DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 5 May 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany)
- Opening of the session
- Election of officers
- Adoption of the agenda
- Organization of work
- General exchange of views

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

86-64800 8417V (E)
The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: I have the honour to open the 1986 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. May I, on behalf of all members, welcome the officer in charge of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. I also extend a cordial welcome to the competent and experienced Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Alem, and his colleagues.

At the outset of our work it may be wise to reflect once again on the specific role and significance of our Commission. This will enable us to focus better on the tasks at hand. Established in its present form by the General Assembly in 1978, the Disarmament Commission is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly designed to make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament. Its unique contribution to the multilateral disarmament process resides in the fact that its agenda is selective and that a period of several weeks is available for in-depth deliberations on important disarmament issues with a view to elaborating specific recommendations for the benefit of the General Assembly. The specificity of the Commission resides further in its universal character. In contrast with the Conference on Disarmament, all members of the United Nations have their say in the proceedings of the Commission. I would also note the beneficial effect which the rule of consensus on all substantive issues - so far carefully observed - has had for the work of the Commission in previous years. The Disarmament Commission is a place where, by the careful shaping of unified opinion, with the participation of all members of the international community, and the general level of consensus on the necessity and modalities of disarmament measures can be achieved and heightened. With these properties, the Disarmament Commission is an indispensable link in the multilateral disarmament process. It is a precious good that needs to
be preserved and promoted. Yet the potential of the Commission, as I have described it, has not been fully realized in past years. The challenge that confronts us again this year is to do better and to help the Commission to live up to its full potential.

We should all meet this challenge in a particular manner at a time when the political relationship between the two major military Powers has been placed on a new footing. A wave of new hopes and of confidence in the improvement of the world security situation has emanated from last year's summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev. The meeting has resulted in a number of important political understandings and in far-reaching promises of the two participants to accelerate all ongoing disarmament negotiations. These new perspectives of the important bilateral relationship have also instilled a new element of hope in the multilateral disarmament process. Indeed, it has come to be increasingly realized that both multilateral and bilateral disarmament efforts are necessary and that both must be designed to be mutually complementary. The Disarmament Commission is embarking on this year's work period practically at the same time when the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on nuclear and space weapons are entering a new phase. This should spur us on and enhance our specific contribution to the disarmament process.

There is yet an additional challenge that the Commission must meet. The year 1986 has been declared the International Year of Peace. In the view of the General Assembly, the importance of the International Year of Peace requires that the Year be devoted to concentrating the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States on the promotion and achievement of the ideals of peace by all possible means, and the General Assembly has invited the organs and subsidiary bodies of the United Nations to commemorate the Year in the most appropriate form, highlighting,
inter alia, the role of the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. It goes without saying that this assignment is of particular significance to the Commission and its mandate in the field of disarmament. May I suggest to delegations that they, in the implementation of the aforementioned General Assembly resolution, heighten their awareness of the importance of the International Year of Peace and give expression to their views on this important event in the course of their contributions to our general exchange of views. In my view the most effective and most propitious contribution the Commission can make to the promotion of the International Year of Peace would be diligence and untiring efforts in the elaboration of specific consensus recommendations on the important disarmament issues on our agenda this year. The proclamation of the International Year of Peace should admonish all of us to bring the annual session of the Disarmament Commission to an optimum result.

All representatives are aware of the grave financial problems the United Nations is at present confronting and of the proposals designed to alleviate the financial preoccupations as currently under discussion in the General Assembly. A number of these proposals would, if adopted, affect the Commissioner's work, specifically the duration of this annual session and the extent of in-session documentation. As of this hour the General Assembly is continuing its deliberations, and it would be premature to anticipate what decisions it might take with regard to our work. However, the appeal contained in the Secretary-General's proposals is already with us and I would suggest that it is our obligation, even at this hour and pending more far-reaching decisions of the General Assembly, to make a contribution of our own to the solution of the Organization's financial calamity. I therefore suggest that we all concur to set ourselves a slightly
advanced target date for the finalization of our task. If delegations agree, I shall try to do everything in my power as Chairman to structure our work in a way that would enable the Commission - pending decisions of the General Assembly - to finalize its work by Wednesday, 28 May, at noon, or earlier if that could be achieved.
(The Chairman)

I would also, in the spirit of the Secretary-General's appeal, remind all delegations of the need to curtail their requests for the circulation of documents and to recognize the need for the fullest possible utilization of meeting time and interpretation services. The contribution our Commission can thus make to alleviating the grave cash problems of the United Nations may be limited; we should, however, not hesitate to prove our earnest intentions in this manner.

As in previous years, the General Assembly has entrusted our Commission with a number of important subject matters. Several resolutions have specifically requested the Disarmament Commission to consider, and to make specific recommendations on, a number of significant agenda items. In the next few days, beginning this very day, we shall have to decide, pursuant to resolution 37/78, which specific subjects from among those under our consideration should be singled out for the elaboration of concrete recommendations for the benefit of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. The importance of all items which will figure on our agenda, once we have adopted it, is such that I should like to anticipate that all substantive items entrusted to the Commission will be so selected.

