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President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).

AGENDA ITEM 8

General debate (continued)

1. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the French Republic.

[The speaker continued in French.]

2. On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome His Excellency Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, President of the French Republic, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

3. Mr. GISCARD D'ESTAING (*interpretation from French*): For the first time the President of the French Republic is taking France's seat here. I consider it a privilege.

4. This is an opportunity for me to stress the excellence of the ties that link my country with the United Nations, of which France remembers being one of the founding Members. Today we are convinced of the importance of its role as a forum for developing decisions on world problems and also as a place for dialogue and a meeting place for all those who bear the responsibility—the heavy responsibility that sometimes disturbs our serenity and sleep—for international relations and peace.

5. I should like, Mr. President, to add my tribute to that paid to you by this special session of the General Assembly in electing you as its President. This tribute goes to the country which you represent, and also to you personally for your qualities as a man and a diplomat.

6. May I also express my confidence in and esteem for the Secretary-General, whose competence and dedication to the service of peace are known to everyone here and in the world at large.

7. As I speak to this Assembly, I properly appreciate the uniqueness of the present debate in the history of the United Nations.

8. It is unique in terms of its goal, namely disarmament. No goal has ever involved more directly the future of our earth and the fate of our species, the human species, with its 4 thousand million men and women, and in the future even more.

9. It is unique in its framework, which is the General Assembly of the United Nations—a body that brings together the entire international community, so diverse in its peoples, cultures and political choices, but so unanimous in its fears and hopes.

10. So, my first remarks must be to thank and congratulate those who were responsible for taking this initiative. The non-aligned countries in particular had the distinction of being among the first to anticipate and then give voice to one of the great aspirations of all our peoples.

11. However, it is not enough for this debate to be unique. It must, above all, be useful; in other words, this session must mark the beginning of genuine and meaningful progress towards disarmament. It is this that is at stake.

12. And that is why I wanted to come here personally to make France's voice heard. Our country is not pursuing any individual interests here. It does not seek any effect for the sake of propaganda, as would be all too easy on such an issue. There is no point in winning a battle of words and then letting the illusion collapse. I have come here to look at a case, to examine it seriously and to propose practical lines of action.

13. France has no other claim to your attention than its commitment to the cause of peace and its contribution to the disarmament efforts—a contribution illustrated by the heartfelt eloquence of Aristide Briand before the war and the impassioned skill of Jules Moch in this very forum. France does not intend to monopolize the debate, knowing full well that this is inherently a joint undertaking to which each State, from east to west and from north to south, must make its own contribution. Needless to say, France will make its contribution to every meaningful effort which may be decided on in favour of disarmament.

14. One cannot speak of disarmament without taking a look at the world of our times. What sort of a world is it, in fact, that must be disarmed?

15. I should like to draw on a personal recollection. The last time I spoke from this rostrum was in 1957. I was still quite young and thrilled to represent my country here.

16. The image of the world I saw reflected in this hall then was profoundly different then from the image I see today. The world was still fresh from the war; relations between East and West were marked by ideological vehemence and the cold war; the two German States had not yet been admitted to the United Nations. Decolonization had scarcely begun; Africa was represented by only eight

independent States, whereas today there are 50 of them in the Organization. Many of these States have historical and cultural ties with France, and friendly relations with my country, and I am happy to greet them here. In the economic sphere, there was the secure and triumphant dominance of American currency, which was convertible into gold at a fixed rate. Any observation that cast doubt on that obvious fact was considered blasphemy.

17. Today we are in a different world. Today the United Nations, with its 149 Member States, including populous China, which has gained its rights here, is starting to perceive another possible organization of our planet. It is looking towards the future instead of into the past. Of course, the problems inherited from the past have not all been solved. Decolonization is still incomplete, especially in Africa. But the problems that are gaining in importance in international debates are world problems—problems having to do with what I would call world solidarity: that is, aid to development, the establishment of a new economic and monetary order, and now, today, disarmament.

18. The world is beginning to realize that its problems are global. Will it thus be in a better position to solve them?

19. The disarmament effort has been a failure so far. Despite partial results, the net result after 30 years of proposals, initiatives and negotiations is tragically insufficient. Unfortunately, this is not just a personal opinion but an observation supported by figures.

20. The figures—as certain speakers have said before me—show, first of all, the huge amounts of money being devoted throughout the world to arms expenditures: \$400,000 million, or more than \$1,000 million a day. This is as much as the combined national product of all the Latin American countries and twice that of all the countries of Africa.

21. The figures also show the continuing increase in military expenditures: an increase over time, for these expenditures have more than doubled in the last 20 years; and an increase in area, for the third world, which accounted for a total of only 4 per cent in 1960, today accounts for 14 per cent.

22. Finally, these figures also demonstrate how disproportionate military spending is—disproportionate in comparison to the other needs of mankind: the \$1 thousand million devoted each day to military arsenals is the equivalent of what is spent on health care in the entire world. It is 14 times the amount spent on all forms of aid to development. In this Organization devoted to the study of inter-State relations this means that, of the two kinds of real relation existing between States—on the one hand, distrust leading to armament, and, on the other, solidarity and co-operation leading to aid—we attach 14 times as much importance to distrust as to solidarity.

23. Military spending is disproportionate even in relation to the need for security, since the accumulated capacity for destruction exceeds what would be needed to annihilate all the inhabitants of our planet. The world today is in a state

of over-armament. In order to understand this situation we must remember that it was the last world war, the most devastating in human history and one that found an immediate extension in the cold war, that provided the yardstick by which the two super-Powers measured their armaments. It is actually a yardstick for wartime, not for peacetime.

24. These thoughts should lead us to undertake a new in-depth study of the disarmament problem. We have not come together simply to deplore a failure or to accept the inevitable: we are here to seek the means of achieving real progress.

25. Two preliminary observations suggest themselves.

26. Progress cannot be made towards disarmament unless further progress is also made towards improving international relations. It is not only when we discuss disarmament that we make progress but also each time we mitigate any international tension. The policy of détente between East and West, the improvement of the security of African States, the implementation of an over-all and just settlement in the Middle East, the consideration of the situation of China—all these things are necessary if progress is to be made on disarmament.

27. The second point is that if our ultimate goal is to be real, general and controlled disarmament, we have to seek the means for this not in mirages of Utopia but in an analysis of the concrete conditions of our times.

28. This is where France can make its contribution by proposing a way of approaching disarmament. I should like now to set forth for the Assembly the principles and contents of this proposal. This approach is based on three fundamental ideas.

29. First, there exists for every State a legitimate right to security. This right is universal, it is the same for all and sanctioned by the Charter of the United Nations. On this point reality and the law coincide. No State, weak or strong, rich or poor, is ready to abdicate responsibility for its basic security.

30. Although the principle of this right to security is incontestable, the practical implications it will inevitably have for disarmament must be considered. With the world as it is today, the immediate goal for disarmament cannot be to achieve a zero level of armaments the world over. Proposing complete disarmament at the outset would not further the cause of disarmament and peace, no more, for that matter, would any of our States consider eliminating all internal normal means of keeping law and order, regardless of how much respect they might have for their citizens. We can do better than repeat the mistake of plans which could not be implemented because they were to unrealistic and could be used as excuses for inaction.

31. France proposes making the legitimate right to security central to our deliberations because this right is part of substantive law and will make it possible, as we shall see, to seek concrete ways of making progress towards disarmament.

32. The second idea is that disarmament is not exclusive to a few countries but must instead become the business of everyone. The meeting of this special session is a visible but temporary demonstration of this idea. We must make sure that henceforth this idea guides all future disarmament discussions. Of course, the responsibility of the super-Powers, which alone account for two thirds of world weapons expenditures, is unquestionable. But most of the forums in which disarmament is discussed were created in an era dominated by confrontation between blocs. In spite of the changes which have occurred in these forums, they continue to bear the imprint of this effect. We must now create the possibility for all States to take part in an endeavour that will be in the interests of everyone.

