

United Nations
**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1935th
 MEETING**

Wednesday, 24 October 1973,
 at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Agenda items 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38 (<i>continued</i>): Economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security | |
| World Disarmament Conference: report of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference | |
| General and complete disarmament: report of the Confer- ence of the Committee on Disarmament | |
| Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: report of the Secretary-General | |
| Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament | |
| Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: | |
| (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament; | |
| (b) Report of the Secretary-General | |
| Implementation of General Assembly resolution 2935 (XXVII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibi- tion of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco): report of the Secretary-General | |
| Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee on the Indian Ocean | 117 |
| Organization of work | 126 |

Chairman: Mr. Otto R. BORCH (Denmark).

AGENDA ITEMS 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 AND 38
(continued)

- Economic and social consequences of the armaments race
 and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and
 security
- World Disarmament Conference: report of the Special
 Committee on the World Disarmament Conference (A/
 8990 and Add.1, A/9033, A/9041, A/9228)
- General and complete disarmament: report of the Confer-
 ence of the Committee on Disarmament (A/9039, A/
 9141, A/9293)
- Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of
 their possible use: report of the Secretary-General
 (A/9207 and Corr.1)
- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report
 of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament
 (A/9141)
- Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear
 tests (A/9081, A/9084, A/9086, A/9093, A/9107, A/
 9109, A/9110, A/9117, A/9166, A/C.1/1031, 1036):

- (a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on
 Disarmament (A/9141);
- (b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/9208)

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 2935
 (XXVII) concerning the signature and ratification of
 Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition
 of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlate-
 lolco): report of the Secretary-General (A/9137, A/9209)

Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace: report
 of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9029)

1. Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland): The changing political cli-
 mate in the world accounts for the fact that the disarma-
 ment debate at the twenty-eighth session of the General
 Assembly is taking place in a more auspicious atmosphere
 than ever before. The recent events in the Middle East, in
 the opinion of the Polish delegation, do not change this
 basic assessment. On the contrary, as I stated in my
 intervention before the General Assembly on 15 October
 1973, they should prompt us all to exert even greater
 efforts towards extinguishing the persisting hotbeds of wars
 and conflicts towards widening and deepening the process
 of détente in the world [2154th plenary meeting].

2. Since the twenty-seventh session a year ago, we have
 witnessed a further consolidation of the process of détente
 in the world, particularly in Europe and in the relations
 between the Soviet Union and the United States. It will be
 recalled that, within a short span of time, the agreement on
 ending the war in Viet-Nam was followed by the resump-
 tion of the second round of the strategic arms limitation
 talks and the important results of the Soviet-American
 summit meeting in Washington, among them the historic
 agreement on the prevention of nuclear war [see A/9293].
 In Europe, at the same time, similarly momentous events
 have taken place, including the normalization of relations
 between the two German States, the Conference on
 Security and Co-operation in Europe, whose second stage is
 now in progress in Geneva, and the negotiations concerning
 the reduction of arms and armed forces in central Europe
 which are to begin in Vienna in a few days' time.

3. The United Nations scene has evolved too. The presence
 in our midst at the twenty-eighth session of the represen-
 tatives of the German Democratic Republic and of the
 Federal Republic of Germany, bringing the United Nations
 closer to full universality, should also have a positive
 bearing on disarmament discussions in this forum.

4. Poland, which has taken an active part in and con-
 tributed to some of these developments, welcomes this
 climate of political détente with profound satisfaction.
 However, we consider that the improvement in the inter-

national political situation should be reinforced by, and reflected in, a corresponding military détente and that the favourable prospects for peaceful international co-operation should be followed by new, imaginative and bold disarmament undertakings, paving the way to durable and effective solutions concerning both nuclear and conventional arms.

5. Despite the improved political situation in the world, or more accurately, because of it, the compelling reasons for determined action by the international community now are evident to all. Even though we are well into the Disarmament Decade, the vast arsenals of both nuclear and conventional arms, have a way of expanding both in sheer numbers, potency and sophistication. With the world's gross military spending soaring past the once mind-boggling \$200,000 million mark, and on the way towards the \$300,000 million mark, the world has long since reached the point of secured mutual destruction. However, we must see to it that it never becomes a point of no return. As my delegation urged from this conference room a year ago, what we have to work for instead, is ensured mutual security.

6. The universal character of the arms race implies equally universal responsibility for disarmament, since in a world where peace and security are indivisible, the efforts for ensuring them must be also.

7. In order to make tangible progress towards the objective of universal peace and security, meeting all the legitimate interests and concerns of all countries, it is essential to secure the active and constructive participation in disarmament efforts of all countries, and primarily, of course, of all the nuclear Powers and other States with substantive military potential.

8. The Government of the Polish People's Republic has long held the view—as expressed in its reply to the note of the Secretary-General of 2 May 1972¹ concerning a world disarmament conference—that such a world body would be the most appropriate universal framework wherein each and every country could discharge, on the basis of full equality, its share of responsibility for the course of disarmament negotiations in the years ahead.

9. Indeed, the urgent need for the early convening of such a conference is a view widely shared by the international community. This year alone, for instance, that view was uniformly supported in the declarations or communiqués adopted in the course of many high-level official visits, either made by the Polish leaders abroad or by foreign statesmen in Poland which involved, *inter alia*, the following countries: Austria, Finland, the German Democratic Republic, Iceland, India, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yugoslavia.