Members will recall that in a process of intensive consultations which has spanned the last few months – consultations held both in New York and in Geneva – I have attempted to foreshadow the structure of our work and to facilitate the achievement of a consensus on all procedural decisions to be taken with regard to our future agenda items. I am pleased to note that on the majority of those proposals an incipient consensus can be observed. A number of working groups will have to be established, and on two of the agenda items we may wish to decide that an initial phase of consultations, to be conducted by the Chairman himself, should
(The Chairman)

precede the eventual establishment of working groups. For the overriding
disarmament issues comprised in item 4 of our draft agenda, in keeping with
precedent, a contact group should be established. Further subsidiary bodies will
be established by the Committee of the Whole and report to that Committee before
they are presented in plenary meetings towards the end of our session. I do not
intend now to go into the details of those organizational arrangements, since
members are familiar with them and since they will have to be taken up in the
Committee of the Whole as soon as it convenes.

At this juncture, I wish to voice my hope that we shall be in a position to
finalize consideration of at least some of those agenda items. Several of them
have been before the Commission for a number of years; one or two have dragged on
longer than necessary, and there should be a concerted effort at this annual
session to take determined action and to finalize those subjects with specific
consensus recommendations which the General Assembly - and beyond that the
international community - has a right to expect from our work. I hope, in
particular, that the agenda item on the question of South Africa's nuclear
capability and the elaboration of guidelines for confidence-building measures can
be finalized in time and give rise to concrete and useful recommendations which can
then be placed before our higher body.

Considerable progress can, in my view, be achieved on item 7 of our draft
agenda, review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, given
the fruitful debates already initiated on the subject last year. In the vast field
covered by item 4 of our provisional agenda - the overriding disarmament items - it
should be our ambition to elaborate at least a limited number of recommendations,
as has been done in past years, so that the ongoing process of nuclear and
conventional disarmament does not remain at the level of academic debate only,
but is translated into some operational activities. We should all be ambitious enough to expect that progress can also be achieved on those remaining agenda items which I have not specifically referred to.

In many cases, the key to progress may be a determined effort to free ourselves from the overly complicated and controversial draft texts of earlier sessions and to look for a fresh approach, with a view to consensus and action.

It is my privilege to wish all members a fruitful and success-oriented session, marked by the harmony and sense of common purpose which the subject matter of our endeavours demands.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The CHAIRMAN: As members will recall, at its organizational session in December last year the Commission was not able to complete its Bureau; it elected only five Vice-Chairmen. Those colleagues of mine are present, and I wish to take this opportunity to welcome them warmly and to congratulate them on their election. They are: Cameroon from the Group of African States; Burma from the Group of Asian States; Hungary and Poland from the Group of Eastern European States; and Australia from the Group of Western European and other States.

There remain to be elected two members, one each from the African and Asian regions, which shall also include the Rapporteur. I understand that consultations on those nominations are still going on, and I urge the Groups concerned to speed up their consultations and provide the nominees for the remaining officers of the Commission.

I am happy to report that I have been informed that the Group of Latin American States has in the meantime nominated Ecuador and Peru to be Vice-Chairmen of the Commission.
May I take it that the Commission wishes to elect the aforementioned countries to the vice-chairmanship of the Commission by acclamation?

It was so decided.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The CHAIRMAN: I now put to the Commission for adoption the provisional agenda (A/CN.10/L.18).

Mr. LOWITZ (United States of America): On behalf of the United States delegation, Sir, I congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Commission, and wish you well in your endeavours. I know that in your usual manner of excellence you will perform your duties in an outstanding way, and my delegation and I look forward to a most productive session.

As was made clear at the informal meeting you held on Friday, Mr. Chairman, the United States, in considering the provisional agenda presented to the Commission, has raised certain questions.
It is our understanding that the provisional agenda is subject to adoption by
the Disarmament Commission, and has been so adopted in previous years. It is my
Government's further understanding that the adoption of the provisional agenda,
making it the working agenda of the Commission, has always in the past taken place
under the rule of consensus. This being the case, to the United States it seems
that the provisional agenda should be open to objection as to any specific item it
contains. Therefore my delegation wishes to raise its objection to the inclusion
of item 8, "Substantive consideration of the question of naval arms race and
dismament", on the agenda and to request that the agenda be adopted after the
deletion of, and hence without the inclusion of, item 8.

As my delegation and I indicated earlier, the United States position
concerning the naval arms race has been made very clear in the past, and I would
call the attention of representatives in the Disarmament Commission to the
explanation of vote my delegation gave when it voted against the draft resolution
(A/C.1/40/L.36) in the First Committee last fall. That explanation set out in some
detail the United States position concerning this issue.

Therefore I would request that the agenda be adopted without provisional
agenda item 8, and that it be adopted by consensus.

Mrs. URIBE de LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish):
Mr. Chairman, I realize that you want to proceed with the adoption of the agenda
that has been proposed to us, but I should like to return to agenda item 2, the
election of officers, particularly with regard to the Latin American candidates.

I should like to express the enthusiastic support of my delegation and other
Latin American delegations for the candidates that have just been elected. This
session of the Disarmament Commission offers our delegation the opportunity once
again to meet with those with whom we have worked in the past and to achieve closer
relations among our countries.
With regard to the chairmanship, we should like to express our happiness at seeing occupying that post a person for whom we have the greatest respect, one we consider a friend and to whom we always listen very carefully.

As I have already indicated, my delegation wishes to pledge its wholehearted support for the Latin American representatives that have just been elected members of the Bureau and who will work with you, Sir. I should like in particular to refer to Ambassador Miguel Albornoz, whose task will be extremely complicated, namely to deal with item 4 of our agenda. Whatever credentials I may have to speak of Ambassador Albornoz are based on my admiration and affection for a man who has devoted his best efforts to, and is fully dedicated to, the work of the United Nations and the fraternal relations between the peoples of our two countries, Colombia and Ecuador, which share a common past and whose struggles and triumphs Ambassador Albornoz has enshrined in many important books.