33. The third idea is that the approach to disarmament must take into account regional situations. Indeed, in a world as diverse as the world of today, to wish to impose the same principles on all States would be to fly in the face of reality and make ineffectiveness a certainty. This would be even truer if these principles were to be conceived with the two biggest Powers in mind, for those two Powers, although comparable to each other, are not comparable to any other Power. By starting with regions, by analyzing threats to security as they are perceived by the States involved, there is hope of finding both the most effective measures and the consensus needed to apply them.

34. These three ideas—that disarmament must be based upon the legitimate right to security, that it is the business of all and that it must be approached on a regional basis—lead to a revision of the aims and methods of disarmament. In order to demonstrate this, I shall discuss disarmament first from the world standpoint and then from the regional standpoint.

35. From the world standpoint, we must ensure that disarmament is brought about with the help of all, under the supervision of all and for the benefit of all.

36. First, with the help of all. To be sure, we may decide—as I hope we do, and others have indeed proposed this—to hold other special sessions. But that will not remove the necessity to establish permanent institutions.

37. In terms of deliberation, the principle of universality entails that one particular committee of the General Assembly must be given the responsibility of following disarmament issues on a permanent basis, with the participation of all States.

38. In terms of negotiations, it means that the more select body entrusted with this task should reflect the rule of universality in its spirit, composition and procedures. As we all know, this is not true at present of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament meeting in Geneva. The time has come to replace it with another body having more concrete ties to the United Nations system, an open membership and an assurance of equal standing for the participants. In this regard, Mr. President, I have noted the comments you, yourself, made when you opened this session. Once these principles had been put into practice, France would be prepared to discuss ways and means of establishing such a body and would then participate in it.

39. In terms of ideas, it means that we must have an instrument of disarmament studies at the level of the world Organization. Such bodies have already been established in several countries, particularly in Sweden, and some are recognized to be authoritative. How useful such a body could be if it were attached to the United Nations, which would provide it with material support while respecting its need for intellectual independence! Such an institute could, in addition to its research, conduct studies on weapons levels modelled on the work done by the International Monetary Fund on the financial standing of its member States. That is why, without disregarding the initiatives other States have taken along these lines, I propose that a world institute for disarmament studies be established. The French delegation will submit a specific plan to this end.

40. Disarmament must be achieved with the help of all, but also under the supervision of all. The problem of supervision, as everyone knows, is crucial to disarmament: there can be no real disarmament without effective control. Advances in technology, which have also resulted in the most awesome of weapons, now offer new possibilities through the use of observation satellites.

41. The two biggest Powers are the only ones that have such equipment right now. Other countries, such as France, will in their turn be acquiring it in the next five years, but it will remain for a long time in the hands of a tiny minority of States. We feel that it is time for the surveillance capabilities of these satellites to be made available to the international community. That is why France is proposing studies on the creation of a satellite monitoring agency. Satellites alone will not solve the whole problem of supervision. We know that international use of satellites will raise complex questions, but the advantages of such an agency for the international community are too obvious for each State not to wish to do its part, under conditions that will have to be carefully defined and studied.

42. Disarmament must work to the benefit of all. The idea of a link between disarmament and development has been current for a long time, and the need for it emerged in the comparison of figures on military expenditures, which were 14 times higher than expenditures devoted to development assistance. So far this idea has not been translated into reality because there has been no objective or indisputable way of measuring the true level of armaments. This does not make it any less important as a matter of simple justice.

43. For reasons connected both with advances in detection and with the rationale of deterrence, it so happens that the most powerful weapons, conventional and nuclear, are relatively well known.

44. Setting up a special disarmament fund for development remains a difficult undertaking. France has drawn up proposals on this subject and will be submitting them for discussion by this General Assembly along with plans which have been or will be submitted by other Member States and in the light of the observations made to us the day before yesterday by the Secretary-General.

45. Important as they are, these initial proposals alone

will not suffice. They may advance disarmament by paving the way for it, accompanying it or exercising surveillance over it, but they will not have a direct effect on it.

46. No approach to disarmament will be complete unless measures at the world level are supplemented by action to reduce armaments taken on the basis of regional situations.

47. Let us take a look at the military map of the world. Two large zones are apparent. In the first, there are no nuclear weapons. In the second, they are an essential element of the balance of power. It is essential that this basic distinction be made before we can proceed clearly. The problem and its solutions cannot be the same for the two zones.

48. First let us consider the nuclear-free zones. Nothing could be more destabilizing and nothing would enhance more the legitimate right to security than to introduce nuclear weapons into these zones. The result inevitably would be a further escalation of the arms race. The goal that must be given priority is, therefore, that of avoiding this risk. It is clearly the responsibility of the countries concerned to preserve their status as non-nuclear States. Some of them have already taken concrete steps with a view to forming themselves into nuclear-free zones. This is the case in Latin America. Others, sensing this need, have announced their intention of doing so. I am referring here to Africa. With respect to this point, I have taken note of the wishes expressed at the ninth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers at its recent meeting at Dakar in April 1978.

49. In choosing this option, the States of these zones are exercising their sovereignty without, of course, infringing the rules of international law. They have, however, the right to be assured that there will be no discrimination against them, either in terms of their security or of their development.

50. In terms of their security, the decision by the States of a region to preserve a nuclear-free status should entail an obligation for the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from seeking a military advantage from the situation. Nuclear-weapon States should in particular preclude, according to a formula to be defined, any use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against States that are part of a nuclear-free zone.

51. In terms of their development, this decision should be accompanied on the part of the countries supplying materials and equipment for nuclear power by the implementation of an appropriate policy of non-proliferation. It would, of course, have to be meticulously prepared so as to prevent any risk of spreading nuclear weapons, but at the same time it would have to be an open policy in order to provide easier access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly once the military risk had been ruled out.

52. France would welcome it if continents decided to become either wholly or partially nuclear-free zones. While it is not up to my country to take the initiative in regions to which it does not belong, France is prepared to encourage this process by negotiating the necessary agreements with these zones in order to give a contractual and binding form

to the commitments I have mentioned. It is also in this spirit that France signed and ratified Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco¹ as early as 1974. France also hopes to be able to sign Additional Protocol I. With a view to doing so, it is to enter into contact with the authorities constituted by the Treaty for the purpose of examining the conditions under which its signature might be effected.

53. It is not enough to rid these zones of the nuclear danger. It is also necessary to block the threat of a conventional arms race. Once again it is in a regional framework that the problem could be tackled with the greatest chance of success. Consultations among countries of the same region should make it possible to establish a ceiling for weapons or successive levels of arms reduction. Should regional agreements of this type be concluded, France would be prepared to help the implementation of them by adjusting its policy of military equipment sales. A combined meeting of the countries of the same region that import military equipment with all the supplier countries would seem to me to be the most realistic approach towards achieving what we hope to achieve: a concerted limitation on sales and purchases.

54. These, then, are the areas in which France proposes action in all the regions of the world not covered by the nuclear deterrents. Unless this action is to be imposed on us, the effort must be collective: every State, whether nuclear or non-nuclear, supplier or purchaser of conventional arms, must play its part.

55. There remains the vast zone that extends over the greater part of the northern hemisphere, from America to the Soviet Union across the whole of Europe. It is here, in Europe and in Asia, that the world's foremost Powers confront each other. It is here that a conflict, if it were to break out, would have the most devastating consequences for the whole of mankind.

