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Chairman, Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. ZAPOTOCKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset I wish, on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation, to express our condolences to the people of the United Sta tee on the devastating earthquake in San Francisco, which has caused so much human and material loss. The President of my country has already sent President Bush a letter expressing our heartfelt condolences. The Permanent Mission of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to the United Nations also expresses its deep sympathy to the famil ies and relatives of those who died in this catastrophe.

On behalf of the Csechoslovak delegation, Mr. Chairman, I congratulate you on your election to your high and responsible position. At the same time, I assure YOU and the other officers of the Committee of our full support and our desire to co-opera te in the interests of our common task and the good of all mankind.

It is difficult to get a more graphic picture of the contemporary world, its problems, its hopes and its suffering, than that which emerges from the mosaic of the statements made by the representatives of 159 States Members of the United Nations at this session of the General Assembly. In addition to many dark colours, the picture contains a range of other colours of a rosier hue, which evoke hope, optimism and belief in the future. Indeed, mankind, which was almost on the brink of the abyss, must look for a way out of this situation that will enable it not only to survive physically but also to ensure the further development of civilization, free from threatening flaws and distortions. In this situation, the spiritual forces of the peoples must be radically mobilized to restructure present international relations on the basis of the harmonization of national and human values and mutual respect.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

We are happy that a clear sign of our times is a qradual change from confrontation to co-operation, from military deterrence to moderation, from rearmament to disarmament. We welcome all efforts aimed at creating a new basis for international security and stability in Europe and in the world. Such secur i ty and stability must be based on mutual trust, a balance *of* interests, the primacy Of international law, and broad co-operation.

We believe that only in that way can we create the necessary conditions for further active measures by all States - large, medium-sized and small - to solve the vital regional and global problems. Confirmation of this can be found in the outcome of the Ninth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government Of the Non-Al igned Countries held in Belgrade. This constitutes an important factor in the restructuring of international relations on a just and democratic basis.

At the same time, as realists we fully realise that at this transitional stage of world development mankind still faces many risks and their very serious consequences! that there are many obstacles to the building of a new international order; and that the pceitive trends have not yet become irreversible.

Czechoslovakia is convinced that the main road to the strenqthening of international peace and security is the road of disarmament. Together with our allies, we have put forward and are developing a well-known programme *of* disarmament up to the year 2000. The implementation of that programme would lead to the gradual elimination of all types of nuclear and *other* weapons of mass destruction and a radical reduction in armed forces and conventional armaments.

We note with satisfaction that the process of true disarmament has begun - although there are still problems. The Soviet-United Sta tea Treaty on the elimination of two types of nuclear weapons - intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles - is be inq successfully implemented. Czechoslovak ia is taking Part in that.

(Mr. Zapo tocky , Czechoslovak ia)

This year the Soviet Union is withdrawinq 500 tactical nuclear warheads from the territory of its allies. It is ceasinq the production of highly enriched uranium for military purposes and is limiting the production of weapons-grade plutonium. It has completely stopped the production of chemical weapons and will begin to eliminate them even before the adoption of an international legal document in Geneva.

Our country, toge ther with other States members of the Warsaw Pact, is consistently carrying out unilateral measures to reduce our military forces, conventional armaments and major expend1 tures. On that basis, certain units of Swiet troops temporarily stationed on our territory are beina withdrawn. In Czechoslovakia, we have reduced the number of military personnel in major units by 12,000 men. We are withdrawinq and gradually destroying 850 tanks, 165 armoured transport vehicles and 51 military aircraft.

(M tZapo tacky, Czechos lov ak ia)

We are transfetrinq 20,000 military personnel into civilian units. We intend to reduce the term of compulsory military service from 24 to 18 months. Military expenditures are beinq reduced by 15 per cant. In this connection, I would inform the Committee that Czechoslovakia is joininq the system of standard accounting for military expenditures worked out at the United Nations, and it will present the necessary da ta, In 1989, our country s production of military technology will be reduced by 16 per cent, in 1990 by 25 per cent, and this trend will con tinue.

Tak ing Czechos lovak ia's size in to account, it can be seen that these figures are certainly not merely symbolic. They deserve due attention. In takinq these steps, we are also helping our national economy. For instance, some of the tanks taken out of military units will be used as bulldozers and land-reclamation machinery. We have also worked out A national plan Ear the qradual limitation and cessation of military production at some enterprises, which will then be used exclusively for production in the civilian sector. The resources and intellectual potential thus freed are to he used for wider international co-operation to develop peaceful al tar natives in various sector s of economic, scientific and technological proqrese. All these steps indicate the defensive nature of our armed forces. In our opinion the time has Come for the problem of conversion to be the subject of multilateral interna tional discussion within the United Na tions.

Alonq with the rest of the international community, we have qreeted with enthusiasm the results achieved on nuclear and space armaments at the talks between the Foreign Ministers of the USSR and the USA in Wyoming, which atrenqthen our hope that it will soon he possible to conclude an aqreement on a 50 per cent reduction in strataqic offensive weapons.

There is also increasinq reason to hope for positive movement reqardinq tactical nucl car weapons. Tn a large extent, solution of that problem will

(Mr. Zspotocky, Czechoslovakia)

determine Europe s stability and security. With our allies we have concluded that the solution of that question can be reached gradually, in stages, and we have taken into account the existing concept of minimum nuclear deterrence in the NATO countries and their readiness to start. talks about this category of weapons if there are concrete results in the talks in Vienna on conventional weapons.