10. More recently, such support was forcefully declared by the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of *Non-Aligned Countries* at Algiers in September 1973 which urged the earliest convening of a world disarmament conference open to all States. It will be recalled that the very idea of a world conference devoted to disarmament in fact originated with and was consistently supported by the non-aligned countries at their previous conferences at Cairo,

Lusaka and Georgetown. These countries evidently—and rightly so—interpret a world disarmament conference as a suitable platform for participation, on the basis of equality, in the process of the resolution of the fundamental problems afflicting the world today. Their dedication to the idea of the conference confirms their awareness that such a forum would offer a real possibility of contributing in a constructive fashion to the solution of the involved questions of both nuclear and conventional disarmament, whether on a regional or a world-wide scale. Not irrelevant, too, is the assessment that—as pointed out by the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, in his letter to President Boumediene of Algeria, in his capacity as President of the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of *Non-Aligned Countries*—a successful world disarmament conference would not fail to contribute significantly to the social and economic advancement of the developing nations of the world. Last but not least, a world disarmament conference would offer the means whereby advancing and consolidating détente in Europe and between the major Powers could extend to and be shared by the non-aligned nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, as indeed it was urged at the Algiers Conference.

11. The Polish Government considers—as it did last year—that a world disarmament conference should seek to attain two principal objectives: first, to ensure constructive and equal participation of all States in the consideration of disarmament questions; and, secondly, to ensure that all aspects of disarmament of interest to all States, both in the field of nuclear and conventional arms, whether on a global or regional scale, may be examined in parallel. For obvious reasons, the conference should not be called upon to pursue the actual negotiations of specific measures. What it could and should do, however, is to review and make recommendations pertaining to the military, political, economic and social aspects of disarmament, and set forth priorities, principles and guidelines for the future. Reflecting security concerns and interests of all States, such recommendations would represent a sound basis for more specific negotiations in the appropriate disarmament organs. Without prejudice to any conceivable modifications of the existing disarmament machinery, such recommendations would not only supplement, but, more importantly, add momentum to and facilitate the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. In the view of the Polish Government, this organ—by virtue of its past accomplishments and considerable experience—is the appropriate body qualified not only to help prepare for the convening of a world disarmament conference, but also to follow and translate its recommendations into practical terms of specific draft agreements.

12. Poland's view has always been that any specific agenda for the conference must seek to bring us closer to our ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. It was therefore with great satisfaction that public opinion in my country—and I am sure throughout the world—saw this view upheld by the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States of America in their joint communiqué of 24 June 1973, wherein they confirmed that:

“The ultimate goal is general and complete disarmament under strict international control, including nuclear

¹ See A/8817, annex I.

disarmament. The convening of a world disarmament conference at an appropriate time can play a positive role in this process".

13. There is a clear consensus that while a world disarmament conference should strive to explore the whole gamut of disarmament problems, it must give its primary attention to weapons of mass destruction. Its consideration of nuclear disarmament, and particularly such a facet of it as the question of a comprehensive test ban, binding upon all nuclear Powers and covering all environments, would undeniably constitute a step that would contribute most effectively to halting and reversing the nuclear arms race while, at the same time, enhancing international co-operation in the peaceful uses of the atom.

14. Following up the agreements reached by the first round of strategic arms limitation talks and the Soviet-American agreement on the prevention of nuclear war of June 1973 [see A/9293], a world disarmament conference could equally profitably examine another facet of nuclear disarmament, namely, the possibility of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. In this context, the Soviet initiative at the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly concerning the non-use of force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would be a suitable basis for discussion.

15. In its parallel consideration of conventional disarmament, a world disarmament conference could look into such familiar proposals as those seeking the reduction of conventional arms and forces, the elimination of foreign military bases, reduction of military budgets and other measures conducive to promoting world-wide détente and peaceful co-operation among all States.

16. It is appropriate to recall here the important initiative of the Soviet Union, presented at this session of the General Assembly concerning the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries. The implementation of that proposal would add considerably to the momentum of disarmament efforts.

17. The proposal for convening a world disarmament conference was the subject of extensive debate at the last two sessions of the General Assembly. As a result of a virtually unanimous vote on resolution 2930 (XXVII) at the last session, a Special Committee was established with a mandate to explore the views and suggestions of governments on the matter and to report thereon to the twenty-eighth session.

18. Regrettably, due to the negative position of some Governments which chose to defy the desires of an overwhelming majority of States to proceed expeditiously with preparations for a world disarmament conference, the Special Committee was not in a position to operate in a fully effective way. None the less, it met on a number of occasions and held important exchanges of views and suggestions; and, as was rightly pointed out at the 1934th meeting by the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Roschin, as well as by the Chairman of the Special Committee, the representative of Iran, Mr. Hoveyda, those

exchanges were certainly useful. It is the considered view of the Polish delegation that the General Assembly cannot afford to underestimate, much less ignore, the value of the important and substantive work of the Special Committee. It undeniably represents a meaningful contribution which can and should facilitate our own work, at the current session, of formulating recommendations on convening a world disarmament conference.

19. Poland is prepared—as, I am sure, are other countries—to make an effective contribution to the efforts designed to speed up the specific measures preparatory to the holding of the conference. We are determined to approach this task with imagination and an open mind. We fully appreciate, for instance, the aspirations of those States which have, at one time or another, expressed their interest in and desire to make their contribution to the preparation and ultimate success of a world disarmament conference. We are therefore ready and willing—as, indeed, we were last year—to consider a reasonable enlargement of the Special Committee, acceptable to all regional groups and interested States. We are equally prepared to extend our full co-operation in drafting such terms of reference for the Special Committee that would in effect turn it into a preparatory committee, thus bringing nearer the day when a world disarmament conference can be convened.