56. The salient feature of this zone is that it is protected by the nuclear deterrent and has been for more than a quarter of a century now. Nuclear weapons have become an integral part of the over-all military balance there. For this reason the rivalry between the super-Powers has never led to an annihilating exchange, despite some grave alarms which we all remember. Nowhere else would a mistake prove more immeasurably costly. Nowhere else must the analysis of a situation be so rigorous in order to correspond to the immensity of the danger. It is therefore imperative to dismiss the illusion, however tempting it may be, that it would be enough to eliminate nuclear weapons to ensure in that region the security of all. Such a measure would have no other result in present circumstances than that of disturbing the balance of conventional arms. That in turn would generate even greater danger.

57. The primary threat in that region does not lie in the actual existence of nuclear weapons but in the accumulation of these weapons and in the continual progress made in refining them.

¹ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068, p. 326).

58. On these two levels, quantitative and qualitative, the rhythm of development is being set by the United States and the Soviet Union. It is from their rivalry that a fatal imbalance could emerge. By leading these two countries to acquire means vastly superior to those required for deterrence alone, that rivalry could make plausible the "first strike" theory and that of so-called "limited" nuclear wars that supposedly would be waged outside "national sanctuaries" on the territories of other countries.

59. It is indeed on the efforts of these two countries that halting the arms race will depend first and foremost. American and Soviet leaders realize this. For several years now they have been negotiating the limitation of their strategic armaments. France welcomes this and hopes that their efforts will be successful. It does not underestimate the difficulty of the undertaking, namely to achieve substantial reductions in the quantity of weapons and to bring about a technological "freeze" without jeopardizing either the security of the two partners or that of their allies. The results will be translated into reality only slowly and in stages. We hope that these stages will come soon and will be substantial.

60. In what way, then, can France make a contribution? There is a considerable disparity between the nuclear strategic forces of the super-Powers and those we possess to make our deterrence capability secure and credible. If after successive reductions the nature of this disparity were to be altered, we could then act accordingly.

61. The threat posed to Europe does not stem solely from the accumulation and further refinement of nuclear weapons. It also stems from the presence on our continent of enormous arsenals of conventional weapons and the disparity between them. There must be no mistake about this: nuclear disarmament would soon reach its limits if this situation remained uncorrected. The visible inequality in conventional weapons constitutes a real impediment to nuclear-arms reductions.

62. Accordingly, France is proposing to all the countries which are concerned with the future of European security and which out of that concern participated in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe that they should meet in conference to discuss disarmament in Europe. Tomorrow we shall be submitting to them a plan detailing the goals, the field of application and procedures for such a conference. I shall simply say that in taking this initiative France intends to remain faithful to the spirit that guided it throughout the Helsinki Conference.

63. The conference advocated by France would aim in the first stage at building up trust among all countries of Europe by instituting measures for providing appropriate information and notification and, in the second stage, at achieving a genuine reduction of armaments within the European geo-strategic complex that extends from the Atlantic to the Urals.

64. If we succeed in this, we shall have improved security in the European continent by defusing the detonator where it is situated now and will have opened up to the world the prospect of a future less fraught with danger.

65. These are France's thoughts and proposals for furthering the disarmament endeavour.

66. In the time allowed me here I cannot reply in advance to any criticism. I have, none the less, thought about it. Some criticism will come from those who insist on an over-all, immediate decision to eliminate weapons. If this view reflects a noble conviction, no one will reproach them. But if it serves as an excuse for refusing to take action, then it is shameful to present illusions as real hopes.

67. Other criticism will come from those who hesitate to take the first step. The \$400 thousand million spent yearly on weapons does indeed reflect the collective anxiety of all leaders for the security of their peoples. Who will dare to be the first to lower his guard?

68. Because I sincerely believe that no leader, not even the most liberal, can toy with the security of his people, I am proposing this concrete approach which consists in reconciling step by step the dialectics of security and disarmament: to prevent, wherever possible, the introduction of nuclear weapons, to reduce in stages the level of nuclear strategic weapons while maintaining balanced deterrence, and to begin a regional debate on the level of security and the limitation of arms sales.

69. We have no illusions; should this be undertaken and achieved by our generation, the last to have been involved in the horrors of world conflict, then trust will begin to take root and the stage of general disarmament can usefully be discussed.

70. In conclusion, I should say that six years ago at Santiago, Chile, we discussed the age-old effort of our species, the human race, to fight poverty and hunger, over and above race and boundary. Today we are talking about another effort, the effort to prevent conflict among men, conflict that also goes back thousands of years, evidence of which is to be found among the earliest remains of primitive man in the first weapons he used to defend himself. The clash of these weapons resounds throughout our history, often heralding the chronicles of glory yet scattering the ashes of dead cities and spreading the stains of spilled blood across the earth.

71. This is the effort that we must make, the effort to ensure the supremacy of knowledge over ignorance, of justice over inequality and of peace over war.

72. As the strange dawn of the third millennium draws closer, let us make our contribution so that mankind may cross the threshold of the new age in less poverty and in greater peace.

73. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I thank His Excellency the President of the French Republic for the important statement that he has just made.

74. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Owing to circumstances beyond his control—and

the higher the function the more unexpected and unavoidable such circumstances are—the Foreign Minister of my country, Mr. Santiago Roel García, is unable to speak here as he had every intention of doing when the list of speakers was opened three months ago. Thus, I have the great honour and privilege of being Mexico's spokesman in this general debate, which began only a very few hours ago. This special session of the General Assembly will go down in the annals of the Organization as the first special session devoted to disarmament.

75. At the outset I should like to extend to you, Mr. President, our sincerest congratulations on your election as President of this most important session of the most representative organ of the international community. This honour is well deserved, both because of your outstanding personal qualities and because of the paramount role that Yugoslavia has always played in connexion with the questions now before us.

76. We should like also to congratulate wholeheartedly the Secretary-General of the United Nations, whose constant efforts, discreet and effective, have provided encouragement for the preparation of this session, which he has rightly called "the largest, most representative meeting ever convened to consider the problem of disarmament" [*1st meeting, para. 36*].

77. The founders of the United Nations showed from the beginning particular concern that the Charter of the Organization should include a principle that the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security should be promoted "with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources".

78. The General Assembly has been guided in its actions in this field by a philosophy similar to that which guided the founding Members at San Francisco. It has demonstrated great consistency in the many resolutions—numbering about 250—that it has adopted on disarmament.

79. The very first of these resolutions, adopted unanimously on 24 January 1946, provided for the establishment of a commission which was asked to put forward with the utmost urgency specific proposals for, among other things "the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction".

80. On 20 November 1959, almost 20 years ago, the Assembly adopted—again unanimously—its resolution 1378 (XIV), in which it stated that "the question of general and complete disarmament is the most important one facing the world today", and called upon Governments to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution of this problem. It also expressed the hope that, in the shortest possible time, "measures leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control" would be worked out and agreed upon.

81. A decade later, on 16 December 1969, in resolution 2602 E (XXIV), adopted without a single negative vote and with more than 100 votes in favour, the General As-

sembly, after reaffirming a number of its earlier resolutions, and in particular the 1959 resolution to which I have just referred, stressed the grave dangers involved in a spiralling nuclear-arms race and the great burden, both unproductive and wasteful, which that arms race placed on both the developing and the developed countries; declared the decade of the 1970s as a Disarmament Decade; and called upon Governments to intensify without delay their efforts to ensure the elimination of nuclear weapons and agreement on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

82. But if the General Assembly's actions on disarmament have been a model of consistency and continuity, we certainly cannot say as much for the actions of the nuclear Powers, although there have been rather frequent expressions of good intentions and praiseworthy objectives—sometimes put forward by common accord.