The Vienna talks on conventional weapons among 23 States members of the Warsaw Pact and NATO have in our view been generally positive. Their greatest political capital is the readinasa of both military-political groups to include in the agreement important offensive weapons such au tanks, artillery, armoured transport, aviation, helicopters and manpower, and their agreement that armed forces will he reduced to eaual levels and sublevels. The views of the sides on definitions of various categories of weapons and their numhers are so close - almost identical - that they can he agreed upon during this round or at the beginning of the next one. Nobody douhts the need to establish strict mutual controls with on-site inspections without right of refusal. The recent NATO proposal. on the exchange of information, stabilization and control measures, and the changes in the posi tion of the Warsaw Pact countries on the auewtions of aviation, tanks, artillery and regional distribution, have moved the study of these problems even closer to the very heart of the future agreement.

Thus, we have reason to he reasonably optimistic. But we are still Far from euphoria because many matters are still pending. Further, for reasons that are well known, we are constantly under pressure of time. We can assure al.1 that Czechoslovakia will do everythinq not only to maintain the tempo of the talks but also to facilitate the reachinq of an important agreement next year.

We are also very satisfied with the work done in the 35-country talks for the otrenqthening of confidence and security in Europe. The proposals express the

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

fundamental priorities, approaches and goals of the three groups of countries Participating in these negotiations. The existing agreement and the convergence Of positions makes it imperative for us to seek speedy and mutually acceptable decisions on the important problems still pending. What is most important, however, is that the activities of the air forces and navies be included in the study of confidence-building measures and ways of limiting the number of military exercises in which all types of armed forces are used.

The agreements that will be worked out in Vienna will require new approaches - not only in the gathering and consideration of a large amount of information among the 35 States members of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), hut also in deciding on the machinery for consultation. That is why, together with our allies, we put forward the idea of creating a pan-European centre to reduce military threats, and we expect a constructive response.

We are also in favour of a detailed discussion of the open skies" idea advanced by the united States and developed by the Soviet Union. If worked out Carefully, this idea can make an important contribution to the creation of a system of openness world-wide. The international conference it is Canada's responsibility to convene is in our view an appropriate forum in which to work out the main aspects of this initiative.

Our efforts to participate actively in the development of a pan-European process are reflected in the Czechoslovak initiative for the creation of a zone Of trust, co-operation and good-neighbourly relations between contiguous States members of the Warsaw Pact and NATO, put forward by the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Jakes, in February 1988. Its objectives must, however, he reached through a general expansion of political dialogue, contacts, and mutually advantageous co-operation in the spirit of the new politic.31 thinking.

(Mr. Zapotocky , Czechoslovakia)

In the first stage, we informed interested States and the public at large of the Principles and forms of co-operation between contiguous countries which in our view should eliminate confrontation and the lack of confidence between the two qroups and do away with the image each had of the other as its enemy. In the second stage, with the assistance of the relevant governmental bodies and departments and many social organizations in Czechoslovakia, we worked out a set of specific measures and projects aimed at the further development of co-operation in all fields. In the near future, we intend to discuss these with all potential partners from the confidence zone and any other interested partners.

In the military field, we are interested first and foremost in cutting the manpower of our military divisions and reducing the numbers of the most dangerous forms of offensive weapons in the zone along the line of contiguity between the two blocs in Europe. In this respect, we would also draw attention to the increasing relevance of the joint initiatives of the Governments of Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, which they put forward between 1985 and 1988, towards Creating a zone in central Europe free of chemical weapons and a corridor free of nuclear weapons from 1987 on. Implementing these and other, partial, regional steps and measures could set up a buffer against further proliferation in the tools of mass destruction and their missile delivery systems.

Czechoslovakia is firmly in favour of strengthening the role of the United Nations, its Secretary-General and the Security Council in the field of disarmament. In the meetings of this Committee too we are prepared to give our active support to any constructive proposals to increase the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms of the United Nations and to create new ones, if the reality of the situation and the need to solve burning issues so demands.

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Recently, much 'has also been said about ways to improve the operation of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We are in complete agreement with those who point to the insufficient use made of that body's potential. We believe that one of the possible solutions could be to reduce the number of items on the agenda, rotate Group chairmen, form small working qroups - of 20 to 25 experts - with specific terms of reference, and so on.

We place a high value on the activities of the United Nations and its Secretary-General in developing various types of studies and research on disarmament. They not only help experts in their work but also inform people and publicize the humanitarian mission of disarmament. Czechoslovak ia intends to continue its active participation in this beneficial United Nations endeavour. Czechoslovakia's practical contribution is nw coming in the form of direct participation in developing research into the role of the United Nations in the field of monitoring.

To be honest, we expected more from the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva this year. Yet again the procedures for forming the working bodies has proved to be clumsy.

There should be some noticeable movement, in our view, in the discussions on the set of nuclear disarmament issues, the more so as all the nuclear Powers are taking part in the work of the Conference. The progress which has been registered at the Soviet-United States talks, particularly at the Wyoming meeting, lays good groundwork for the work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

We would welcome the most rapid possible beginning of businesslike talks on a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon testing. We are therefore prepared to do every thing in our power to that end, as we confirmed in the joint document from the socialist States adopted in June 1987, in which the main provisions of a

(Mr. Zapo tocky , Czechoslovak ia)

comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty were formulated, and in the compromise proposal put forward in Auquat 1998, which sets the terms of reference for the corresponding work inq body.

One of the possible ways towards ending nuclear teats would be, in our view, to extend the 1963 Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water to cover underground explosions. We support the idea of convening in the very near future a special conference to discuss this issue, preferably after the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Ptolifera tion of Nuclear Weapons.