His great dedication to history and literature is but one of his many qualities. In his capacity as Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations, and dean among Latin American representatives, he has held very important posts in the Organization, particularly as regards the Committee on Information and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, where serenity and good judgement, qualities he possesses, have been necessary, and he has exercised great diplomacy in alleviating the problems some have experienced. These are great qualities of his, and they lead us to place our trust in him and to pay tribute to one who so fully understands the lofty goals towards which we are working.

For those as well as other reasons it would take too long to enumerate, we believe Ambassador Albornoz has human and intellectual qualities and great experience to share with the Chairman of the Commission as he carries out the difficult and sensitive tasks that have been handed down to him.
We all trust that this year, which began under the theme "peace", we shall be able to reconcile the different viewpoints to achieve the higher interests of mankind. As you yourself, Sir, have quite rightly said, that is our common aspiration. Thus we are very pleased at your invitation to strive to overcome the difficulties that exist and to work for peace in an atmosphere of harmony.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Colombia for her very encouraging remarks, in particular those for her two Latin American colleagues on the Bureau. I am sure they feel bolstered in the execution of their tasks by her remarks, as do the other officers of the Committee, including myself.

Reverting to the question on the agenda, we have heard the representative of the United States of America. In my view, his objection to one item on the draft agenda raises an important legal question. Anticipating that the question would come up, I have sought advice from the Legal Counsel of the United Nations, and I have before me a legal opinion that specifically addresses the question of the extent to which this Commission has the power to eradicate from the draft agenda an item that has been placed there by specific United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

The easiest way to enable members to familiarize themselves with this important legal opinion is perhaps for me to read out an excerpt from the text and thus place it on the record. It reads as follows:

"While in general terms an organ has the competence to consider the provisional agenda and to finalize its agenda with such additions, deletions or other modifications as it deems necessary, a subsidiary organ" - and I would add that we are a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly by virtue of paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament -
"is required to follow the instructions given to it by its parent organ. In this particular case, the Disarmament Commission has been requested by the Assembly to consider a particular matter at its 1986 session. In the practice of the United Nations, a request by a principal or parent organ to its subsidiary organ that an item be placed on its agenda is considered to be a directive to be followed by the subsidiary body concerned. It would therefore not be consistent with this practice if the Disarmament Commission were to adopt its agenda for the session without including the item on the naval arms race which appears on its provisional agenda. Of course, it would be for the Disarmament Commission to determine the manner and the extent to which each item on its agenda is to be considered, taking into account its decision-making practices."

I should like to add one sentence to that opinion: that the way in which we determine the manner and extent to which items on the agenda are to be considered should be guided by paragraph 3 of United Nations General Assembly resolution 37/78 H, the resolution to which I referred in my introductory statement.
On the strength of that legal opinion, I would conclude that this Commission has no power to remove from its agenda an item specifically placed there by a General Assembly resolution.

Mr. LOWITZ (United States of America): When I made my previous intervention, I had had the benefit, Sir, of your having shared with me just a few minutes ago the statement you have just read out to the Commission. It was based on that interpretation that my delegation and my Government concluded that our position that the agenda needed to be adopted by this body was correct. As the statement said, it is the Commission's option to finalize the agenda with such additions, deletions or other modifications as it deems necessary. That being the case, I would renew the request of the United States for the adoption of the agenda by consensus, with the elimination of provisional agenda item 8.

I might also just point out in passing that my understanding is that it is not that the United Nations Disarmament Commission receives instructions from the General Assembly but rather that there are recommendations or requests by the General Assembly for the inclusion of matters on the agenda. I would also just add, Sir, that in my Government's view in the position we are suggesting ought to be taken there is nothing inconsistent with the statement you have read out.

The CHAIRMAN: I have listened very carefully to the statement of the representative of the United States; that statement will, of course, be reflected in the record of this meeting. However, it is my considered view that despite the reasons he adduces this Commission has no power to strike agenda item 8 off the provisional agenda, and that we are duty-bound to transfer it onto our final agenda. In my considered view, the objection of the representative of the United States is not appropriate, and not admissible at this juncture.
(The Chairman)

If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission wishes to adopt the agenda as contained in document A/CN.10/L.18.

The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I would recall that in the course of the informal consultations I have held during the past month with a large number of delegations it emerged that, while a great number of proposed organizational arrangements meet with the approval of all delegations, others may need additional discussion. I propose that we reserve both that discussion and the formal establishment of the various working bodies for meetings of the Committee of the Whole. A meeting of the Committee of the Whole will be convened immediately following this afternoon's plenary meeting of the Commission.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind delegations that the list of speakers in the general exchange of views closes today at 1 p.m. Should a delegation be prevented from meeting that deadline, I would urge it to contact me so that we may find an appropriate time for its statement to be heard.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): Let me first of all congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Your experience and ability in the field of disarmament are well known, and we look forward to a successful session of the Commission.

I wish also to express the appreciation of the Swedish delegation of the excellent way in which your predecessor, Ambassador Mansour Ahmad of Pakistan, led the work of the Commission. Through you, Sir, I would ask the delegation of Pakistan to convey to Ambassador Ahmad our warmest thanks for his work as Chairman.
(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

All of us saw the light of hope. We can still see it, but it is a bit more distant and growing slightly dim. This year, 1986, may well be critical. Will hope and reason prevail, or will this opportunity too be lost, and for how long? Can we be sure it will return?