83. For example, as we all know, on 20 September 1961 the United States and the Soviet Union issued a joint statement—which the General Assembly welcomed—setting forth principles agreed upon by the two countries as the basis for disarmament negotiations [*A/S-10/1, vol. III, sect. 2*]. The statement began by declaring that the goal of the negotiations was to achieve agreement on a programme ensuring, among other things, "That disarmament is general and complete and war is no longer an instrument for settling international problems". The statement concluded by setting forth another principle—the eighth—which read, as follows:

"States participating in the negotiations should seek to achieve and implement the widest possible agreement at the earliest possible date. Efforts should continue without interruption until agreement upon the total programme has been achieved, and efforts to ensure early agreement and implementation of measures of disarmament shall be undertaken without prejudicing progress on agreement on the total programme and in such a way that these measures would facilitate and form part of that programme."

84. As representatives are aware, both the joint statement and the two full and detailed drafts for a general and complete disarmament treaty, which the sponsors submitted in the spring of 1962 to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament [*ibid.*, *sects. 3 and 4*], were to become a dead letter.

85. Equally futile proved to be the commitment entered into in 1968 by the nuclear Powers signatories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*], under article VI of which they pledged "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

86. As a matter of fact, however, the nuclear-arms race, far from having come to an end, has gained hitherto unimaginable momentum, especially in qualitative terms, and

general and complete disarmament has been virtually ignored in all negotiations over the past 10 years. According to the most conservative estimates, the destructive power of the arsenals built up by the two main nuclear Powers alone is equivalent to a million bombs like the one which razed Hiroshima in 1945. Those arsenals would be enough, then, to annihilate 100,000 million human beings, 25 times the present population of the entire world. At the same time, the military expenditures of the entire world have been estimated at \$350,000 million to \$400,000 million per annum, which is almost twice the amount earmarked in the entire world for public health.

87. It is not surprising, then, that barely a year and a half ago, on 21 December 1976, the General Assembly should have decided to convene this first special session devoted to disarmament, the solemn inauguration of which we attended the day before yesterday. In resolution 31/189 B adopted on that occasion, the Assembly reaffirmed that disarmament was one of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations. It declared that it was aware that the continuation of the arms race "endangers international peace and security and also diverts vast resources urgently needed for economic and social development," and once again it stated its conviction that "peace can be secured through the implementation of disarmament measures, particularly of nuclear disarmament, conducive to the realization of the final objective, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control".

88. Ever since the San Francisco Conference, Mexico, in all international forums in which it has participated, has striven to contribute to progress on disarmament negotiations. It was one of the sponsors of the draft which was to become the resolution to which I have just referred. We are convinced, as we stated three years ago, that until everyone accepts the idea of convening and institutionalizing a world disarmament conference, a conference that we should like to play a role in disarmament similar to that played by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the economic and social sector, special sessions of the General Assembly must be held, devoted exclusively to disarmament.

89. It seems to us obvious that machinery available to the United Nations in this regard has proved over the past decade to be very deficient, in particular with regard to opportunities for every country in the world to make an effective contribution in this area which is of such concern to them since, ultimately, it is their very survival that may be at stake.

90. What is needed is a forum—and we trust that this special session will provide just that—where, on the one hand, it will be possible to hold a debate on disarmament in which all Members of the United Nations will participate and which can command as high a level of representation and can be as full and thorough as the supreme importance of the subject demands; and where, on the other hand, a final document can be adopted that will serve to lay the foundation for what might be called a new disarmament strategy and to provide decisive momentum to negotiations on this vital issue which has remained stalemated for such a very long period of time.

91. That is why we have offered our most determined co-operation in the work of the Preparatory Committee. Under the skilful leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Carlos Ortiz de Rozas, that Committee has prepared a report [A/S-10/1] which is undeniably an instrument of inestimable value for the deliberations of this Assembly and to which, in more than one way, we have made our modest contribution.

92. We are convinced that in this document we shall find meaningful inspiration as we seek solutions to the many problems which will arise as we consider the various items on our agenda. We certainly welcome the recommendation that the results of the deliberations of this special session of the General Assembly should be combined in a single document made up of four sections. That would underscore the need to avoid its fragmentation and at the same time would stress that there has been a desire to take a different approach from that adopted at past regular sessions.

93. As regards the part of the declaration devoted to the review and assessment of the alarming situation confronting the world in the field of disarmament, the statements of the Preparatory Committee which appear in the draft included in its report, are basically identical to the views which Mexico has been advocating ever since the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva came into existence 16 years ago.

94. We are convinced that never since prehistoric times has mankind faced a threat of self-destruction as real as that now posed by the arms race. The nuclear arsenals in the possession of just a few States are sufficient to destroy, not once but many times over, all vestiges of life in the world, and perhaps sufficient also to make the world entirely uninhabitable.

95. The proliferation of armaments, especially of nuclear weapons, far from contributing to the strengthening of international security, actually weakens and diminishes it. The immense stockpiles which have been accumulated, and their ever greater sophistication as a result of unbridled competition, entails incalculable risks for peace.

96. Military expenditures have attained levels which are constantly rising and which only a short time ago would have seemed inconceivable. The magnitude of the waste represented by the hundreds of thousands of millions of dollars devoted annually to the production and increasing sophistication of weapons stands in stark and sad contrast with the poverty and misery afflicting two thirds of the world's population. This gigantic outpouring of financial resources has become a particularly serious matter because it involves the diversion to war-related activities of enormous material resources, and above all of technological and human resources which are essential for development.

97. The adoption of genuine disarmament measures is today an overriding and urgent task which brooks no delay.

98. As regards objectives, priorities and principles, our position also coincides fundamentally with the points which were adopted in the Preparatory Committee.

99. We share the view that the paramount goal of disarmament is to guarantee the survival of mankind and to eliminate the danger of a nuclear conflagration, ensuring at the same time that war shall cease to be an instrument for resolving problems among nations and that the use or the threat of use of force shall be totally excluded from international life. We believe that it is axiomatic also that the final objective of the efforts of States in the process of disarmament must be general and complete disarmament under effective international control, and that nuclear disarmament measures aimed at bringing about the gradual reduction of nuclear weapons until they are completely eliminated must be given top priority.

100. We believe that there must be flexibility on the number of principles to be included in the declaration, but that there are some which absolutely must appear—for example, the following five.

101. All Member States of the United Nations must act in conformity with the principles of the Charter and fulfil in good faith the provisions of the Charter.

102. All the peoples of the world have a vital stake in the success of disarmament negotiations.

103. It is up to the United Nations to play a role and assume a responsibility of primary importance in disarmament, and that requires that the General Assembly be kept informed of all steps being taken in that field, be they unilateral, bilateral, regional or multilateral.

104. The nuclear-weapon States must faithfully fulfil the obligations which, in accordance with the definition adopted by the General Assembly, they have regarding nuclear-free zones and vis-à-vis those States which are part of those zones.

105. A considerable part of the resources released as a result of the adoption of disarmament measures must be devoted to the promotion of the economic and social development of the developing countries.

106. If we turn now from principles to the programme of action, which in all probability will form the most important part of the final document, I might remind the Assembly that Mexico proposed in the Preparatory Committee—and it is our hope that that proposal will be adopted by the General Assembly—that its contents should be divided into two parts. In the first part we would set forth a series of concrete disarmament measures chosen because there was general agreement on the necessity and usefulness of making all possible efforts to put them into practice in the short term, and because it was felt, realistically and objectively, that there was a reasonable probability that those efforts would be successful, and we would also establish adequate procedures for monitoring compliance with the undertaking thus entered into. In the second part we would define those methods which it was felt were most appropriate for negotiating conscientiously a comprehensive disarmament programme.

107. The three forthcoming regular sessions of the General Assembly should monitor the implementation of the

short-term programme. The negotiated preparation of the long-term or over-all programme would be assigned to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, once the necessary reforms had been made to remove all obstacles to participation there by the nuclear-weapon States.