20. It is generally conceded that active and constructive participation of all nuclear-weapon Powers in a world disarmament conference is essential for its ultimate success. As realists, we say it is equally essential that those Powers have a chance to contribute to its success right from the preparatory stage. They had that opportunity in the Special Committee, set up in accordance with the terms of resolution 2930 (XXVII). We regret that some of them chose to stay away from it and not to take advantage of that opportunity; but we hope that those Powers will eventually decide to co-operate and to join in the common effort at a time and in a form which they will deem most appropriate. The Polish delegation would, therefore, firmly discourage any suggestion that two different categories of States—nuclear and non-nuclear—be set up and be institutionalized with respect to preparations for a world disarmament conference.

21. As I noted at the outset of my statement, the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly is taking place in a uniquely favourable international climate brought about by the progress of détente and growing confidence among nations. Addressing itself to this new climate, the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Algiers succinctly stated in its final declaration that the present strengthening of détente between East and West and the progress towards solution of Europe's problems resulting from the Second World War constitute an important achievement of the forces of peace in the world. The declaration further stated that the non-aligned countries, which have worked unceasingly to establish peace and eliminate tension through negotiation and recourse to international bodies, welcomed with satisfaction all those efforts and initiatives and regarded them as positive steps towards the establishment of peace.

22. It would be only fitting and appropriate for the current session of the General Assembly to put its own

stamp on this new and, hopefully, durable trend. To our mind, the most suitable form for doing so would be a unanimous decision concerning the early convening of a world disarmament conference. Such a decision would correspond to the new world climate and coincide with the desires of the international community.

23. As was stated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic, Stefan Olszowski, in his address in the general debate on 27 September 1973:

“... we favour the speediest possible convocation of the World Disarmament Conference. We trust that in the course of the present session, on the basis of the record of work heretofore of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, established under resolution 2930 (XXVII), we shall take further decisions concerning the preparation of the Conference. The Conference could become a turning-point in the efforts aimed at freeing mankind from the tremendous burden of armaments, strengthening world peace and promoting the successful socio-economic development of the nations of the world.” [2130th plenary meeting, para. 74.]

24. In my statement today I have concentrated on agenda item 32, that is, on the question of a world disarmament conference. I shall ask to speak at a later date on other disarmament items which are before the Committee.

25. Mr. BARTON (Canada): I suppose that to many people who watch what goes on in these halls it will seem incongruous that at a time when war has been raging in the Middle East and has been succeeded only by an uneasy cease-fire we should be introducing a debate on arms control and disarmament in the terms we use here.

26. The repeated outbreak of war in the Middle East vividly illustrates the point which is fundamental to our discussions: that war is a futile instrument for the resolution of differences between States. Moreover, each new outbreak of warfare, wherever it takes place, presents a danger of spilling over into an even wider area, with all that that implies in terms of escalation, in size of forces and of the armaments employed. Mutual deterrence and self-restraint on the part of the nuclear Powers are powerful factors preventing the extension of a regional into a general war. But can we take it for granted that these impediments will always suffice? For most of the world they are not good enough. We want effective international action to reduce and ultimately remove the threat of war, which is why we are here today and, regrettably, no doubt will be back next year and for years to come.

27. This annual debate provides an opportunity to look back over developments during the preceding 12 months, to draw a balance sheet of the current situation, and to give thought to approaches which may contribute to progress in the years ahead.

28. It has been the custom of this Committee to devote particular attention to the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. This, in our view, is fitting, since that Committee reports directly to the General Assembly and, in a sense, acts as its continuing and expert forum on arms control and disarmament between sessions

of the General Assembly. At the same time, however, the Assembly's assessment of the current situation would be incomplete if it failed to take into consideration developments elsewhere in pursuit of limitations, reductions or restrictions on the instruments of war.

29. As is clear from the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/9141], two subjects dominated discussion in that body during the past year: the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban and the question of a prohibition of chemical weapons. These are the issues which the General Assembly at its last session invited the Conference to consider as matters of priority, and the record shows that this wish was respected. With what degree of success is, of course, another matter.

30. I would like to offer some comments on these two issues. First, because in the view of my delegation it has greater significance, let me treat the question of a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. For several years now, the Canadian delegation, like most others here, has been convinced that the most constructive and immediately available contribution to the deceleration of the arms race and to the promotion of arms control which could be taken multilaterally through the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament would be the negotiation of a treaty providing for the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. The considerations that have led us to this position are well known.

31. First, by placing an obstacle in the way of the development of new varieties of nuclear weapons, such a ban would be a factor in slowing the nuclear arms race. Secondly, such a ban would be a measure of self-restraint by the nuclear Powers, consistent with the obligations and spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and it would thus serve to strengthen that important instrument. Thirdly, a comprehensive test ban, adhered to by all nuclear Powers, would eliminate from the world a source of anxiety about the threats that tests pose for our environment. A comprehensive test ban would thus contribute to the safety of this planet, not only today but for the generations which are to come.

32. The consideration of the test-ban issue by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has been lengthy, detailed and frequently constructive, but it is striking that, notwithstanding the undertakings of the nuclear Powers in the non-proliferation Treaty, the initiatives have always, or almost always, come from other members, and never the super-Powers. This year, for instance, the most that was achieved was a meeting of technical experts to review developments relating to the complex problems of verifying an underground test ban. That meeting was called not at the initiative of any of the nuclear-weapon States but at the urging of the delegation of Japan. Once again, as was the case in past meetings of this kind, only two of the nuclear Powers at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament—that is, the United States and the United Kingdom—participated; disappointingly, the Soviet Union again held to the line that it would join in promoting scientific exchanges in the field of seismic monitoring of underground nuclear-weapon tests only as part of an agreed comprehensive test-ban treaty.