Last year we witnessed what seemed at least to be attempts to find a more sensible way of handling United States-Soviet relations. Negotiations were re-commenced. The Geneva meeting in November resulted in a number of important assertions: that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought; that military superiority must not be sought; that negotiations should be accelerated to prevent an arms race in space and to terminate the arms race on earth; and that a 50 per cent reduction in nuclear arms should be made at an early date.

Since November, we have, however, seen little progress in the efforts to translate those words into concrete action. The bilateral Geneva negotiations are moving slowly. Both parties obviously continue to think in outdated concepts of nuclear balance and sub-balances. The enormous technical complexity of the issues involved can thus always provide convenient pretexts for opposition to progress. A number of proposals have been made, but one can hardly talk of any common ground for an agreement having become visible, and on many matters positions remain wide apart.

In this situation it is perhaps not surprising that the United States and the Soviet Union each appear to be intent on reducing expectations of the forthcoming summit. Maybe they feel they have misjudged the intentions of the other party or the strength of their own hard-liners.

But ever-growing public opinion will keep reminding them of their solemn pronouncements six months ago: If they want nuclear arsenals to be reduced and ultimately to be eliminated they should not have any reason to continue to build up
their nuclear stockpiles. If a nuclear war must never be fought there is no reason for them to pursue the development of even more refined doomsday weapons by continuing nuclear testing.

It is hard to build up credibility and confidence; it is very easy to lose them. To retain credibility and confidence, the nuclear Powers must therefore show results, soon. It is easy to let opportunities pass by; they can be lost in negotiations and on nuclear testing-grounds. That is why the 22 March test by the United States triggered off such a strong reaction of sorrow and anger all over the world.

Opportunities can be lost in any of many local hotbeds of tension and conflict. Dialogue can be broken off, delayed or complicated by any international event. Even if all parties are intent on continuing a dialogue, that dialogue must be carefully sustained if it is to survive and develop.

In today's world, any military conflict can engage the nuclear Powers. Any war can eventually involve nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons can set off a chain reaction with catastrophic consequences for all States and peoples. Thus, in today's world, threats to security are global threats. Security must be built globally through the participation of all States.
The problems of the naval arms race also illustrate to a high degree the
global character of military developments and of the peaceful interests that are at
stake. More than two thirds of the earth's surface is sea. The sea is of vital
importance for communication, international trade and fishing. It provides an
increasing proportion of the world's energy supplies. The sea-bed is rich in
mineral resources. The sea is also the scene of an increasing militarization. The
main naval Powers maintain forces ready for rapid deployment in distant waters.
Every fourth nuclear weapon is earmarked for naval deployment. These weapons are
often carried on even routine patrols all over the world. Strategic submarines
play an essential role in policies of nuclear deterrence.

The danger of the early use of nuclear weapons is possibly nowhere greater
than at sea. Apart from the risk of accidents and miscalculation, it could be
claimed that political considerations restraining the use of nuclear weapons are
more likely to be overruled in this area. It is easy to imagine that in some
situations it could be tempting to use a single nuclear weapon to destroy an
aircraft carrier, for example, representing an enormous concentrated military
capacity, and that could be done without any civilian casualties. But what would
be the next step once the nuclear threshold had been overstepped?

Despite those and other risks, naval armaments have been much neglected in
disarmament negotiations since the Second World War. My Government has therefore
promoted initiatives aimed at reintroducing this topic in the international
disarmament debate. A first step in this direction was taken with the
Secretary-General's study on the naval arms race. That study, which was concluded
last year, was referred by an overwhelming majority by the General Assembly to the
Disarmament Commission for further consideration. The study will certainly be of
great assistance in laying a foundation for negotiations on naval disarmament.
As the study concluded, the proliferation of nuclear weapons at sea gives rise to mounting concern. The rapid technological development of such weapons makes effective naval disarmament measures ever more urgent. Time is now more than ripe for the problems of the naval arms race to be addressed in a multilateral forum. Our objective at this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission should be to identify possible measures of disarmament and confidence-building and to discuss appropriate forums for negotiations. The United Nations study listed a wide range of possible measures. Some are general in character; others are applied to specific weapons systems or in specific geographical areas. Some measures may be subject to multilateral negotiations; others could be dealt with effectively in negotiations between the major nuclear Powers.

I do not intend at this stage to present any formal list of proposals that should be the subject of negotiation. I shall, however, mention a few main issues which, in my delegation's opinion, ought to be considered.

All types of sea-borne nuclear missiles should be subject to limitation. Sea-based cruise missiles of longer range should be banned before they are produced in larger numbers. This matter should be taken up as an integral part of bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Tactical nuclear weapons at sea should be brought ashore. Such weapons on routine patrols are a source of particular concern. The deployment of tactical nuclear weapons at sea should be limited, and restraints should be negotiated on navigation with such weapons on board. This would be a natural topic for consideration in bilateral negotiations and at the Conference on Disarmament as well. In this context mention must be made of the policy of nuclear Powers neither to confirm nor deny the presence of nuclear weapons aboard any particular ship at any particular time. As I have pointed out before, this is a confidence-blocking practice, and it should be abandoned. It could be added that the principle of
neither confirming nor denying may very well be losing its military rationale. The nuclear powers themselves, at least, are in all probability fairly capable today of determining whether or not a vessel is carrying nuclear weapons.