108. That programme, which would be considered and adopted by a second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament—and we have suggested that that session be held in 1981—should encompass all measures which it is felt are advisable in order that the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control can become a reality in a world where there is international peace and security and where a new international economic order can be strengthened and consolidated. The programme should also contain appropriate procedures to promote the co-ordination of all disarmament negotiations, regardless of where or in what form they might be held, and to ensure that the General Assembly shall be kept fully informed regarding the progress of such negotiations, so that it can efficiently perform its functions, including the timely possible assessment of the situation and the continual monitoring of the implementation of the programme.

109. With regard to the negotiating body to function within the United Nations, Mexico feels that that should continue to be the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. We are convinced, however, that its structure and functioning are not particularly suitable for carrying out the very important work required in that area. That is why as early as 10 years ago we began to press for changes in its organization and procedures in order to enhance its effectiveness and making it possible for all nuclear-weapon States to participate in its work. Only two months ago, together with the other 14 members of the so-called Group of 15, consisting of those States which do not belong to either of the major military alliances of the East and West, we presented to the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva a working document [*ibid.*, vol. VI, document A/AC.187/107] setting forth five specific changes which, in our opinion, deserve top priority. Of these, I feel it might be appropriate to recall here the following two changes.

110. First, the existing ties between the General Assembly and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should be strengthened. For that purpose every Member of the United Nations should have the right to introduce directly in the Committee proposals on disarmament questions which are the subject of negotiations there, and the right to participate in the discussions both in the Committee itself and in any subsidiary body where those proposals are being considered; also, that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Centre for Disarmament should be assigned a greater role in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

111. The second reform proposed is to replace the system of co-chairmen by another system to be agreed upon, the choice to be made from among the various alternatives that have been put forward. The proposal made by Mexico is that the chairmanship be rotated on a monthly basis

among the States members of the Committee on Disarmament which do not possess nuclear weapons.

112. We fully agree with the judgement contained in these laconic words appearing in the draft declaration submitted to us by the Preparatory Committee:

“Removing the threat of a world war is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or perish.”

113. We hope that this special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will perceive the significance and implications of this painful dilemma. The time has come for resolutions to embody something more than mere words and for speeches not to be mere displays of eloquence but to bear testimony to a positive political will.

114. The world expects from this session a new strategy leading to genuine disarmament measures, and such action is particularly urgent on a number of questions in respect of which we feel that any further delay would be not only unjustifiable but also quite inexplicable. That list would include, for example, the following questions: first, a ban on all nuclear-weapon tests, which have been expressly condemned on seven different occasions by the General Assembly and which have been a matter of concern to the United Nations now for over a quarter of a century; secondly, a substantial reduction of nuclear weapons and a freezing of their qualitative competitiveness, fraught with unimaginable consequences. On both those points the General Assembly has stated its views with great energy and perseverance when year after year it discussed the strategic arms limitation talks; thirdly, the elimination of all chemical weapons, which on so many occasions the General Assembly has said should be a matter of top priority; fourthly, the conclusion of agreements prohibiting the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons, as well as other conventional weapons that are considered excessively harmful or producing indiscriminate effects; fifthly, the establishment of practical procedures to channel and distribute to developing countries a “considerable part” of the resources that might be released by effective disarmament measures—with that objective in mind, we suggest that, until the special fund for disarmament and development, proposed by France in an initiative that we fully support, comes into existence, an *ad hoc* account in the United Nations Development Programme should be opened on a provisional basis, and finally, the adoption, by States which are required to do so by virtue of their compliance with the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its two Additional Protocols, of all the relevant measures necessary for that Treaty to enter into force throughout all the geographical areas defined in the Treaty. It was in order to achieve that goal that the General Assembly adopted its first appeal in 1967 [resolution 2286 (XXII)].

115. It is a source of special pleasure for me to say here that the Government and people of Mexico have, with great pleasure, welcomed the declaration made exactly one month ago by President Leonid Brezhnev to the effect that the Soviet Union had decided to accede to Additional Pro-

TOCOL II of the Latin American instrument to which I have just referred. And, shortly after, the first step towards accession was adopted, with the signing of the Protocol which took place on 18 May.

116. Similarly, we welcome the statement just made here by President Giscard d'Estaing concerning Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. His statement about the intentions of his Government is particularly gratifying to us because once France has signed the Protocol in question no signature will be missing from either of the two protocols that supplement the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, or Treaty of Tlatelolco.

117. My country has been fortunate enough to play a role, in the various United Nations bodies dealing with disarmament, far beyond that which might be expected of us in view of our demographic, economic and military position.

118. We believe that this is because Mexico has always tried to practise what it preaches in the international arena; we have tried to back our words with actions as we so keenly desire this Assembly to do.

119. Thus the budget for education in Mexico is eight times greater than our military budget.

120. Thus it is also that in 1963 we proposed the military denuclearization of Latin America, and we followed this with a contribution in resources and efforts, which led to Mexico being appointed the repository of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and its capital becoming the headquarters of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

121. Thus, Mexico is perhaps the only country in the world that has deemed it necessary to introduce an amendment to its Constitution expressly stipulating in its supreme law that nuclear energy can be used on our national territory for peaceful purposes only.

122. Thus the President of my country, José López Portillo, upon assuming his high office on 1 December 1976, emphatically announced his decision to contribute to the “banning of the genocidal weapons threatening the existence of mankind” and, last week, in a statement in Moscow during his State visit to the Soviet Union, made the following statement, with which I wish to conclude this address:

“We believe that the creation of peace is not a problem that rests exclusively with the great Powers: it is the task of all nations. The nuclear threat has world-wide dimensions. ...The legal equality of nations and their active participation in international bodies makes powerful those who have arguments to advance and allows their voices to resound throughout the entire world. ...We believe in a positive peace, one which permits the establishment, with the co-operation of all peoples, of a freely interacting international system—one which will lead the world to the study of the equitable distribution of wealth and genuine equality of opportunity. We are

keenly aware that this goal will involve a difficult and gradual process; that in order to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control we shall have to go through various stages; but we are serenely optimistic. Positive signs can be detected which should lead us to the adoption of concrete measures. . . . It is our earnest hope that this process will continue, with the participation of all nations, until we have totally eliminated all means of extermination and thoroughly explored every aspect of the grand design for world peace."

123. Mr. WOJTASZEK (Poland) (*interpretation from French*): I wish to express my deep satisfaction that this special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament is taking place under the presidency of the distinguished representative of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a country to which we are linked by bonds of close friendship. In conveying my congratulations to you, Mr. President, I would also express my conviction that this special session of the General Assembly will be an important stage in the struggle to curb the arms race and to make progress towards general and complete disarmament.

124. The Polish delegation approaches this special session of the General Assembly devoted exclusively to disarmament problems with the firm determination to make serious efforts, together with other representatives of countries meeting here, to give high priority to these problems which today are of primary importance, and to attack them more vigorously. Our desire reflects the will of the Polish people and is in keeping with its vital interests. We are convinced that this wish is also in keeping with the will of other countries of the world, particularly those that have been directly affected by the tragedy of contemporary warfare and those which do not yet fully enjoy the benefits of peace.

125. The right to live in peace is the most elementary right of every man and of every people. This right determines the direction of all efforts of individuals and societies and of all national and international efforts to bring about material and intellectual progress. This right is at the same time the very foundation of an equitable international order.

126. I wish to state that all of Poland's activities in the international arena are devoted to bringing about the full enjoyment of this right.

127. The desire for peace is deeply rooted in the conscience and conduct of the Polish people. Throughout its history, which goes back more than a thousand years, our country has known many wars. Nearly every generation in Poland has been called on to rebuild its country and to bind its wounds.