33. To sum it up, nothing which occurred this year at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, whether in statements, working papers or participation in technical discussions, produced any evidence of a change of position by any of the nuclear-testing States.

34. There is another dimension to the nuclear testing issue: that is, the continuation of nuclear testing in the atmosphere by two nuclear Powers. The possibility of being exposed to radioactive fall-out from these tests has instilled a sense of deep apprehension among peoples of many countries and this has provoked insistent demands from around the world that this kind of testing in particular must stop. My Government once again calls on the nuclear Powers concerned to reconsider their position on the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water and to abandon this particularly objectionable kind of nuclear testing.

35. Briefly, then, non-nuclear States have done all they can in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and outside to bring about an end to testing. It is now up to the nuclear Powers. Three of these nuclear Powers have repeatedly asserted—in the partial test-ban Treaty, in the non-proliferation Treaty and in numerous statements—that their objective is an agreement on the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests. We would like to believe that these Powers do not make such commitments lightly.

36. In this situation, it seems to a number of delegations, including my own, that the step the Assembly should take this year—the tenth anniversary of the partial test-ban Treaty—is to unite in the adoption of a simple but sharp resolution reiterating in the clearest possible terms our determination that nuclear testing in all environments should be brought to an end. We hope in the near future to join with a number of other delegations in introducing a draft resolution to this effect. Of course our message is not new, but it is up to us—we cannot fail—to remind the nuclear-testing Powers of our firm and continuing expectation that they will take measures aimed at halting the nuclear arms race.

37. It is clear that the nuclear testing issue is closely linked to attempts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons which find their embodiment in the non-proliferation Treaty. This important agreement, multilateral in nature, seeks to reduce the danger of nuclear war by restricting the number of States that have access to nuclear weapons to those which possessed them at the time the Treaty came into force in 1970. Non-nuclear-weapon States which adhere to the Treaty recognize that it is not in their interest to possess nuclear arms; but it is their right to benefit fully from advances in peaceful nuclear technology, and this is guaranteed. To date some 80 countries have adhered to this Treaty, reflecting a collective judgement that such an agreement must be in the interest of the whole world community. But we must not forget that several countries with advanced nuclear technology still have not ratified the Treaty nor concluded safeguard agreements pursuant to the Treaty. It is disturbing also that two nuclear States remain *unwilling to accept even the very limited obligations* which would be placed upon them if they chose to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty. My delegation earnestly hopes that such States will, as a minimum, maintain policies

consistent with the objectives of the non-proliferation Treaty and that they will respect the efforts of the parties to the Treaty to fulfil their obligations, particularly with regard to article III concerning the application of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

38. I should like now to turn to the other item which has been before the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament as a matter of priority, that is, the banning of chemical weapons. Again, the Conference has not made the progress we had hoped for in its efforts to negotiate a treaty prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. But I must add that my delegation, for one, has yet to be satisfied that any of the proposals so far envisaged will provide the necessary security guarantees for a treaty to be generally acceptable and effective.

39. Let us consider the current situation regarding chemical weapons. The Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare² of 1925 has been in effect for nearly 50 years and is widely accepted as expressing a norm of international law. Unquestionably, its effectiveness has been reinforced and given substance by the fact that, by and large, nations have been reluctant to use chemical weapons not simply for moral or political reasons but also for practical military considerations. Their use carries with it the probability of retaliation and the necessity to adopt difficult protective and defensive measures. It is evident that a key factor which has led certain countries to the development of chemical weapons and their production and stockpiling has been the desire not to use them but to deter by the threat of retaliation their possible use by potential enemies.

40. In attempting to draw up a treaty banning development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament is of course aiming to make a contribution to the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament and in the interim to limit the dimensions of war-making. More specifically, it is seeking to find a way of reinforcing the Geneva Protocol by eliminating the weapons of chemical warfare. This would mean that trust in the effectiveness of such a treaty would replace the deterrent value of maintaining chemical weapons. If Governments are to be persuaded to abandon the right to exercise this measure of deterrence, they must be satisfied that the treaty will provide an equal or better standard of protection; in other words, there must be an effective system of verification in which all parties to the treaty will have confidence.

41. But as we have come to realize in the course of our studies in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the problem of devising an effective system of verification is proving to be extremely difficult if not intractable. Facilities for the development and production of chemical warfare agents are not essentially different from those required for many industrial chemical processes and, indeed, some industrial chemicals can be used as chemical warfare agents. Chemical weapons in many cases do not differ in external appearance from other munitions.

² League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, No. 2138, p. 65.

Clearly, in these circumstances, adequate verification would be difficult and would seem to need some kind of internationally supervised system of on-site inspection. But such a system is anathema to certain Governments, and even if this problem did not exist it is evident that, by the nature of the task to be carried out, adequate verification will require a system that is intrusive and expensive and will be difficult to reconcile with the requirement that it should not unduly hinder the operations of chemical industries throughout the world or constitute an undue burden on the international community.