The legitimate claims of coastal States for reasonable seaboard security must be confirmed. Systems of confidence-building measures should be applied to relevant sea areas. Such measures can be discussed in a number of forums. In many cases, the Conference on Disarmament would be appropriate for negotiating general rules of global application. As far as the European region is concerned, the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which is currently taking place at Stockholm, offers another possibility.

The inalienable right of all States to use the freedom of the seas should not be infringed upon by military activities. With the Convention on the Law of the Sea as a basis, international law could be evolved to promote this aim. The relevant principles could be discussed, for instance, in the Conference on Disarmament.

The current laws of sea warfare should be modernized. Most of the treaty law that regulates naval warfare dates back many years. It could be updated by selecting certain issues of humanitarian interest and by adopting additional protocols. To take an example, the 1907 Hague Convention on Automatic Submarine Contact Mines is today of limited value, though it contains some useful elements. A possible future protocol on sea mines could widen the prohibition to cover more modern types of mines as well.

Another measure that could perhaps be made the subject of discussion in the Conference on Disarmament in the near future is a multilateral treaty corresponding to the United States-Soviet Agreement on the prevention of incidents on and over the high seas. Such a relatively easy step would be in the obvious interest of all naval States.
Due consideration should also be given to other measures suggested in the Secretary-General's study, such as continued negotiations for the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed and giving full effect to the nuclear-weapon-free régime of the Antarctic region. Another possibility that is mentioned in the study is the holding of a United Nations conference on security in the maritime environment.

We are at the beginning of an important discussion. My delegation expects all to assist in providing the best possible conditions for a free, open and deep consideration of this main item. Censorship breeds neither confidence nor security. This is true in domestic politics as well as in international co-operation. Fruitful discussions on the naval arms race at this and, if necessary, the next session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission should provide us with a solid background for the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That third special session ought, in my opinion, to reach agreement on a set of general guidelines, including the proper forums, for the further work for disarmament and confidence-building at sea.

The situation in southern Africa is indeed a threat to international peace and security. It is, unfortunately, one of the several situations in which regional violence and terror may escalate, with global consequences. The despicable system of apartheid in South Africa and the illegal occupation of Namibia have been major concerns of the international community for decades now. Since last year the situation has deteriorated further. The Pretoria régime has increased both repression at home and threats and violence against neighbouring States. Time is fast running out for a peaceful solution. That situation adds to our deep concern that South Africa, which is not a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and whose nuclear facilities are unsafeguarded, might acquire nuclear weapons. My Government continues resolutely to oppose any form of nuclear collaboration with South Africa. We urge all States to do likewise.
(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The issue of the nuclear capability of South Africa has now been discussed for a number of years in this forum. The urgency of this crucial issue makes it even more essential to reach a consensus during this year's session.

The continuous destabilizing development of military technology and doctrine must be halted. This development decreases warning-times, increases pressure and tension in a time of crisis and deprives political decision-makers of their capacity to act as such. It is the very opposite of what we wish to achieve with confidence-building measures.

In Europe - the most heavily armed of all the continents - confidence-building measures have now been discussed for two years at the Stockholm Conference. The general purpose of the measures discussed is to increase the predictability of military activities, to decrease the risk of surprise military attacks and to restrict the role of military force in Europe. Given the political will of all participating States, I am optimistic about the possibilities of the Conference to arrive at an agreement which will promote these objectives.

The future European process may also benefit from ideas presented for instance here in the Disarmament Commission. This item on the agenda gives us every opportunity to consider confidence-building measures in the broad sense of the word, not excluding important nuclear aspects. Such measures deserve prominence, even if they obviously cannot be a substitute for disarmament measures as such.

Sweden welcomes the continued attention in the Disarmament Commission given to the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Such a discussion could serve to prepare a more thorough evaluation at the third special session on disarmament.
The disarmament machinery, which was established at the first special session on disarmament, and after the second special session, has worked well. Institutional reforms have improved the capacity of the United Nations to meet the need of all States to participate directly in efforts to build security through disarmament.

The Disarmament Commission has its own role in the United Nations disarmament machinery. It provides a forum where all Members of the Organization can state their views. We should do our utmost to reach agreements on at least some of the important items being considered and, in this way, make room for new questions.

The Conference on Disarmament, as a negotiating forum, should be allowed to negotiate. In the same way, the Disarmament Commission, as a deliberative forum, should be allowed to deliberate.

The agenda before us is indeed diverse. It reflects the complexity of today's discussion on disarmament. The arms race transcends all geographical boundaries - it moves into outer space and onto the oceans. The arms race casts its shadow on political relations between the major world Powers. It exacerbates local and regional conflicts, making some of them even more explosive threats to world peace. It steals precious resources urgently needed for development purposes.

In recent months, the world has experienced disappointments and setbacks; but it has not seen any reason to despair. Opportunities have been lost, but they can still be regained. It is certainly not too late - yet.

Progress can be made in multilateral disarmament forums and in crucial nuclear negotiations. Progress can be made if the two major nuclear Powers start implementing their November statement.

Their world is also ours.
We do not plead, but demand, that they go from peaceful words to peaceful action: allow for progress in multilateral negotiations - in Geneva, in Stockholm and in Vienna; stop their nuclear testing; cut their nuclear arsenals; stop proliferating their instruments of death - into outer space and onto the oceans!

