is facilitating mutual understanding on a number of issues dealing with the ban on chemical weapons. We view as constructive the proposal to convene a conference of States parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 to strengthen international legal obligations to ban the use of chemical weapons. We should also like to emphasize the need for business-like and

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

non-confrontational negotiations on how to prevent the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction. Czechoslovakia views positively the concrete proposal of India to prevent the abuse of sophisticated technology for military purposes, presented at the third special session. In that proposal we also see one of the ways to strengthen the role of our Organization in the disarmament area.

In our view, the Member States of our Organization today must try to see to it that appropriate international machinery in the disarmament field functions with full effectiveness, and, in particular, that the effectiveness of the major the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, is considerably enhanced. Czechoslovakia attaches the highest priority and significance to the results of the work of that Conference and is doing all in its power to make those result tangible and concrete. We believe that the work of the Conference should not once again consider disarmament questions in general, which is being done at the United Nations. The Conference should, in fact, see to it that the will of the international community as expressed in resolutions of the General Assembly are embodied as speedily and fully as possible in concrete disarmament agreements. This requires making full use of negotiating instruments and methods created by that Conference. Based on the needs that experience has shown, we must think of ways to improve them and to work out methods that will allow us to meet the demands of multilateralism and, at the same time, to enhance the effectiveness of the negotiations.

Guided by such criteria, one year ago the Prague meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty made concrete proposals regarding the enhancement of the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament. In agreement with our allies, they were presented and explained in the statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Geneva Conference in

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

February of this year. We propose to step up the schedule of work of the Conference, in which there should be no unnecessary breaks. That applies particularly to issues on which significant progress has been made in the negotiations, and here the Conference should work on a virtually year-round basis. The negotiating machinery of the Conference could be considerably strengthened, by agreement on the establishment of working committees on all priority questions, with a mandate to carry out concrete negotiations. When required by circumstances, the Conference could hold meetings at the level of ministers of foreign affairs. That would make it possible to overcome significant obstacles that impede progress and to create an impetus for achieving agreements where a final step needs to be taken. All States should be given an opportunity to make their contributions to the negotiations. The present practice of the Conference in this regard should be further strengthened. The object of these and other possible measures to be taken in this area should be to raise the quality and increase the dynamism of the negotiations in the Conference in full accord with the demands of our day. Thus, we would hope that the Conference on Disarmament would act as a modern and highly effective mechanism for international interaction. We see it in the future as a continuing universal body for disarmament negotiations.

The limited results of the work of the Conference this year once again demonstrate that the measures proposed to enhance its effectiveness are absolutely necessary. In proposing those measures, of course we take into account the fact that a major prerequisite for progress is still the political will of States, on which depends both the content and the form of the negotiations.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

In an era when the weapons of war created by man can annihilate life on earth many times over, almost nothing is comparable in terms of significance to the complex and enormous task of protecting the environment. In bringing that up in this forum, we in no way intend to infringe on the very responsible work of other United Nations bodies which, in fact, deal with substantive aspects of the threat to the environment which are linked to man's peaceful activity.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Here, we also share the concern that was voiced at the present session of the General Assembly and which was heard consistently regarding the problems of the storage and elimination of toxic wastes. All of these questions certainly require effective solutions which will ensure the ecological security of all States and will be in keeping with the interests of the economic and social development of each country.

On this subject, Czechoslovakia has its own concrete proposals to make. But we cannot fail to recall the real threat the arms race represents to the environment. This has also been pointed out by States members of the Warsaw Treaty in the document of the Political Consultative Committee, entitled "Consequences of the Arms Race for the Environment and Other Aspects of Ecological Security" which was adopted in July in Warsaw. In that document, we emphasized that a nuclear war would inevitably lead to total ecological catastrophe.

We should like to point out that significant damage to the environment is caused by any armed conflict. The environment is negatively affected by the production, storage and transportation of various types of weapons - nuclear, chemical and even conventional.

Nature is also negatively affected by the wasteful use of non-renewable raw materials and energy sources for military purposes. The extension of the arms race to outer space is also extremely dangerous to the environment.

These extremely urgent and pressing questions must also be resolved, and that is possible only on the basis of the broadest and most open international co-operation.

A solution must be based on the interdependence of today's world and the interlinkage between the processes taking place in it. It must be based on a whole range of approaches aimed at achieving the highest goal of mankind, the survival of civilization.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Our Organization should also turn its attention to questions of the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe. We hope that, as a result of international support for an intensification of the all-European process, the present debates will have a stimulating effect on the successful conclusion of the Vienna meetings in the upcoming weeks and on the opening of negotiations in the area of conventional weapons in Europe. This is particularly so since a realistic concept of their reduction is gradually being formed.

Work towards and achievement of this reduction would not only substantively decrease the danger of military confrontation on our continent, but would have extremely favourable effects on a global scale. We believe that a basis for agreement on such a concept could be the joint proposal of the Warsaw Treaty countries made last July. It proposes that in three carefully balanced stages, there be mutual elimination of asymmetry in various types of weapons and, after that, substantive reductions of armed forces to a level where the military potential of both sides is exclusively defensive in nature.

We are also convinced of the need for the greatest possible reduction of the risk of military confrontation along the line of contact between the two major military-political alliances.

Together with its allies, Czechoslovakia has made a proposal to that effect. It has proposed that there be mutual elimination of the most dangerous offensive weapons from the zone along the line of contact. This is one of the most important measures relating to the military-political aspect of Czechoslovakia's far-ranging initiative to create zones of confidence, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations along the line of contact between States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a proposal put forward this February by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, Milos Jakes.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia proposes that active efforts be made so that the negotiations on disarmament be undertaken in an atmosphere of trust and openness, in order reliably to ensure strict compliance with the agreements on limiting weapons and to promote disarmament, and that obligations undertaken be subject to comprehensive verification. This, too, is an objective of our concrete proposals.

As one of the sponsors of the draft resolution for the establishment of international verification machinery regarding implementation of agreements to decrease tensions, to reduce weapons, and on the military situation in regions of conflict, we believe that these questions are among those that require an active role on the part of the United Nations. Our delegation will state its point of view on these and several other agenda items in greater detail in one its statements at a later date.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.