42. From what I have said, it is evident that the question of the adequacy of verification will be seen by many States to be related directly to the scope of a prohibition. Unless the system of verification is found to be adequate, those States now having the protection of a deterrent chemical weapons capacity may be unwilling to accept a scope of prohibition which would include their existing capacity. On the other hand, States which do not have independent access to a chemical weapons deterrent capacity may be unwilling to adhere to a treaty placing restraints on themselves without there being at least some reduction in the potential chemical warfare threats that they fear.

43. Then there is another problem which has not been faced up to by any of the proposals submitted so far to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Is the treaty only to come into effect if all States Members of the United Nations adhere to it, or do we have to envisage a situation whereby a nation would be expected to forswear its right to chemical weapons even if its potential enemies do not do likewise? What provisions, if any, should we put into a treaty to deal with this situation? These are hard questions, but they must be answered if there is to be any hope of negotiating an effective treaty.

44. It should be evident that my delegation does not see any instant solutions to this difficult set of problems. We believe that the Conference should proceed with all deliberate speed in its search for the elements of a treaty, and to this end it should continue its meticulous examination of the complex issues involved.

45. Long-standing efforts to eliminate the use of chemical weapons stem largely from a feeling of repugnance about the suffering which they have caused, and from fears about their possible indiscriminate use. Similar concerns have led to proposals that strictures should also be placed on the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons. A committee established by the International Committee of the Red Cross is reporting on this question of weapons of indiscriminate effect. The substance and conclusions of this report, and also the report prepared by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the use of napalm [*A/9207 and Corr.1*], will warrant detailed and objective examination by Governments in order to determine what measures might be taken with a view to placing effective restraint on the use of the weapons in question. In our view, such an examination would be of particular value if it were to reflect a wider concern with the dangers, especially for non-combatants, arising from the broad range of weapons now employed in so-called conventional war.

46. A further factor to be considered is the relationship between the question of the use of such weapons as napalm

and other incendiaries and this broader question of principle concerning the use of all types of weapons in ways which could be indiscriminate in effect or cause unnecessary suffering.

47. My country has demonstrated its concern that efforts to promote, define and reaffirm international humanitarian law in armed conflict should meet with the greatest and most rapid success. We have stressed at various conferences of the International Committee of the Red Cross the importance we attach to international efforts to promote general restraint by military forces in order to avoid unnecessary injury to combatants, and the indiscriminate use of weapons which could cause injury to non-combatants.

48. It seems to my delegation that if the most expeditious progress is to be achieved, both in the search for a solution of the question of napalm and other incendiary weapons, and in the promotion of the further development of international humanitarian law in armed conflict, the examination of possible limitations on the use of incendiaries and other particular types of weapons should be carried out by Governments as energetically as possible, but in a body other than the 1974 Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts. My delegation has an open mind about the type of forum which could most appropriately consider limitations on the weapons in question, and we would be willing to consider any proposal that commends support in this General Assembly for separate consideration of these two groups of issues.

49. We are faced with a situation where the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has not been able to make any discernible progress on the main items before it. This is a distressing situation. However, in order to come to a balanced assessment of the wider prospects for arms control, it is necessary to look beyond the Conference to other bodies or negotiations which are now taking place. I think it is fair to say that outside the Conference there have been some encouraging developments.

50. The world can only welcome the efforts which are being undertaken by the super-Powers to avert the risk that differences between them could lead to nuclear war. Of course, I have in mind the agreements signed in Washington last June [*see A/9293*], and the resumption of the strategic arms limitation talks with a view to completing the Moscow agreements of 1972. Progress in these talks is vital to world security.

51. While the need to reduce the danger of strategic nuclear confrontation between the super-Powers must remain a principal objective, a formidable and related problem is to reduce the major military confrontation in central Europe, and to devise stabilizing measures that can reduce tensions in that area. In a few days' time, representatives from European and North American States with forces in central Europe will enter into negotiations in Vienna with a view to bringing about mutual reductions of forces and armaments and associated measures. The Canadian Government will participate actively in these talks and looks to them to bring about an increased sense of

security and a reduction of tension, first of all in Europe, but also in the rest of the world. The talks on force reductions in Central Europe, like those on strategic arms limitations, deal with the essential elements of the security of States; they cause very serious problems for all the participating countries. At the same time, however, they hold open prospects—if they can be brought to a successful conclusion—of the most far-reaching and significant arms control measures yet achieved. On the same continent of Europe, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, while mainly concerned with other matters, is giving attention to military aspects of security in Europe, and in particular to certain confidence-building measures which could reduce the possibility of misunderstanding ensuing from military activities.

52. Other regional arrangements of various kinds can also have a fruitful role to play in the search for global arms control, since they can be designed to meet needs and take advantage of opportunities that may be different in different parts of the world. A pioneering venture of this kind is, of course, the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.³ Since none of the States of that area possesses nuclear weapons, the co-operation of existing nuclear-weapon States is an important factor in its effective implementation. Accordingly, it was with considerable satisfaction that my delegation learned that China and France had adhered to Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. There remains only one nuclear State which has not yet done so. We are also watching with sympathetic interest the efforts of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Indian Ocean.

53. Briefly then, it cannot be denied that there have been some encouraging developments in the area of arms control and disarmament. But we are not satisfied with them. How can we be satisfied until the tide is turned and the level of armaments is in a general state of decrease? It is important that this Committee not approach its work in a mood of discouragement. We must attempt, rather, with clear heads to determine where the real obstacles lie, to identify those areas where progress can be achieved, and to remain prepared to seize upon promising circumstances as they arise.