I would 1 ike to assure this important body that Czechoslovakia, which does not possess or produce chemical weapons and has none on i ts territory, will continue actively to promote the achievement of a convention banninq and eliminating them, in the spirit of the Paris and Canberra Ccnferencee on chemical weapons which have taken place this year. The principles of *our* approach on this issue are set out in the declaration by the Government of Czechoelovak ia of 5 January 1989. In that declaration, we expressed our readiness to be one of the first States party to a convention, just as soon as it is ready. Even now, we are taking suitable steps within our State, with the involvement of 23 ministries and departments.

Our practical contribution in this direction is shown by the fact that we have taken legal measures to limit the export of selected types of dual-purpose chemicals; these are temporary, partial measures to prevent the misuse of chemicals for military purposes until the convention is concluded. In January this year we carried out a national experimental verification which confirmed that it is possible to have effective control that would ensure that chemical weapons are not being produced in our civil chemicals industry. In August the Minis ter of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Johanes, informed the Conference on Disarmament in

(Mr. Zapotocky, Czechoslovakia)

Geneva of Czechoslovakia's readiness to carry out this experimental verification at the inter national level. At the same time, we published the principal data about our chemical capability which were relevant to this issue, and allocated a special laboratory fat use by the future bodies set up under the convention to ban and eliminate chemical weapons.

Czechoslovakia is aonstant in its support for reaching agreement on practical measures to prevent the deployment of any weapons systems in outer space. We are very interested in the proposals by the Soviet Union to set up a qroup of inspectors to monitor objects launched into outer space in order to verify that offensive weapons have not been deployed, and to set up an international space agency. If these proposals ate adopted, we are prepared to submit to monitor inq all Czechoslovakia's technical equipment which has been launched into outer space under the INTERCOSMOS programme, We are also prepared to discuss constructive proposals by other States on confidence-building measures and measures to increase openness in space activities. These could become a reliable quer antee that the spread of the arms race into outer space would be prevented.

(Mr. Zapotocky , Czechoslovak ia)

On other matters on the agenda of the Geneva Conference, such as the Prohibition *of* radiological weapons, guarantees of security for non-nuclear States and a general disarmament programme there is great delay which must he overcome by a common effort.

To conclude, I express the hope that all States represented in this international forum will show the political maturity and will that at this decisive stage of international development will help us to achieve concrete aqreements to limit armaments and ensure disarmament. The United Na tions can play a fundamental role in this process.

Mr. STRESOV (Bulqar ia): T congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your highly responsible post and wish you every success in the discharge of your duties. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau. The delegation of the People s Republic of Bulqar la is prepared to work to promote understandinq and co-operation amonq the Member States of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and international security.

Permit me also through you, Sir, to convey our deep and sincere condolences to the deleqa tion of the United States of America on the traqic loss of human life caused by the earthquake in California.

We note with satisfaction that the debate in the General Assembly demonstrated the desire of practically all deloqa tions to concentrate the work of the forty-fourth session on ways and means of eneurinq greater utilization of the potential of the United Na tions in resolving international problems. In our view the success of these efforts will depend to a very great extent upon further progress in disarmament. That is why for the People s Republic of Bulgaria the wor k in this field is of the highest priority. Further practical steps for curbinq

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

the arms race and adopting effective disarmament measures would strengthen the positive trend set by the signing of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republica on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Ranqe Missiles - the INF Treaty. This would etatablieh a qualitatively new atmosphere in the eearch for solutions to the most complicated military and strategic problems.

Even the seemingly irreconcilable contradiction between the strategy of nuclear deterrence and the idea of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons can be overcome if the necessary political will and readiness for dialogue and compromise exist.

In his etatement *before* the Council *of* Europe, Mikhail Gorbachev propoaed the concept of minimum nuclear deterrence and the convening of an expert mee ting to assist in the eearch for a generally acceptable definition. This concept would be feasible as a temporary solution as long as it excluded the potential for carrying out nuclear attacks. In our view this fresh approach could make a valuable contribution to elaborating a common etand on rendering the procera of nuclear disarmament ir rever sible.

A major step in this direction should be the completion of the Soviet-American negotiations on reducing by half their strategic offeneive weapons. We hope that solution8 to the remaining problems can be found before the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation *of* Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Thie would be of major significance in arriving at a wider concurrence of views on the strengthening *of* the non-proliferation régime.

The nuclear-arms race cannot be stopped if nuclear testing continuee. A radical eolu tion to the problem of a comprehensive and complete ban on all nuclear-weapon tests is long overdue. It is our hope that after the anticipated success of the Soviet-American negotiations on the verification procedure8 of the

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgar ia)

1972 and 1976 Treaties the two countries will arrive at the NPT Review Conference having achieved oonaiderable progress in co-ordinating reductions of the number and power of nuclear teats. A posi tive example has been set by the decision of the Soviet Union to reduce unilaterally by one third the number of its nuclear teats, as well as to limit their yield. We would note, however, that the bilateral negotiations on stage-by-stage reduotiona of nuclear tests ace neither a substitute for a comprehensive teat ban nor an alternative to multilateral efforts in this field, particularly those within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

We believe that an international agreement on hal ting and subsequently banning the production of fissionable materials for military purposes would be a further step on the way to curbing the arms race that would complement a ban on nuclear-weapon testing.

The problem of reducing tactical nuclear weapons in Europe is now gaining prominence. The preaerva tion, modernization and further aocumula tion of such weapons would have a destabilizing impact on the continent, especially if the expected convent ion al reductions 90 ahead. The States parties tc the Warsaw Treaty have proposed separate negotiations on the problem of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, to be preceded by consultations on their mandate and composition, without waiting for the conclusion of an agreement on the reduction of conventional foroea.