128. We were participants, from the very first to the very last day, in one of the most frightful of wars, the Second World War. Our blood was shed copiously in the struggle against Hitlerite fascism, both in Poland and in many other countries and on many other fronts. In terms of our human and material potential, our losses were the greatest: more

than 6 million of our citizens lost their lives in the course of that war. Of every 1,000 inhabitants of Poland, 220 lost their lives. Material damage amounted to more than 40 per cent of our national property. The Polish capital, Warsaw, was completely razed to the ground, as were hundreds of other towns and villages.

129. From that historical experience, coupled with the present aspirations of our nation and the awareness that Poland's security and development are possible only if there is lasting peace in the world, was born our determination to work resolutely for the promotion of peaceful relations among countries.

130. The Constitution of the Polish People's Republic makes action for peace one of the fundamental principles of our foreign policy.

131. We constantly associate our efforts at strengthening détente and developing co-operation among peoples with the efforts we are making to limit armaments and to bring about disarmament.

132. Poland, like other States in the socialist community, considers that at the present time the most important and the most urgent task is to curb the arms race and to embark upon genuine measures of disarmament which will not be detrimental to the security of any State.

133. Since the founding of the United Nations, Poland has persistently declared itself in favour of giving high priority to disarmament efforts. All important proposals regarding the consolidation of peace and disarmament, beginning with the very first session of the General Assembly, were put forward by us in the United Nations.

134. Our concepts and our ideas which we submitted at the United Nations in time had far-reaching effects and yielded fruit for the benefit of world peace.

135. I refer here to the plan to create a denuclearized zone in central Europe, submitted in this very hall on 2 October 1957, bearing the name of the Rapacki Plan.² The idea of denuclearized zones has now found a permanent place among achievements in the consolidation of peace and has become a reality in certain parts of the world.

136. The proposal put forward by Poland in December 1964 to convene a European conference on security and co-operation³ was realized in the Helsinki Conference in 1975.

137. We proposed a freeze on nuclear armaments in central Europe; we put forward the idea of undertaking research into the effects of the possible use of atomic, chemical and biological weapons. We have constantly made a practical contribution to the negotiation of agreements aimed at curbing the arms race.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 697th meeting.

³ *Ibid.*, *Nineteenth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 1301st meeting.

138. It is our duty to try by every possible means to serve the cause of disarmament. Almost four years ago, from this very rostrum, Mr. Gierak, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, put forward the proposal of instilling in the rising generations the ideal of a life of peace.⁴

139. The education of society and particularly of the younger generation, in a spirit of peace, the fostering of friendship and respect for the values and riches which each nation contributes to the storehouse of civilization and world culture constitute activities that are indispensable if international relations are to be rendered beneficial to all peoples. Along with the building of an infrastructure for peaceful co-operation, such education creates a propitious atmosphere and provides support for present and future disarmament measures.

140. Let us do everything in our power to prepare future generations to live in a world which is disarming and has been disarmed. Let us imprint upon the hearts and minds of young people and future generations the ideals of peace, freedom, equality and the right to live in peace. The need to ensure appropriate education for society in a spirit of peace and friendship among peoples should receive high priority, within the context of the limitation of the arms race and the whole complex of disarmament problems.

141. In putting forward our own proposals, we have always given and we shall continue to give our support to initiatives aiming at military détente and progress in the field of disarmament taken by other States which have adopted a realistic attitude.

142. The USSR and the other socialist countries have submitted numerous and important proposals. Some of them have been submitted individually, others by all the countries of the socialist community. Poland and the other socialist countries have presented their points of view on fundamental problems that now exist in the disarmament field in the draft declaration on disarmament and in the draft programme of action on disarmament, both dated 7 September 1977, which were submitted to the Preparatory Committee for this session [A/S-10/1, vol. V, documents A/AC.187/81 and 82], and also in the general disarmament programme, submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva on 21 February 1978.⁵ The complex of proposals for disarmament submitted on 25 April last by Leonid Brezhnev [see A/S-10/11] are of great importance. Poland gives them its whole-hearted support. We have also learned of the proposals of other countries submitted in the course of preparations for the special session of the General Assembly. We find a number of them interesting and we support some of them. In particular we whole-heartedly endorse the position of the group of non-aligned countries and several developing countries which have expressed the wish that at its special session the General Assembly should begin to draw up a vast programme of disarmament and provide genuine momentum for disarmament negotiations.

143. We should like the programme of action to be adopted at this session to be realistic and to specify the tasks of key importance for international peace and security. Like the non-aligned countries, we believe the most important task is at the present time that of eliminating the threat of nuclear war and banning nuclear weapons and, indeed, all types and kinds of weapons of mass destruction.

144. Our debate is taking place within the framework of a complex international situation. The very fact that the special session has been convened to study the whole complex of disarmament problems is the reflection of an ever more general awareness of those problems and of a deepening of the contradictions between political détente, the development of co-operation and the intensification in the arms race; between the achievements of science and technology and their applications; between ever more complex social and economic world problems and the waste represented by the allocation to armaments of constantly increasing funds. In a word, contradictions between the aspirations of mankind for a prosperous future and the threat stemming from the incessant accumulation of the means of annihilation.

145. Over the last few years, much has been done to build lasting foundations for peace and security. When, in the past, Poland, the USSR and other States advocated peaceful co-operation instead of the sterile confrontation of the cold war, they encountered a lack of understanding and indeed active opposition. Today, only the most extreme of extremists and the militarists question the fact that the process of détente, in spite of difficulties and procrastination, does constitute the only reasonable way of developing relations among States.

146. A bilateral and multilateral debate has grown and a growing number of States are participating in it; it is a debate on politics, economics, science and technology, the protection of the environment and other important problems common to the whole of mankind. Efforts are going on to establish a new and equitable international economic order that will take account of the interests of all countries.

147. The result of the policy of détente has been reflected in an evolution in the situation in Europe where, thanks to the combined efforts of all States, we have seen a complete change which has made it possible to pass from the cold war to the establishment of a new system of relations among States. However, this process is not only of importance for Europe. Taking into account the potential of the States of that region and the fact that it is here that two politico-military groups confront each other, the strengthening of European security is of global significance.

148. The improvement of the situation in Europe has been reflected in the settlement of problems inherited from the Second World War and the post-war period, that is, in the recognition of the existing political and territorial realities and also in the development of broadly developed relations in the political, economic, scientific and cultural fields, and in the field of human contacts.

⁴ Ibid., Twenty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 2264th meeting.

⁵ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 27, vol. II, document CCD/552.

149. I take pleasure in noting that Poland has been making, and continues to make, a substantial contribution to these positive changes. My country today is linked by relations of co-operation based upon the principles of peaceful coexistence with a growing number of States in the world.

150. We consider that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as well as the Final Act adopted on 1 August 1975 at that Conference have opened up favourable prospects for the development of our continent and have created an atmosphere propitious for the solution of many essential problems in this region.

151. A propitious mood has been created for subsequent progress in the building of a lasting security system in Europe. This has also made it possible to tackle realistically the urgent tasks which exist in the fields of military détente, and the limitation of armed forces and armaments, as well as in the field of disarmament. The major scope of the recent Belgrade meeting consists in the confirmation of the importance of the Final Act and in the adoption of decisions relating to new multilateral meetings among States which participated in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

152. There can be no denying that the progress of détente in Europe is useful to the whole world.

153. The Soviet-American dialogue, in particular the disarmament negotiations being held within the framework of the second round of negotiations on strategic arms limitations and also in other key areas, is of major importance for the whole process of détente in Europe and throughout the world. Poland is paying particular attention to this dialogue and is giving it its full support in the hope that it will lead to favourable results.

154. However, we would be lacking in realism if we failed to draw attention to a number of negative, even dangerous, phenomena. We are disturbed at the growing influence which has recently come to be exercised in certain countries by military and industrial complexes which seek to subordinate the policies of their Governments to their own selfish interests. They have been attempting to impose upon the world a new cycle of the arms race. The weight of armaments today constitutes a heavy burden on the peoples of many countries. It makes difficult, or even impossible, the solution of urgent social problems and distorts economic life.