54. Let us consider the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in this manner. I have made it abundantly clear that my delegation shares the disappointment of others that this body has made no progress in resolving the issues at present before it. That the Conference as constituted can be productive when the right circumstances exist is amply demonstrated by the partial test-ban Treaty and the non-proliferation Treaty, as well as by the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof [*resolution 2660 (XXV), annex*] and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and Their Destruction [*resolution 2826 (XXVI), annex*]. Nevertheless, some delegations have concluded that the reason for the current lack of progress in the Conference is that the machinery is at fault and that a thorough overhaul would

transform it into a more productive body. My delegation is perfectly willing to consider, on their merits, any proposals for increasing the efficiency of the work of the Conference. We are under no illusions, however, that minor changes in its size or organization will add fundamentally to its effectiveness. It is not that adequate machinery is lacking, but rather a readiness on the part of the major military Powers to make use of existing machinery whether to deal with the issues which are already under consideration or to introduce new ones. My delegation would warmly receive suggestions which would lead to the participation of France and China in an active manner in these arms control and disarmament negotiations since it is clear that without the participation of all the nuclear-weapon Powers the effectiveness of any negotiating forum in bringing about arms control measures which can be adhered to by all States is bound to be severely restricted.

55. The same considerations guide my delegation's views on the holding of a world disarmament conference, or, for that matter, the convening of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

56. Sharing as we all do the feeling of frustration at the lack of positive action in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, it is not surprising that there is wide support for a world disarmament conference in which all nuclear Powers should participate. But faced by the fact that some nuclear Powers have made it clear that they are not ready to do so there are some delegations which believe that this need not be considered an obstacle and that planning for such a conference should proceed regardless. My delegation sympathizes with those who feel this way, but we believe that to follow this course would be a case of the heart ruling the head.

57. The hard fact that we must face is that proposals for disarmament may be endorsed by a hundred or more nations, but they would be valueless unless the nuclear Powers supported them. Indeed, such proposals could be harmful if the consequences were to make more difficult the enlistment of the support of all nuclear Powers, and it is for this reason that the Canadian delegation believes that under the circumstances we should reserve our judgement on the timing of a world disarmament conference, or any substitute, until the prospects for progress become brighter than they are at the moment. In the meantime we should continue each year to take advantage of the General Assembly to review the situation with respect to arms control and disarmament and express ourselves forcibly on desirable measures and on obstacles to progress. Even if our annual debate in the General Assembly at times sounds tedious and repetitious, even if the United Nations negotiating body—the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament—appears to be making little headway, we must keep up the pressure. We cannot afford the luxury of yielding to boredom or discouragement and in so doing neglect the vitally important issues that we are grappling with.

58. In concluding, I should like to echo the thought I expressed at the 1875th meeting a year ago. Security does not lie in the possession of ever larger arsenals. The real national interests of every country on this earth would be furthered by seeking our broader international interests,

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068, p. 283.

making effective agreements to limit and reduce the levels of armament and the size of forces in the context of other measures which can promote constructive and stable relations between States. In this way the threat of war will cease to be a credible tool in the hands of Governments, and this is the goal we must all pursue.

59. Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): The question of convening a world disarmament conference, the urgency of which is constantly growing and the solution of which is gradually turning into a fundamental condition for attaining progress in a number of disarmament issues, has been on our agenda now for several years.

60. The convening of a world disarmament conference in the near future would come at a favourable time, a time of international détente and a time when the most burning international problems, such as the ending of war in Indochina, the normalization of relations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, and the elimination of the remnants of the cold war in Europe, are gradually being solved during a period of some over-all improvement in the international climate.

61. The convening and the successful work of a world disarmament conference might, for its part, accelerate this favourable development; it might serve as an impetus for the resolving of the outstanding international conflicts as well as for the liquidation of the present hotbeds of war, and for the attainment of the final goal—the securing of a durable, undisturbed and lasting peace for the whole of mankind.

62. True, certain successes have been achieved in the field of disarmament in recent years, but there has been only slow progress towards accomplishing the main goal of the disarmament talks—general and complete disarmament. The principal established disarmament body—the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, has proved that it is capable of applying a number of partial measures and has prepared a number of disarmament agreements. But hardly anyone can doubt that we need to introduce some new elements into disarmament negotiations. We feel, especially, that in order to solve the question of general and complete disarmament greater efforts will have to be exerted than thus far. It would also be necessary that as broad as possible a special forum, which would meet following thorough preparations, consider this aim. Such a forum could indeed be created by a world disarmament conference.

63. Yesterday, at the 1934th meeting, we heard arguments that an unsuccessful world conference could be a big disappointment for world public opinion and that therefore it would be better not to risk it. The Czechoslovak delegation does not agree with such an argument. Not to start a good work because of fears of failure does not correspond with the spirit of progress. The United Nations must rely on courage to accomplish things, not on fears of bad results, and we well know from past experience that every step forward, even a very small one, is important in improving international relations in all fields, and that this is even truer with regard to disarmament where a situation often could be particularly complicated. We think that the convocation of a world disarmament conference could help to create a new atmosphere for the solution of the most

complicated disarmament problems. Those who have the real cause of disarmament on their minds do not need to fear anything.

64. Czechoslovakia has always seconded a constructive and matter-of-fact approach to the solving of the questions pertaining to disarmament at all international disarmament talks. Such is the case also in the present deliberations on the convening of a world disarmament conference. We fully supported the initiative of the non-aligned countries in 1964 and the General Assembly resolution 2030 (XX), which provides for the convening of such a conference. We welcomed the initiative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics during the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly in 1971, we supported General Assembly resolution 2833 (XXVI) and in our reply to the above resolution we have explained our positive position in detail in document A/8817. Czechoslovakia became a sponsor of resolution 2930 (XXVII), adopted last year, and it has also become a member of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference.