Mr. RAMAKER (Netherlands): Before speaking on behalf of the 12 States members of the European Community I wish, Sir, to express the satisfaction of my delegation with your assumption of the chairmanship of the Commission. Your experience in this body and in other multilateral disarmament forums is well known to all of us. My delegation has full confidence in your ability to steer our work in the coming weeks. We shall assist you in this task in whatever way we can.

My delegation would be grateful to the delegation of Pakistan if it could convey to Ambassador Ahmad of Pakistan our gratitude for the outstanding work he did in guiding last year's session of the Disarmament Commission.

As I just said, today I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the European Community, to which, as representatives know, Spain and Portugal have acceded since our session last year.

The 12 countries on whose behalf I speak firmly believe in the central and indispensable role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. For overall consideration of activities in the field of disarmament the United Nations, because of its universality, provides the most appropriate forum. Within the United Nations context the Disarmament Commission derives its usefulness primarily from its potential to concentrate on a limited number of complex problems. It follows from this, _inter alia_, that the agenda of the Disarmament Commission must not be too long but that, on the other hand, there must be sufficient scope for discussion of new subjects, should this become necessary.
The fortieth anniversary celebrations and the serious financial crisis which followed hard on their heels have made it all the more necessary to reflect, in this International Year of Peace, on the United Nations role in the field of disarmament. The original Cameroonian paper introducing the subject entitled, "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament", states that there is no other field in which the absence of significant progress has so greatly affected the credibility of the United Nations and its very raison d'être. The Twelve are of the opinion that one should not overlook the important disarmament treaties for whose genesis the United Nations has provided a fertile breeding ground. It is true, however, that significant progress in disarmament negotiations has been painfully slow in recent years.

The Twelve agree with the Cameroonian diagnosis that the United Nations efforts in the field of disarmament could be more productive if they took:

"sufficient account of contemporary world realities and concentrated more on those initiatives and proposals which offered the greatest chances of agreement among States."

Otherwise, proposals will tend

"to encourage endless debate, creating an atmosphere which is hardly conducive to constructive dialogue and co-operation". (A/CN.10/71, para. 10)

That document rightly observes that:

"The agenda of the current multilateral negotiations is far too broad and complex". (para. 11)

Unfortunately, and ironically, our deliberations last year has resulted in a list of "topics for appropriate recommendations" that seems so broad and so long that in-depth consideration and elaboration of the issues involved will not be possible. We hope that this year's session can identify a number of key questions
regarding the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The timely and salutary analysis and the recommendations contained in document A/CN.10/71 provide an excellent starting-point for our efforts to streamline our work, as do the responses to resolution 39/151 G.
For the Twelve, one of the key questions is, in the words of resolution 40/152 K, adopted by consensus, "how the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament can be further improved". It is the view of the Twelve that in recent years United Nations studies have produced important contributions to the multilateral disarmament debate and that there is a number of issues future studies could usefully clarify. It has been suggested that the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies could play a central role in the process - something which is necessary in the light of the financial difficulties of the United Nations - of rationalizing and co-ordinating the conduct of studies. This might, however, have disadvantages as well. The Twelve believe that it is timely for the United Nations Disarmament Commission to discuss this subject, to the benefit of forthcoming sessions of the General Assembly and the next special session on disarmament.

Efforts to promote the reduction of military budgets have been on our agenda for some considerable time. Over the years the Twelve have actively participated in the United Nations work on this subject. Member States of the European Community submit annual figures on their military budgets, as requested by the General Assembly. The Twelve have just responded to the request contained in resolution 40/91 B to present their views on the Study of the Group of Experts on the Reduction of Military Budgets (A/40/421). They support the Secretary-General in his task of exploring further the recommendations and conclusions of the study.

Our first and foremost objective should be, however, to gain sufficient acceptance for the existing instruments, thus promoting participation by an increasing number of States and thereby facilitating the transparency of information on military expenditures. The General Assembly has requested the United Nations Disarmament Commission to finalize the principles that should govern the actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military
expenditures. The Twelve hope that agreement on these principles will be possible and that finalization of the principles can be achieved.

Tension and violence continue in South Africa. Certain steps have been taken towards a reform of the apartheid system, but the Twelve consider them insufficient. They are determined to contribute to the abolition of apartheid and have taken a number of measures, including a prohibition on all new collaboration in the nuclear sector. This illustrates once more our determination to bring about fundamental changes in the policy of apartheid. The Twelve consider it important to note that we probably all agree on the basic issue, namely, the importance of the establishment of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, as envisaged in the Declaration of African Heads of State in 1964, and the rejection of any contribution to the development of a South African nuclear explosive capability. Given this basic agreement it must be possible, with sufficient flexibility, to draft consensus conclusions from our debate.

It has already been observed that naval arms limitation and related disarmament efforts have not so far received much consideration in the multilateral disarmament context. Therefore, the completion of the United Nations study on the naval arms race, contained in document A/40/535, has generally been considered a welcome development. It has been recognized that, while current naval developments possess certain characteristics of their own, the subject should not be considered without reference to the overall context of halting and reversing the arms race in general.

A further clarification of the issues involved might therefore be useful and necessary during the days ahead. The forthcoming debate on the subject can perhaps build as much as possible on what has been achieved so far by the study. In this respect it might be advisable to concentrate on measures of restraint and on confidence-building measures.
Confidence-building measures in general will be discussed under agenda item 8, and this important area will be a subject for discussion not only here in New York but also, in a somewhat different context, in Stockholm. The Twelve will seek constructively to achieve progress on the basis of the document that has seen the light of day thank in no small measure to your own efforts, Mr. Chairman. It does not seem, however, that points of view have changed over the last two years. In view of the situation it seems appropriate that we have not discussed confidence-building measures every year but only in alternate years. This procedure could be applied to other subjects as well.