155. In certain Western quarters it is asserted that it is necessary to give more credibility to deterrence. The doctrine is still maintained that only an increase in armaments can ensure a higher level of security. These disturbing symptoms demonstrate that the concept according to which the "balance of fear" is the guarantee of peace and security is still alive and well. This line of thought is illusory and dangerous.

156. Awareness of the danger posed by armaments to peace in Europe and in the world and the sense of responsibility for the present and future of the peoples of the world should arouse a determination to act.

157. We are not among those who believe that the idea of disarmament is nothing but a noble and lofty Utopian idea and that humanity is condemned to an inevitable escalation of the arms race. On the contrary, agreements on the limitation of the arms race and on disarmament on a bilateral and multilateral basis which have already been concluded and put into effect demonstrate that the curbing of this arms race is within our grasp and that it is possible to bring about disarmament given the political will to do so.

158. It is in this conviction that Poland is taking part in the Vienna talks on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe and associated measures. We believe that progress in these talks would be an important factor for the strengthening of military détente. We hope that, on the basis of the principle of maintaining the relative degree of security of each of the States, a solution will be found that will make it possible to reduce the level of the current military confrontation in this sensitive area of Europe. Together with our allies, we have acted with perseverance to this end. We are consistent in applying the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe relating to the means of building confidence.

159. Since the very beginning, Poland has taken an active part in the work at Geneva of the Committee on Disarmament, which is the principal forum for multilateral negotiations on disarmament and which has produced a series of agreements of considerable importance in this field. We take a favourable view of the work of this body, while believing that we must try to increase its effectiveness even further. An essential factor in this is that States should have the will and the necessary political aptitude in order to conclude negotiated agreements.

160. The States members of the Warsaw Treaty have presented at Geneva a draft convention on the banning of the production, stockpiling, deployment and use of neutron nuclear weapons.⁶ We attach particular importance to this point, and we take note of the decision of the United States to postpone the question of the production of this weapon. Nevertheless, we consider that this should be followed up by a decision totally to renounce its manufacture, as, indeed, the Soviet Union announced that it was ready to do on a reciprocal basis. We should like to express the hope that the United States and other members of NATO will agree to the convention on the total prohibition of the neutron weapon.

161. As I have already pointed out, the socialist countries submitted to the Geneva Committee last February a long-term disarmament programme. We consider that this is a realistic programme in keeping with the interests of all States. I should like to draw the attention of delegations to some of the essential problems in this programme, problems to which Poland attaches particular importance and in which it has traditionally shown particular interest.

162. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

⁶ *Ibid.*, document CCD/559.

Weapons would prevent the spread of those weapons, just as the system of guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency constitutes an essential impediment to the use of nuclear energy for military purposes. We believe that we must step up efforts aimed at making the agreement on non-proliferation universal and increasing the effectiveness of the system of guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be constantly associated with the refinement of a more effective system of guarantees. It is precisely this question to which Poland has devoted its activities within the framework of the London Club.

163. We are in favour of the prohibition of the development and production of other weapons of mass destruction made possible by the race in armaments technology. For years now, my country has been involved in the extremely important problem of the total elimination of chemical weapons. We can take note with satisfaction that it has been possible to narrow appreciably differences in positions in the course of negotiations aimed at producing a relevant agreement. We hope that an agreement in this realm will shortly be concluded.

164. It is indispensable to make further progress to prevent an arms race on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. After the conclusion in 1971 of the treaty on the denuclearization of the sea-bed and ocean floor,⁷ we must go even further towards total demilitarization.

165. Poland, as the Chairman of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, would like to stress its satisfaction that the majority of States share this view. This was expressed in the course of discussion and in General Assembly resolution 32/87 A.

166. We attach considerable importance to the problem of the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council and other States possessing significant military potential. We support the proposal of the USSR to allocate part of the funds thus released to the needs of economic and social development, and particularly to aid to developing countries.

167. It is extremely important for the maximum number of countries to become parties to the multilateral disarmament agreements already in effect. It is in fact difficult to imagine any possibility of making appreciable long-term progress in the field of disarmament and the limitation of the arms race if a certain number of States do not subscribe to the agreements already concluded.

168. The Preparatory Committee for the special session, in the work of which Poland took an active part, performed a useful and difficult task in preparing the outline for the final document which laid the basis for the work of this session.

169. Agreement was reached on a series of fundamental principles which should serve as a guide for the efforts of States in the field of disarmament. At the same time certain differences of view emerged, relating both to certain principles and above all to the programme of action and the question of machinery. We think that these differences can be overcome in the course of the work of this session. It is our view that the document to be adopted at this session should be realistic and that its form should be acceptable to all States. It cannot have the character of a declaration; it must aim to lay down the most important lines of action and to define the most urgent areas of action in the field of disarmament, and it must create conditions favourable for the adoption of concrete disarmament measures. The session should also result in a determined acceleration of the talks on disarmament which are going on at various levels.

170. The principal conditions for the success of the session are the demonstration of the necessary political will on the part of all its participants and respect for the universally accepted principles of disarmament, particularly the principle of the inviolability of the security of States. It is also particularly important that any resolutions adopted at the session should be adopted by consensus, because only thus will they have the necessary authority and actually be put into effect.

171. We should try to combine the efforts of all those who are determined to base their security on lasting foundations and all those who understand that in the conditions of the world today war has ceased to be a means of solving disputes and that the arms race is a burden which makes ever more difficult the achievement of the aims of economic and social development. In other words, we have to identify the highest common denominator of the interests shared by the absolute majority of States by the formulation of goals and essential principles of disarmament, as well as a programme of essential measures. It is precisely this which in our view constitutes one of the principal tasks of the special session of the General Assembly. This task is indeed in keeping with the requirements of the Charter of the United Nations.

172. It is our hope that at this session the way will be opened for the adoption of concrete preparatory measures for the convening of a world disarmament conference. We should like that conference to be universal and to have a suitably constituted authority, and to establish working groups which will make it possible to produce practical solutions that would take account of the interests of all States.

173. The conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the use of force in international relations, proposed by the Soviet Union, would be of great importance in creating an appropriate climate of confidence which would be propitious for disarmament measures.

174. The world today is the common property of all peoples, and efforts aimed at building a lasting structure of peace should be the primary task of our generation. It is a duty towards those who have sacrificed their lives for the

⁷ Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor (resolution 2660 (XXV), annex).

cause of liberty and independence, and also to those coming generations which will succeed us.

175. Poland, guided by this profound moral obligation and by the imperatives of the day, demands that an end be put to the arms race and that we embark on genuine disarmament.

176. Mr. BARRE (Somalia): Mr. President, I should like at the outset to congratulate you most warmly on your election to the office of President of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We fully appreciate your country's active role in the attainment of the disarmament objective. My delegation is confident that under your skilled and experienced leadership the work of this historic special session will be successfully concluded.

177. No task undertaken by the General Assembly is more closely related to the essential purposes of the United Nations than that of working towards the goal of general and complete disarmament. Certainly no issue calls for the undivided attention of the world community with as much urgency as the spiralling arms race.

178. As a result of the wise and vigorous initiative of the non-aligned group of States, we are able at last to meet here in order to deal in a comprehensive manner with the numerous and complex problems of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

179. The task before us is one of the utmost frightening magnitude. We need only consider the terrible consequences of the eventuality of nuclear disaster that is certain unless we reach a consensus on a bold programme of action and set in motion the process for general and complete disarmament.