A priority task in the field of disarmament is the prompt conclusion of a convention on the banning and elimination of all chemical weapons. The Paris Conference of last January demonstrated the broad in terna tional consenaus both on the need for signing such a convention and on the adoption of preparatory measures at the national level for i ta implementation. It genera ted momentum for the speeding Up Of the negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament. It is to be regretted that this year 's two sessions failed to use this oppor tunity . Therefore

(Me. Stresov, Bulgar ia)

we welcome the proqrese achieved in the Soviet-American talkr in Wyoming and stronqly hope that they will provide the necessary impetus for the Conference on Disarmament to move forward without further delay towards the early conclusion Of a total ban on chemical weapons.

The recent international Conference in Canberra also made a significant contribution to this effect by brinqinq industry into this processn.

The expert group appointed by the Secretary-General to elaborate rules and procedure8 for inquiry into reports on alleged viola tions of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 has also completed its work.

In these circumstances, for the Geneva negotiations to become bogged down in technical details might be fruetrating and bring about a lose of momentum. A determined political effort is now needed to overcome the last obstacles on the way to a global convention. Therefore we welcome the proposals made in plenary meetinq to change the pattern of work of the Conference on Disarmament on this matter and to g ive the Ad Hoc Committee a dra f tinq mandate .

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

There is another area where positive signals are observed. We believe that conventional disarmament is bound soon to become a reality, although it is still too early to outline an exact time frame for its first tangible results. In Europe, where the concentration of conventional arms is highest, a new consciousness is being formed. In Vienna, in contrast with recent times, public relations and propaganda point-scoring have yielded to a business-like dialogue between East and West. We have also witnessed a series of unilateral measures in the conventional field.

My Government has contributed to this trend by deciding to cut the military budget of the People's Republic of Bulgaria by 12 per cent and to reduce the armed forces by late 1990 by 10,000 men, 200 tanks, 200 artillery systems, 20 aircraft and 5 naval units. These reductions are already under way.

These and other measures aimed at real disarmament, however, very often bring about parallel organisational, economic, social and other problems. They are making us view in a new light the conversion of military resources for civilian purposes. The pending disarmament agreements make it necessary to take comprehensive measures at the national level.

This is an issue that concerns a number of countries, and therefore we feel that the United Nations is the best place to exchange ideas and experience on how it may he tackled through the joint efforts of the international community.

The deliberate exclusion of certain fields of disarmament from the international dialogue is unacceptable. The problem of naval arms and disarmament is still such a field. We are in favour of a constructive dialogue at the United Nations and, even better, at the Conference on Disarmament, with the participation of all the major maritime Powers.

(Mr. Strerov, Bulgar ia)

Improving the effectiveness of the united Nations bodies dealing with disarmament would also contribute to the multilateral efforts to curb the arms race. The laat session of the First Committee ehowed a certain improvement, albeit not radical, in its work, Indicating a trend towards greater efficiency and practicality of its decisions. Unfortunately, thie cannot be said of the Conference on Disarmament, and even less can it he said of the Disarmament Commission. It is our hope that at this session our Committee will be able to deliberate on the moat appropriate ideas and propoeale for improving the effectiveness of those bodies and to reach consensus in thin regard.

At the same time, we acknowledge the efforts of the United Nations Department for Dirarmament Affairs, under the able guidance of under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi, which has maintained a hiqh standard of efficiency in this important field.

Those are the general remarks my delegation wishes to share with the Committee. We expect to elaborate on some of them further during the course of the debate.

Mr. PITARKA (Al hania): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, on behal f of the Al banian delegation, upon your election as Chairman of the Committee, to wish you every success in presiding over its proceedings and to wish the other officers of the Committee every success, too.

The concern and preoccupation of the international community over the arms race and the dangers that it poses to international peace and security persist in this session, too, as in previous ones. Most of the agenda items for the debate on disarmament have already become traditional, because the reality of the arms race remains unaltered, characterized by the same denominator: its intensification alonq the lines of the intentions of those forces that aspire to hegemony and

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

supremacy, which view armament8 as a means to attain their goals - that is, to realize their policy of expansion.

The propensity to increase armaments, hoth qualitatively and quantitatively, still imposes itself upon, and continues to dominate, the aspiration *of* the peoples and world public opinion *for* genuine disarmament. It remains one of the moet essential factors directly influencing the maintenance of the complicated world situation, which is fraught with tensions, dangers and conflicts that may potent ial ly I ead to greater confrontat ions. It is eaually natural and underatandahle that, although we are on the verge of the last decade Of this century, the issues relating to disarmament and international security, to the genuine relaxation of tension in the world and to the creation *of* a climate of peace and understanding still constitute the core of our debate.

This year's session coincides with the closing of the Second Diaarmament Decade and with preparations for the Third Decade, which will mark the closing Of the twentieth century. As the last decade Of the twentieth century, it commande attention, not only hecause it is the end of the second millennium of our era, from the chronological point of view, but also hecause we are entering it without freeing humanity from the preoccupation8 and concerns of the First and Second Disarmament Decades,

Mankind continues to live through an unprecedented arms race of all. varieties of weapons, which has piled up gigantic nuclear arsenals in the hands of some big imperialist Powers, primarily the two super-Powers, the United States of America and the Soviet. Union. These arsenals represent a threat to international peace and security. Therefore, in our opinion, the goal, the aspiration and the message of world public opinion on the brink of the Third Disarmament Decade also remain

(Mr. Pitarka , Albania)

largely unchanged: to stay the hand of the forces which hold the peoples of the world hostage to the perpetual blackmail and threat of *war* and nuclear holocaust.