We hope that your energetic and stimulating approach, Sir, will indeed bear fruit in the three weeks allotted to us, and that in this way the United Nations Disarmament Commission can be given new momentum.

Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland): At the outset let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Commission. I am confident that under your guidance the Commission will be able to consider constructively the various items included on this session's agenda and to make further positive recommendations on them to the General Assembly.

In your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned that this year had been proclaimed by the General Assembly the International Year of Peace. For more than 40 years now my country has been actively involved in efforts aimed at creating a broadly conceived infrastructure of international peace, security and co-operation. I shall not take up the Commission's time to recall all those efforts, but I wish to express the moral satisfaction that this International Year of Peace was inaugurated last January in Warsaw by the International Congress of Intellectuals for a Peaceful Future of the World. In their message the participants have stressed that:
"Weapons are not safeguards for the future... lasting peace depends on the renunciation of the use of force in international relations and the peaceful resolution of all conflicts, on confidence-building measures and détente, on disarmament. Eliminating the threat of war is the most urgent task of our times."

If we succeed in making further progress in the work of our Commission, this will be our contribution to the goals of the International Year of Peace.

We in Poland are deeply convinced that peace in Europe and all over the world can be achieved only by détente, disarmament, increased confidence and development of international co-operation. That is why we welcomed with hope and great expectations, first, the renewed dialogue between the two greatest Powers - the Soviet Union and the United States - followed by the summit meeting in November last year between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan with the resulting "spirit of Geneva".

At the same time, we have witnessed a great deal of political good will on the part of the Soviet Union. The most convincing example was the realistic programme for comprehensive nuclear disarmament before the year 2000 presented on 15 January.
Earlier the Soviet Union unilaterally, setting an example, had introduced a moratorium on nuclear tests. It had even expressed its readiness never to resume them in case the United States followed its example. Unfortunately the United States did not do so and, although the Soviet Union extended its moratorium several times, all together for eight months, the United States, despite strong appeals by the international community - among them the appeal of the representatives of the five continents - resumed its nuclear testing in Nevada, seriously compromising chances for improving prospects for a better climate in international relations. It even attempted to justify the continuation of such tests for "security reasons". In fact this is just a further step towards raising the already too dangerous level of the arms race - a further step in attempts to extend the arms race into outer space. Expressing Poland's concern over such a prospect, the head of the Polish delegation to the fortieth session of the General Assembly, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, proposed that a group of eminent international experts, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, undertake a study on the diverse consequences of the militarization of outer space.

A few days ago General Secretary Gorbachev again expressed readiness to renew the moratorium if the United States would halt its nuclear testing. We hope that this time a positive response will follow.

Among the important Soviet initiatives is also that of the recent formulation of basic principles for the establishment of a comprehensive international security system embracing the military, political, economic and humanitarian spheres.

Poland is deeply convinced that the prevention of nuclear war is the most urgent and important problem facing mankind at present. This is also why our Commission attaches so much importance to it. The Polish Government believes that practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war called for in subsequent
Mr. Noworyta, Poland

General Assembly resolutions should include, inter alia, first, the commitment of all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union and China have already made such a commitment and should be followed by the other nuclear Powers; secondly, a freeze by all nuclear-weapon Powers on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons and on the production of fissionable materials for military purposes; thirdly, a moratorium on all nuclear testing; fourthly, the prevention of the militarization of outer space.

These measures should be supplemented by additional steps, such as further consolidation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, conclusion of a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force and maintenance of peaceful relations between the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as working out binding norms regulating relations between nuclear Powers.

Of particular significance are the recent proposals of the Soviet Union for a substantial reduction of conventional armaments and tactical aircraft in Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals, with verification, including on-site inspection, and the elimination of chemical weapons. We are deeply convinced that they constitute a sound basis for a mutually acceptable solution.

Poland has always favoured initiatives aimed at a gradual reduction of the military budgets of all States, in particular of all nuclear-weapon Powers and other militarily significant States. In this connection, it seems to us that a mutual non-increase of the military budgets of the USSR and the United States, starting with the next fiscal year, would be an effective measure for limiting the arms race in all its aspects.

It is regrettable that so far the Commission has been unable to adopt recommendations on the issue of the nuclear capability of South Africa. My delegation will support the African countries on this issue and will favour
resolve measures by the international community against the Pretoria régime, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

Poland highly appreciates the overall role and efforts of the United Nations in the realm of disarmament. Indeed, in order to ensure and consolidate international peace and security the United Nations must direct the total impact of its authority and dedication to the cause of disarmament.

Poland proceeds from the assumption that the halting of the naval arms race and, in the longer perspective, specific disarmament measures in that field would constitute a major contribution to the consolidation of international peace and security. A commendable effort has been made by the authors of the study before us.

Finally let me stress that Poland's active participation in all activities of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe reflects our attitude towards European affairs. Within that process, the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and on Disarmament in Europe plays an extremely important part. For that endeavour to succeed, political good will and a spirit of compromise is essential. Poland's active involvement in that process has been marked from the very beginning by such an approach.

On this and all the other topics before us in the Commission's agenda, my delegation is ready to lend its efforts and active participation to assure concrete progress at this session.