180. Over the past three decades, the United Nations has rightly directed a great deal of its energy and resources towards a number of areas which call for action in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter. But even as the world Organization has tackled political, social, economic and humanitarian problems in an effort to promote 'better standards of life in larger freedom', Member States have become increasingly aware that activities and achievements in these fields are at best temporary and could be rendered futile by the single factor of nuclear war. Today, humanity can no longer remain passive under this ever present threat of mass destruction and havoc.

181. In its approach to the work of the special session my delegation will be primarily guided by those noble objectives aimed at ensuring the fulfilment of the just aspirations of the peoples for peace, stability, freedom and progress.

182. It is envisaged that the main tasks of this session will be to establish the guiding principles of disarmament negotiations through the adoption of a declaration and a programme of action on disarmament, as well as a thorough review of the international machinery for negotiations on disarmament.

183. In this regard my delegation believes that acceptance of the primary role and responsibility of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter, is an essential condition for a structured and co-ordinated approach to the problem of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. While it is essential that bilateral negotiations between the leading nuclear Powers should be vigorously pursued, such negotiations should take place with more than a passing acknowledgement of the central and co-ordinating role of the United Nations in disarmament.

184. Closely connected to the principle of United Nations responsibility is the principle of the right and duty of all States to contribute to disarmament efforts and to participate in disarmament negotiations. It is natural that they should have this right since the security of all nations and peoples depends on the outcome of disarmament negotiations. Consequently, we fully support the proposals of the non-aligned group of States aimed at strengthening the position of the General Assembly as the main political decision-making organ of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Moreover, the implementation of any programme of action on disarmament drawn up by the international community should be effected in agreed stages and on the basis of specific time-limits.

185. The international community has already recognized that the enormous military expenditures of States have great adverse effect on world economic and social development and that the arms race is incompatible with the objectives of a new international economic order. This consideration should provide a strong incentive for disarmament measures. My Government hopes that proposals for the freezing and reduction of the military budgets of nuclear-weapon States will be implemented and that ways of channelling the resources thus released to development purposes will be devised without delay.

186. Reaching agreement on the order of priorities in disarmament negotiations will be central to the work of this session since a consensus on this matter is essential for the effective implementation of a programme of action. In this regard, it seems obvious to my Government that in working for general and complete disarmament the highest priority must be given to nuclear disarmament, a question of direct concern to all States, since the nuclear-arms race poses a grave threat to the very survival of all mankind. Unfortunately, only the most halting and tentative steps towards nuclear disarmament have so far been taken by the nuclear Powers which have the major responsibility for ending both the vertical and the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Today, we are calling once again for a halt to the production, deployment and improvement of nuclear weapons and weapon systems; we are calling for a significant reduction, indeed for the complete destruction, of nuclear stockpiles and their means of delivery and total abstention from their manufacture in future.

187. My Government believes that in order to create the necessary atmosphere of confidence in which such initiatives could be implemented, the nuclear Powers should undertake a solemn agreement to renounce the use of nuclear

weapons and formulate an international convention for this purpose.

188. The renunciation of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear-weapon States is, of course, the other side of the coin of nuclear disarmament. It is clear that halting the spread of nuclear weapons must be effected along with the reduction and elimination of nuclear stockpiles. Unfortunately, the failure of the nuclear Powers to honour their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has seriously hampered its effectiveness.

189. Another important disarmament measure is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones or zones of peace, in accordance with the particular needs of the States in areas where such zones are desired. An indispensable aspect of the establishment of such zones will be a formal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States to respect the statutes excluding nuclear weapons.

190. Speaking as the representative of an Indian Ocean State, I should emphasize the importance to our region of such undertakings by the nuclear Powers. The Indian Ocean States share the desire to see the provisions of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace implemented [*resolution 2832 (XXVI)*], and to be free from the tensions of big-Power rivalry and confrontation.

191. An important step toward the exclusion of nuclear weapons from Africa has already been taken in the form of the General Assembly Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa [*resolution 2033 (XX)*]. I need not emphasize the urgency of translating this Declaration into a legally binding instrument. Unfortunately, however, it is no secret that South Africa's military racist régime has acquired nuclear-weapon technology. This dangerous development highlights a problem inherent in the transfer of nuclear technology. While the Somali Democratic Republic recognizes the need of States to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and considers international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a positive factor to development, we believe that the existing safeguards are inadequate and must be strengthened so that they apply equally to suppliers and recipients of nuclear technology on a universal and non-discriminatory basis.

192. A disarmament priority that my Government considers to be second only to that of ending the nuclear-arms race is the elimination of the use of chemical warfare. The notable achievement of the Convention prohibiting bacteriological warfare⁸ must now be followed by a similar instrument prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

193. While the major disarmament efforts of the world community must still be directed towards the elimination of existing methods of mass destruction, the establishment of preventive measures against foreseeable but still undeveloped forms of warfare must not be neglected. The valu-

able achievements of the treaty on the sea-bed and the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques [*resolution 31/72, annex*] must be continued in the further strengthening of these measures, and there must be a redoubled effort by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to reach agreement on a convention to prohibit new types and systems of mass destruction.

194. Another cause for international concern is the continued use in various parts of the world of napalm and other incendiary weapons and of conventional weapons of mass destruction, such as the anti-personnel cluster bomb. These weapons, which are particularly inhumane and which have indiscriminate effects, are the typical weapons employed by racist, colonialist régimes to suppress the liberation struggle of peoples in Africa and the Middle East for the realization of their just aspirations for self-determination and independence. The level of sophistication reached in the development of conventional weapons makes it necessary that a gradual reduction of such weapons be effected on a global scale and within the context of general and complete disarmament. It will be a valuable accomplishment of this session if we can establish the goals which should be sought by the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, to be held in 1979. The use of conventional and other weapons is, of course, inextricably linked with the question of the maintenance and deployment of armed forces. My delegation supports the view that armed forces must eventually be reduced to levels which will conform only to the national security needs of States. An important factor in the reduction of armed forces would certainly be the dismantling and prohibition of military bases on foreign soil and prohibiting the stationing of troops in foreign territories.

195. In this context, an alarming development in Africa in recent times should be noted. I refer to the development of a sizeable force of foreign troops in various African countries where they are carrying out the strategic designs and hegemonistic ambitions of a super-Power, often with a highly destabilizing effect on the affairs of the African continent.

196. My delegation believes that the question of disarmament has to be clinically diagnosed in order to ensure complete treatment. We do not believe that the world community can achieve substantial progress in its efforts to bring about general and complete disarmament without identifying clearly the underlying causes of the arms race in nuclear and conventional weapons.

197. The real cause for this spiralling arms race is to be found in the struggle on the part of super-Powers for world hegemony and control over the destiny of others. The failure of so-called détente to eliminate big-Power confrontation and arms limitation is ample evidence of this. We must recognize that the subjugation of peoples to colonial rule and foreign domination and the denial of their right under the Charter to self-determination and independence

⁸ Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (*resolution 2826 (XXVI)*, annex).

will inevitably cause regional and international tension by provoking a resort to armed struggle for national liberation. In this context, it is pertinent to recall that the legitimacy of armed struggle in such situations has been affirmed by the General Assembly on several occasions.

198. The lack of political will to end these situations which fuel the arms race is cited so often that it has begun to sound like an inevitable and unchangeable condition. We must resolve that this condition can be changed and we must actively seek to change it. We can do so through the mobilization of the moral force of international and national public opinion in support of disarmament and in opposition to the negative forces which hamper progress towards that goal.

199. We can also accomplish a great deal if we make full

use of the confidence-building measures provided by the Charter and by other solemn declarations of the United Nations. There must be a new determination to use these and all other means at our disposal to break out of all restraints imposed by past failures. Above all, let us not lower our sights and aim only at achieving the small advances which seem immediately possible.

200. Let us never forget that in seeking a world free of the threat posed by the arms race in nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction we are not seeking Utopia: we are seeking the survival of our world civilization.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.