The Albanian delegation supports all those endeavours, in the framework of the Third Disarmament Decade, which will really contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security as well as to the denunciation of the aim of the two super-Powers and the military blocs they head - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Warsaw Treaty - to exploit the arms race to serve their hegemonistic policy and the preservation of their spheres of influence.

It is acknowledged that thie century is among the most unprecedented periods for scientific discoveries. But it will alro go down in history as the century of the two mort tragic world wars, an the century in the course of which the arms race reached new and most dangerous frontiers. As part of the overall arms race, nuclear weapons, with all their many aspects, continue to be among the dangers threatening mankind. If in every international forum - without reference to our Committee, which is specifically dedicated to three issues - it is repeatedly stated that nuclear weapons come first and that genuine disarmament should start from there, that is because it has now been accepted by a13 that a nuclear confrontation could be catastrophic for the very existence of life on Earth. Furthermore, there is increasing proof that the very physical existence of these enornous stockpiles, the tests carried out with nuclear weapons and their technological residues, let alone the political blackmail they exert without even being triggered off, are a constant source of worry, with ever more dangerous consequences for genuine peace and secur ity.

Prompted by the preoccupation over the dangers that the nuclear-acme race is fraught with,. world public opinion is closely following the metamorphosis and evolution of the United States-Soviet dialogue in this domain. The limitation and

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

the real reduction of stocks of nuclear weapons, if realized in practice, would undoubtedly be a positive development. Peace-loving peoples and countries, which have long been insisting on such measures and are continually pressing the super-Powers and the other imperialist Powers to terminate their military course and the arms race, would naturally welcome such steps.

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

It is clear by now that there is an interplay of motives behind the united States-Soviet dialogue on nuclear disarmament and their relations in general, including economic, strategic and propaganda factors. The propaganda factor relates to the pressure exerted by peoples and world public opinion, which aspire to genuine disarmament.

If the 1987 Treaty between the super-Powers on the Elimination of Their Medium-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles is compared with the facts, it becomes clear that more than 50,000 nuclear warheads of various highly sophisticated types still exist and are constantly being perfected. Not even the most optimistic souls can be lulled to sleep by the propaganda lullabies. On the contrary, Vigilance is needed, as we are actually faced with two dangerous trends: first, the extension of the arms race to outer space; and secondly, the compensation of the quantitative reductions in nuclear weapons by aualitative improvement and the continuing modernisation of other weapons. At present, there is a constant narrowing of the boundary between the dangers of nuclear weapons and those posed by sophisticated conventional arms.

The extension of the arms race to outer space would eventually bring about a new and more perilous escalation of the arms race, carrying with it potential threats to our planet from another direction. The existing arsenals of space weapons, in particular both publicized and unpublicised projects, prove that cuter space has been included in the global war plans of the super-Powers, threatening to turn it in future into a real place d'armes, just as the seas and Earth have become.

Nor is the phenomenon of qualitatively compensating for suantitative reductions in nuclear weapons new or without precedent in the history Of the stages through which the arms race has evolved. In the past two, we havr witnessed the same tactics of the super-Powers, which, every time they have agreed to reduce, limit or eliminate a certain category of weapons, have instead come up with new,

(Mr. Pitarka, Al hania)

more sophisticated and more advanced types. Hence, there is real danger of the introduction of a new, more sophisticated and more destructive generation of nuclear weapons, which have been and can still be left out of agreements between the super-Powers - not to mention sophisticated conventional weapons. In our opinion, the facts have proved, and continue to prove, that the striking potential of nuclear weapons is not diminished by their numerical reduction, since constant perfecting can increase their destructiveness. Judging from their actions, this is what has happened and what is still happening now.

The Albanian delegation continues to maintain that the conventional arms race is of esual concern. What makes this aspect of the arms race most upsetting is the ever-increasing use of conventional weapons on the battlefield. No less than 20 million people have been killed by these weapons in about 150 local wars and conflicts, some of which are still going on - not to mention the colossal material losses suffered by the countries involved.

The aforementioned facts are widely known. It is also widely known that the expenditures for the purchase of these weapons place a burden on opposing countries. Neither is it unknown, for that matter, that the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations have expressed concern over the escalation of the conventional arms race, in particular locally, in various regions of the world.

It has been proved that the super-Powers and their military alliances, in collusion with the military multinationals, which account for 93 per cent of the global sales of conventional weapons and their transactions, bear the main responsibility for the intensification of this race.

The negative effects and the burden entailed by the expenditures an such weapons become evident if one considers the grave economic situation of most developing countries, their high foreign indebtedness, massive hunger

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

and so forth. From that standpoint, these weapons have a doubly tragic result: loss of innocent lives and devastation of the economies of these countries, wherefrom the merchants of death make colossal profits.

Because of the presence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty, and of the vast military arsenals of the two super-Powers, an atmosphere of political and military distrust still prevails in Europe. European peoples have grown more sensitive than ever to the dangers of this reality and to its negative effects on the political climate of our old continent.

There is at present a growing realistic tendency to call for the realization of the aspiration of a Europe for the Europeans. We maintain that a constructive step to that end would be the dismantling of the two military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty and elimination of the military presence of the two super-Powers. This would make it possible to proceed further on a course much desired by the peoples of Europe: relaxation of the atmosphere of military and political confrontation and the creation of a climate of mutual trust.

Yet, the newly proclaimed plans and programmes for modernization of short-range nuclear missiles and of certain types of conventional weapons not only give cause for greater concern but are also proof that the super-Powers' intentions on the European continent have remained essentially the Same.