65. Proceeding from the matter-of-fact and realistic approach to the questions pertaining to disarmament, it is our opinion that the convocation of the World Disarmament Conference, as an international body that would work on a permanent basis and would be open to all States of the world without exception, could, with the constructive approach of all nuclear Powers, gradually solve the fundamental disarmament problems—from partial measures to general and complete disarmament. It is in this connexion that we fully support the direct negotiations among nuclear Powers, as well as the idea of a conference of nuclear Powers. Even though there is no doubt that disarmament is a matter of concern to all States, the primary responsibility is held by the nuclear Powers, who have at their disposal the decisive military potentials. The accomplishment of an agreement and of co-operation among States having at their disposal nuclear weapons represents an indispensable precondition for the successful work of the World Disarmament Conference. We have therefore been gratified by the agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the prevention of nuclear war. We highly appreciate the continuing negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic arms, which prove that, if there is a constructive and realistic approach, accords on disarmament measures between nuclear Powers are possible.

66. The trend towards the convocation of the World Disarmament Conference has the support of a broad front of peace-loving States and is in full harmony with the present international situation. This is attested also by the fact that the participants in the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Algiers this year, have expressed themselves in favour of a speedy convocation of the World Disarmament Conference.

67. Czechoslovakia, as a member of the Special Committee established by General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII), is compelled to state that, simultaneously with the growing support of the idea of the convocation of a world disarmament conference, there still exist forces which, since the beginning, have been trying either to

undermine or at least delay the deliberations on the convening of the Conference. A number of differing positions on many questions have become obvious in the deliberations of the Special Committee as well as the objections of some States of a predominantly procedural or structural nature which, in their final effect, made the normal functioning of the Committee impossible and thus also prevented it from fully discharging its mandate, entrusted to the Committee by the above-mentioned General Assembly resolution 2930 (XXVII).

68. In spite of that, the Special Committee has done useful and good work during its numerous unofficial meetings. Appreciation should be expressed for his extraordinary efforts to the representative of Iran, Mr. Hoveyda, who has guided both the unofficial work of the Committee and the consultations with some States very successfully, as well as to all those delegates to the Committee who have spared no effort to obtain concrete results from the Committee's meetings, even when they were unofficial.

69. As Mr. Hoveyda stated here at the 1934th meeting, the unofficial meetings of the Special Committee were useful. They have once again indisputably reaffirmed the support of the overwhelming majority of States to the proposal to convene the World Disarmament Conference.

70. The unofficial deliberations of the Committee have indicated the positions of the individual States and the questions in dispute, mainly of a procedural and organizational nature, on the solution of which we shall have to concentrate our future efforts, as well as certain joint positions that may serve as a basis for our future work.

71. As a whole, the Special Committee has proved to be a body that is able to make concrete preparations for the convening of the World Disarmament Conference. The Committee is equal to the task of doing further preparatory work and the Czechoslovak delegation is prepared to spare no effort so that the Special Committee fulfils its tasks successfully.

72. With respect to the opinions expressed by some States and the wishes of some countries to join in the work of the Special Committee, we are in favour of enlarging the Special Committee by several members and thus complying with those that hold that some geographical regions are inadequately represented in the Committee. In our opinion, the current General Assembly session should adopt a decision allowing a moderate expansion of the Committee. We are of the opinion that such an expansion of the Committee will enable this body to continue its work on an official basis. In view of the fact that disarmament immediately concerns all States of the world without any exception, particularly all the States that are important from the military and economic point of view, it should be logical to expect that all Powers with the biggest military potentials and nuclear weapons at their disposal would participate in the World Disarmament Conference as well as in preparations for it.

73. The desire that all nuclear Powers take part in the preparations and thus also in the work of the Special Committee on the World Disarmament Conference has been expressed by the overwhelming majority of States and the Czechoslovak delegation views it as a just one.

74. However, if some of the nuclear States should not show their interest in direct membership of the Special Committee, the Committee should nevertheless continue its work under those conditions and, at the same time, it should seek forms and ways of co-operating with those nuclear Powers. The motive power of the work of the Special Committee and the whole preparations for the convocation of the World Disarmament Conference lie undoubtedly in the efforts and goodwill of the States to assist in dealing with one of the most burning problems of the present times—with disarmament—and in their concrete contribution to the accomplishment of this aim.

75. The Czechoslovak delegation supports the idea of convening the World Disarmament Conference as well as the concrete steps which would assist in implementing it, and is fully aware of the complexity and contradictions of the present deliberations. But if we have met with obstacles, that does not mean that we should remain idle and wait for a change in the position of those States who are not in favour of a convocation of a world conference.

76. On the contrary, we should work even more strenuously to create a situation in which it would be impossible for those States to avoid participation in the preparations and, in the later stage, in the Conference itself. It is our belief that in the present situation the idea of the World Disarmament Conference may still be implemented and all disputes may be gradually resolved.

77. Certainly, we cannot adopt the method of laying down various terms, but we should take a path that is constructive and open and involves a matter-of-fact approach on the part of all countries and, in the first place, of all the nuclear Powers. The Czechoslovak delegation is convinced that convocation of the Conference corresponds with the interests of the whole of mankind. For our part, we are prepared to spare no effort to assist its speedy convocation.