Chemical weapons as part of the overall arms race have increased in number and we have unfortunately even witnessed cases of their being put to use. This reality, coupled with the concern and preoccupation over the consequences, was clearly demonstrated at the Paris Conference, which took place at the beginning of this year. As we stated then, the increase in chemical weapons and their development to the present state is not, in our opinion, a spontaneous process, but

(Mr. Pitarka, Albania)

a result of the overall arms race between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which possess the biggest arsenals of these weapons, as well as the technologies for steadily perfecting them.

We would welcome an international convention that would outline concrete measures towards chemical disarmament. But in order to attain that goal,, the first and most determining step should be taken by those who possess the largest arsenals Of these weapons, by those who possess the most advanced technologies for their production, and by those who are the main traders in these weapons.

Consistent in its stance on the crucial issues of the time - preservation of peace and international security, aII-round and genuine disarmament - the People's Socialist Republic of Albania has supported and will continue to support all actions and steps that are conducive to peace and international security. We shall also oppose all policies that threaten freedom, independence and the sovereignty Of countries and nations, including the arms race, by denouncing the real protagonists and the ones who are responsible for its continuation.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the readiness of the Alhanian delegation to make its own modest contribution to the proceedings of this Committee.

Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria): Permit me, at the outset, to convey to you, Sir, the congratulations of the Austrian delegation on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Your election is a tribute to your professional experience and ability in the field of disarmament. I am convinced that under your guidance the work of this Committee will achieve substantial results.

I also congratulate the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur on their elections. I assure the Bureau of the full support and co-operation of the Austrian delegation.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

At the beginning of laet year's general debate in the First Committee, we were able to welcome the improvement in the international climate, in particular between the two super-Powers. This year, we are even more encouraged by the progress in international relations. Nearly all Heads of State or Government and Foreign Ministers, in their statements in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly, mentioned the positive trend towards further détente and a heightened awareness of common responsibility for the maintenance and enhancement of peace. All the addresses made reference, in particular, to the recent talks between United States Secretary of State Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevrednadae and praised the impetus that disarmament efforts have gained from those talks.

Indeed, increased understanding between the super-Powere and a new flexibility in East-West relations oontribute enormouely to the spirit of goodwill which is essential for the disarmament process. Looking back to 1987 and 1988, we are very satisfied with the conclusion of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic8 on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Ranqe and Shorter-Ranqe Missiles - the INF Treaty - which, for the first time in history, eliminated a whole cataqory of weapons and was a token of the transition from mete arms control to qcnuine disarmament, We welcome the implementation of that important Treaty, which is tak inq place in accordance with the set timetable and without frictions.

In this context, we have to take into account particularly the interaction between and interdependence of bilateral, regional and multilateral disarmament endeavours. It was stated in last year's resolution 43/75 F that

> "real progress in the field of nuclear disarmament could create an atmosphere conducive to progress in conventional disarmament on a world-wide basis".

This makes it obvious that genuine conventional disarmament is not feasible without correlating steps in the nuclear field. On the other hand, progress in the

(Mr. Hohenfellner , Austr is)

oonven tional field can promotc conf idence and oan, therefore, together with confidence- and secur i ty-building measures, contribute to a climate favourable to achieving common poet tions and agreements relating to nuclear disarmament .

I recall the fact that shorter- and intermediate-range missiles rapresent only about 3 per cen' of the total nuclear arsenal. Hence, my deleqa tion is convinced that the INF Treaty, which has been whole-heartadly welcomed by all of us, can he only a starting point from which further measures have to be launched. Thus, we welcome the intentton of the super-Powers to out their strategic arsenals by 50 per cent and to make this their qoal in the s tra teqic arms reduction talks. We hope that pending questions can be reeolved quickly and that an agreement can be reached within a ehort time. The proposals concerning inspections have been interesting and promising. WQ are confident that a ooneenaua in thin field will facilitate the solu tion of other questions. The recent talks of Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadae have given an encouraging sign and now give riae to well-founc!ed expectations of further progress.

Austr ia is a small country located in the heart of Europe and bordering on Sta tes which belong to the two moat powerful military alliances. Europo has the highest concentrations of weapons, conventional as well as nuclear, in the world. Short-range missiles of 500 kilometres or less could easily reach our territory and cause the most ser ious damaqe and suffering to nur country and Its people. That is why we feel that the question of tactical nuclear weapons also has to ha addressed more intensively and that progress in thin field has to be achieved. If security is possible on a lower intermediate-range missile level, or even on zero level, and seems to be possible on a lower strategic-weapon level, it munt. also be possible on a lower level of tactical nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Hohenfellner , Austr ia)

Aurtr ia attaches the utmost importance to achieving agreement on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. The urgent need for a treaty prohibiting any form of nuolear testing is clearly evident when we take into account the faot that since 1945 *more* than 1,500 nuclear test explosions have been conducted, with 38 explosions during the year 1988 alone. This considerable number of explosions in recent year6 shows the utmost importance of a comprehensive test ban. We regret that the var ious morator iums, which we welcomed, have not been used to make substantial progrerr in this field.

I recall, in this context, that the Austrian Federal Government, on 3 February 1987, made a public appeal *to* the Governments of the Soviet Union and the *United* States for the immediate cessation *of* nuclear testing. My Government expressed *its* confidence that an early atatt on negotiation8 aiming at the conclusion of a oompreheneive nuclear-teat-ban treaty would constitute an important step in halting the arms race and contribu ting to a safer world.

Auctr ia welcomes all endeavour s with a view to achieving a comprehensive nuclear-tert-ban treaty. There fore, we feel encouraged by the process of discussion going on between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Staten of America with regard to a step-by-step approach towards an end to nuclear testing. The same holds true for the agreement to incorporate hydrodynamic and se ismic mon.i tot ing , be well as on-site inspection, and the levels above which theee measurements would occur in the ver ification protocol to the 1974 threshold test-ban Treaty, and for the agreement on *the verification* protocol to the 1976 Treaty on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. We look forward to the ratification of both Treaties as an interim measure on the way to a comprehensive nuclear-teat-ban treaty. We fully agree that finally a total test ban must be achieved,

(Mr. Hohenfellner , Austr is)

With regard to the verification of compliance with a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, Austria actively participates in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific kperts. The onyoing large-acalo technical endeavours approved by the Conference on Disarmament show that the problem8 of verification are technically resolved and permit evaluation of the performance of the verification sys tern. In addition to A global seismic monitoring system, complementary measures will be needed. On-site inspections by international teams would, in any case , enhance confidence. We hope that a consensus on the mandate of a relevant ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament can soon be reached.

The emergence of a climate of confidence should be used for the establishment of a functioning verification syatem. The technical possibility ought now to be matched by political will and should result, in the long run, in a nuclear-free wor ld, a world which would be less dangerous and more secure than the present.

Nuclear and conventional disarmamant are closely interrelated and have to be considered in a manner that takes into account the mutual influence of both fields. On the European continent a major: achievement was recorded in the conventional field by the Concluding Document of the Vienna follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed on 15 January this year . We regard the Vienna Concluding Document as one of the corner-etones Of conventional disarmament in Europe, s ince in its mandate for the nego tia tions on conventional forces in Europe the Sta tee members of the two alliances announced their intention to enhance stabil ity and secur ity through the creation of a balance of conventional forces and armaments on a lower level. Auetr ia is proud that these important negotiations, as well as the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measuree in Europe take place in Vienna.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The talks on the mutual reduction of forces and armaments in central Europe have been going on for 16 years and have ended without result. Maybe the scope of the negotiations, which aim only at the reduction of troops and weaponry in a limited area of Europe, has been too narrow; maybe the political will to reach an agreement has been lacking; maybe disarmament efforts in the conventional field ought to be undertaken in a wider framework, in a more comprehensive manner. Since the last condition is significant for the newly established talks on conventional forces in Europe and since their beginning this year has been very promising, we are confident that those talks will have positive results.

(Mr. Hohenfellner , Austria)

In addition to the talks on conventional forces in Europe, there are the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, meant as a follow-up to the very fruitful Stockholm Conference. The mandate of those involved is to elaborate and adopt a new set of mutually complementary confidence- and security-building measures. The complementary nature of confidence- and Security-building measures - complementary to the achievement of progress in disarmament and the enhancement of security - is stressed in the Vienna Final Document. The potential of such measures in Europa is far from being exhausted. It is now necessary to take ambitious new steps, which must be accompanied by efforts to change military software. We expect the Vienna negotiations to result in substantial progress in this field.

In his statement to the General Assembly on 25 September 1989 the Austrian Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he was convinced that the progress achieved in confidence- and security-building measures within the process of the Conference OK Security and Co-operation in Europe (GCE) might be of interest to other regions also. May I repeat that Austria is prepared to organize, in co-opera tion with the United Nations, an international seminar on this subject , and it will also draw on the experience of experts from States participating in the CS CE process. Such a seminar could be held in Austria in the spring of 1991. The very first steps towards the preparation of this seminar have been taken already, and I am confident that it will contribute to better international understanding and, hence, to a safer world.

While talking about conventional disarmament we must not forget the crucial problem of the international transfer of arms, as the Secretary-General pointed out in his annual report on the work of the United Nations. This scourge, which is the cause of so much instability and 'insecurity in the world , has to be looked at more

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

closely, taking into account, in particular, the necessity of drawing a distinction between the leqal trade in weaponry and the illegal trafficking in armaments.

It is of the utmost importance that the work of the Conference on Disarmament on a convention on the product ion, stockpiling and destruction of chemical weapons he brouqht to an early conclusion.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the progress achieved in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons dur ing the laet year - in particular, in regard to the protocol on inspection, national trial inspections, and the list of precursors. It is true that many of ua had expected earlier success; indeed, many of us had expected the convention to *be* finalized in 1988 or dur ing the fir *at* aix months o f this year. However, we must not overlook the fact that the discussion is now concentrating on the very core items of the Convention, which, of course, are more complicated to tackle. We rhould not be discouraged by the fact that the talks on verification, on the structure of the control authority and on the destruction of weapons take time. The ideas that have beun put forward so far are promising, and we hope that an agreement on the outatanding items can be reached in the foreseeable future.

So far as chemical weapons are concerned, we have reason to he confident, especially because of the momentum that has been qa ined th is year. The Conference on chemical. weapons in Paris in January thie year took place in a positive atmosphere. It underlined once again the importance of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and reiterated the call of the international community for a chemical-weapons convent ion. The chemical-weapon@ issue was once more at the centre of world publi c opin ion. We have to thank the Government of France for this initiative.

I wish also to thank the Government of Australia for putting forward the idea of a government-industry conference o n chemical weapons. My Government regards last month's meeting at Canberra, where disarmament experts a n d representatives of

(Mr. Hohenfellnet , Austria)

the world's chemical industry gathered, as having been very valuable. The industry's interest in the early conclusion of a convention, its co-operative attitude, and the intention to create an international industry forum in Geneva gave momentum to the discussion on the chemical-weapons sector.

We also noted with great interest a proposal to step up the work on the chemical-weapons convention by establishing a g oup of technical experts, and we are willing to participate in the further alabora tion of that proposal. Another expression of Austria's willingness to support international efforts in the field of chemical weapons is that it recently joined the so-called Australian Group.