78. I reserve my right to speak again in the general debate on other disarmament questions on our agenda.

79. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): This statement, which I shall endeavour to make as brief as possible, will be wholly devoted to the item on the Assembly's agenda entitled World Disarmament Conference, which, as in 1971 and 1972, appears to us to be the most important of the disarmament items. My delegation hopes that subsequently it will be able to take part in the debate on several of the other disarmament items on our agenda.

80. I shall confine myself now to an examination of the following four points, which we regard as essential if we wish the results of our work to be truly constructive.

81. First, it is extremely desirable for the Assembly to have a subsidiary body entirely devoted to carrying out those activities that are deemed likely to facilitate the convening of a World Disarmament Conference; proper preparation will make it possible for all States, and particularly all the nuclear Powers, to participate.

82. Secondly, in order that that subsidiary body may effectively discharge its duties, its composition and func-

tions should be such as to ensure for it the active co-operation of all the nuclear Powers. That co-operation, as I had occasion to emphasize last year at the closing meeting of the twenty-seventh session, can be provided either within the Committee, as a member, or, should that prove impossible, from outside the Committee. However, it will be essential for the nuclear Powers to be in a position to provide that co-operation on a footing of absolute equality.

83. Thirdly, in the light of the foregoing it is obvious that whether the subsidiary body in question should actually be the Special Committee established a year ago with the required modifications, or some other organ to be created, is of secondary importance. What is necessary is to ascertain the kind of composition and functions of that subsidiary body that would allow the realization of the basic objective to which I have referred—namely, the active co-operation of all the nuclear Powers. This is the aspect it would be desirable to explore without delay through appropriate informal contacts and talks—in other words, the present position of those Powers on this question.

84. The fourth and last point is this. It is worth recalling that during the twenty-seventh session the attitude of the delegation of the People's Republic of China concerning the item now under consideration took a most laudable turn.

85. In fact, in its first intervention in the General Assembly on 3 October 1972, that delegation stated:

“The ‘world disarmament conference’ . . . has neither the necessary requisites nor a clear aim. It would in fact be an ‘empty-talk club’ which would indulge in far-ranging rambling discourse without solving any practical problem. To hold such a conference would only serve to hoodwink and lull the people of the world. It is better not to hold it.” [2051st plenary meeting, para. 166.]

86. Notwithstanding that statement, seven weeks later, as a result of prolonged informal talks with a group of representatives of the developing countries, the delegation of the People's Republic of China explained its vote in favour of what was to become resolution 2930 (XXVII), stating *inter alia*, the following:

“ . . . the Chinese Government fully understands the good intention of many countries upholding peace and justice which oppose the super-Powers' arms race and demand their disarmament, and we are ready to work together with them to promote the convening and smooth progress of a true world disarmament conference . . . although China will not participate in the special committee referred to therein, the Chinese delegation can agree to maintain contact with the special committee and exchange views on the question of disarmament.” [1899th meeting, para. 52.]

87. It would be desirable to inquire whether the Chinese delegation today still maintains the same position and whether the delegations of the United States, the Soviet Union, France and the United Kingdom would be prepared to give proof of a similar spirit of conciliation in order to find a procedural solution acceptable to all.

88. The four points I have just enumerated should, in our view, serve as guidance for the work of our Committee. If the inquiries we have taken the liberty to recommend were to show clearly that the situation we confront, either for identical or for different reasons, is essentially the same as the one we have had to deplore since the beginning of this year until now, it might then be desirable to abandon temporarily the idea of having a subsidiary body for the subject and to resort on a transitional basis to other procedures likely to enable us to move towards the realization of the desired aim, while at the same time keeping alive the idea of the holding of a world disarmament conference, for which purpose we could, for instance, request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to undertake the preparation of such studies, reports or other working documents as may be deemed useful.

89. We do not believe that there should be a repetition of the situation so concisely and faithfully described in the note by the Secretary-General [A/9228], a situation which undoubtedly has not helped to enhance the prestige of the United Nations; nor has it redounded to the benefit of the spirit of frank co-operation that should inspire us all in this undertaking. As was so rightly said at the 1934th meeting by the representative of Iran, Mr. Hoveyda, to whose goodwill and untiring efforts I am happy to pay a tribute publicly today, there are certain missions that in given circumstances can only be termed impossible.

90. Of course, the foregoing does not mean that we are ready to agree, as we have already declared in this same Committee on 23 October 1972, with any attempt to transfer the Security Council veto to the Assembly, especially in the case of a matter such as this, in which all the peoples of the world are vitally interested. If, regrettably and contrary to our clear preference, it becomes necessary to declare a waiting period, this should be done on the understanding that the General Assembly could not indefinitely subject to the acquiescence of the nuclear Powers the establishment of a subsidiary organ to deal with the careful preparation for the convening of the world disarmament conference. It would have to be clearly understood that at its next session the General Assembly would set up that organ, although first making one last effort to obtain the co-operation of all those Powers. However, should this prove impossible, and even if its membership would have to be limited to non-nuclear-weapon States, it is worth recalling that they have already met on another occasion and obtained very fruitful results, at the Conference held in Geneva in the autumn of 1968.

Organization of work

91. The CHAIRMAN: It is the recommendation of the Chairman of the sea-bed Committee that tomorrow the First Committee should resume its discussion of item 40. Two meetings—one in the morning and one in the afternoon—have therefore been scheduled for that purpose tomorrow. In this connexion, members have before them a revised version of the draft resolution relating to the convening of the Conference on the Law of the Sea [A/C.1/L.647/Rev.1]. It is my hope that it will be possible to bring our discussion of item 40 to a successful conclusion by tomorrow evening.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.