The same is true Of the important statements made by President Bush and by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze at the General Assembly this year. President Bush's proposal that the super-Powers cut their chemical stockpiles was accepted, even amplified, by Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. The international community expects this impetus to have a positive influence on the Geneva talks.

My delegation has always been of the view that only a global, comprehensive and verifiable convention will achieve the desired goal. Once the convention is completed, we must urge all nations to ratify it and adhere to it. Access ion by only a limited number of countries would jeopardize its very purpose.

In this context, I reiterate that Austria would be pleased to host the international organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons, envisaged in the rolling text of the convention. Based in Vienna, the organization - apart, possibly, from achieving financial savings owing to the availability of an infrastructure - could benefit from sharing the technological knowledge and experience of the experts of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the field of control and verification.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

My delegation will comment further on the chemical-weapons issue at a later stage.

Austria had the honour of presiding at the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, and my delegation is currently involved in intensive discussions with a view to the submission, this year again, of a draft resolution on biological weapons. My country, firmly convinced that the exchange of relevant data can promote international security, is very interested in having the Convention enhanced. My delegation will elaborate on this at a later stage.

A matter of particular concern to my delegation is the militarization of outer space. Austria supports all efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. We are disappointed that the relevant Committee of the Conference on Disarmament was unable to achieve progress, and we call upon all member States to increase their efforts and to show a more flexible attitude.

One topic on the arms-control agenda in respect of which my country was able to contribute is the recently completed Third Review Conference on the sea-bed Treaty. At that Conference, Austria proposed that the Final Declaration include recognition of the fact that no nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction have been placed on the sea-bed, even outside the zone of application of the Treaty.

During its deliberations the First Committee will discuss also questions relating to international security. In this field, new ideas have been put forward, and new approaches have been suggested. We think that new ideas designed to address international security in a comprehensive manner are very interesting. Where there is new thinking, it takes time to achieve a breakthrough, but the new approaches and, to some extent, the reactions to them are very promising.

(Mr. Hohrnfellnet , Austr ia)

Austria has alwaye been convinced of the need for disarmament endeavour8 at the unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. Sometimes i t is alleged that genuino success can be ach ieved only in the bilateral or in the regional framework. I want to stress the importance of the United Nations and of its central role and its contribution in the multilateral- and global-disarmament rpheres. Let me give an example. As I said ɔarlier, the convention on chemical weapons must be accepted universally and must, therefore, be elaborated within a multilateral forum, ruoh as the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Elaboration on that item by only a very limited number of States would not bring about the desired results. Efforts must be mutually supportive and complementary in nature. Only world-wide co-operation can bring substantive progress in all disarmament spheres. Only multilateral arms control will lead to genuine security and lasting peace.

The work of the Conference on Disarmament is of the utmost importance since it is the only multilateral negotiating body in the field. Regrettably, not all of its committees were in a position to produce tangible results. My delegation therefore hopes that the Conference will also reach success in various disarmament fields where there has been a standstill in recent months. Although my country only has observer status in the Conference, Austria is actively participating in its work. The Austrian Federal Government, in accordance with its fundamental commitment to promote international peace and security, will continue its endeavours to become a member of the Conference on Disarmament. In that ceqard my delegation expresses its hope that difficulties related to the enlargement of the Conference, which was already decided upon at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1982, will be settled very soon.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, as the important deliberative body of the United Nations machinery in the field of disarmament, was unable to reach agreement On a single item on its agenda at its substantive session earlier tnis year, although a consensus on one or two topics seemed very close. That is why a number of delegations that were somewhat disappointed proposed certain changes to or alterations in the structure of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and its work. I had the honour to propose the establishment of a working group composed of the officers of the Commission and interested deleqations with a view to enhancing the Commission's work and output. In the meantime informal

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

discussions and deliberations are taking place in a very promising atmosphere and show the keen interest of many delegations in realizing an improvement. The proposals put forward so far are very interesting and they now need to be deliberated intensively. I can assure members tnat my delegation will actively participate in the relevant endeavours.

The work Of the First Committoo has undergone a Car-reachinq rationalization that has already contributed to a more fruitful method and outcome for our discussions. However, we must not overlook the fact that restructuring and reform represent a permanent process. This year we have 26 substantial items on our agenda, several of which are broken down into an many as 14 sub-items. The time allotted for our deliberations should be meaningfully spent. We should concentrate on those issues that could lead ta multilateral progress and to specific recommendations to the Conference on Disarmament. The various bodies of the United Nations machinery related to disarmament should concentrate on their specific tasks. Duplication or repetition of work should be avoided.

My description of the disarmament machinery would be incomplete without mention of the United Nations Secretariat's Department for Disarmament Affairs. I should like to pay a tribute in particular to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Akashi, and to his staff in the Department for their untiring efforts to promote the disarmament process. In this context I want to extend my thanks to him and to the Government of Japan for the organization and holding of the highly valuable United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues at Kyoto last April. The Conference, designed to produce an exchange of views and the creation of ideas in various disarmament fields, has been of great importance in the search for a common ground with respect to arms control and international security.

(Mr. Hohenfellnar , Austr ia)

In conclus ion I should like to s tress my delegation's conviction that mankind is not solely capable of creating new and more sophisticated weaponry and new means o f mass destruction. In our view mankind is also cspahle of mak inq the necessary aseesementa of the preaent situation and of taking the decisions that are indispensable for its own survival. we have to try hard, hut if we succeed mankind will qa in more and more security at ever-lower arms levels. One day, maybe, we will achieve security without needing any kind of weapon, and we will hrinq about real and permanent peace.

The meeting rose at 4. 45 p.m.