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): It is a pleasure, Sir, to work under your chairmanship. You are well known in these quarters for your steady guiding hand, which we need, and for your vast knowledge of the issues under consideration in this Commission.
Since the last session of the Commission, the world has not become safer. Nevertheless, the voice of reason calling for co-operation and understanding is becoming stronger.

Two super-Powers are conducting dialogue and negotiations on nuclear and outer space weapons. Significant proposals have been submitted with the aim of launching and speeding up negotiations on measures for halting the nuclear-arms race and for disarmament.

At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, efforts are being made to achieve agreement on some important disarmament issues. A step forward was taken towards the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. An agreement was reached on the continuation of negotiations on halting the spread of the arms race into outer space.

At the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures in Europe, a process of exceptional political importance is under way, a process with implications reaching beyond the European continent. The last round of negotiations in Stockholm proves that there are grounds for optimism. The future of Europe can be ensured only by agreements and by promotion of co-operation among the peoples on the continent.
There are also other examples testifying that the present world of interdependence cannot exist without co-operation, dialogue and negotiations. Nevertheless, international developments point to the need for more resolute steps to be taken towards disarmament and genuine security, equal for all.

The source of world problems is to be found in attempts to legalize the policy of force, interference and intervention as the means for lording over, and exploitation of, the weaker ones. The arms race, as an expression of those policies, continues, and there are signs that outer space will not be spared from it either.

East-West relations are based on an unstable balance of force, and range from cold war to a geographically and substantially limited détente.

In addition to the divisions and confrontations between East and West, the world is ever more dramatically facing a gap between North and South, a historically older and deeper phenomenon, and potentially longer-term. It is an illusion to believe that in the growing chasm between North and South there is less risk than in the arms race. The deepening of the crisis of international economic relations affects all countries, and particularly the developing countries, threatening the stability of the world at large.

It is of particular concern that the non-aligned countries, their internal stability, sovereignty and independence, are more and more frequently the target area of the policy of force. Almost half the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries are exposed to ruthless pressures and direct or indirect bloc confrontation in various parts of the world.

It is becoming ever more evident that the bloc concept of security, narrowly conceived and contrary to the determination of an overwhelming majority of
countries, cannot be sustained. Bloc divisions mean an aggressive defence of the narrow interests of groups of countries. Traditional perceptions of military force, as the main guarantee for the implementation of political goals, have become incompatible with new processes in international relations.

Security can be enhanced if it becomes the cause of all, if domination is suppressed and disarmament is launched, and if it provides for more just international relations between States.

At the recent Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New Delhi, India, the participants underlined that it was necessary to eliminate structures of domination, discrimination, exploitation and inequality, as well as to continue efforts aimed at establishing a new system of international relations based on independence, equality, justice and co-operation between States.

There has been an emergency involving radiation in recent days. We regret the casualties and appreciate the efforts made to mitigate the consequences. It has brought home to all of us the fact that we live in a nuclear era, how small the planet is and how interdependent we are in many cases as well as in the case of radiation. Lessons are to be drawn from it as to the effects and consequences of nuclear energy out of control.

Last week's emergency has a number of messages. First and foremost, the statements that fears of nuclear weapons are unfounded are utterly irresponsible. No particular imagination is needed to comprehend what would happen to humanity and its living environment after the use of just a single warhead or a fraction of the existing nuclear arsenals.
It is high time to cease all nuclear-weapon tests. That would be the first step in the right direction, and would greatly affect the arms race. Assertions about the absence of means of verification should not be used as an excuse for the further development and refinement of nuclear weapons. It is widely recognized that there is no sound argument against the adoption of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. So-called technical obstacles have been ruled out for years. In this respect, particular attention should be given to the offer made by the leaders of the five-continent peace initiative to the two super-Powers.

It is high time to comprehend how profoundly irrelevant is the debate over whether a nuclear war can be won. It is high time, also, that production of nuclear material for weapons ceased and nuclear weapons were eliminated.

The emergency is further proof of how right are those that have for years been calling for nuclear disarmament. The situation should give strength to the demands for nuclear disarmament launched by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the peace movements, the Greens and other environmentalists, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, non-governmental organizations for disarmament and all those millions of people who find the proposals and appeals by the non-aligned countries to be in the best interest of humanity. Non-aligned and mass movements should apply the power of pressure, pressure without let-up, in the hope that those that are evading nuclear disarmament will finally see the light.

Finally, the United Nations and the specialized agencies, particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency, should be put to immediate use in case of emergency. Those that do not like the United Nations anyway claim that the United Nations cannot be used in such cases. We think it can and should be used.
The Commission should encourage the taking of faster and more resolute steps in order to halt the arms race, the nuclear arms race in particular. The membership of the Commission testifies that disarmament is not the exclusive subject-matter of a few powerful States. The Commission is an expression of the need to solve acute international problems on an equal footing in multilateral forums, above all in the United Nations.

The task and the role of the Commission have today become even more significant, because the launching of disarmament is more needed than ever. Over the seven years of its work, the Commission has dealt with numerous issues, which, inter alia, ensue from the complex nature of the problems it deals with. All hopes invested in the Commission have not yet been fulfilled, but some results have been accomplished in it, and they must not be ignored.
The Commission has contributed to the clarification of some issues in the fields of nuclear disarmament, common security and confidence-building measures. It has successfully contributed to a better knowledge of the nuclear capability of South Africa and has shed light on numerous aspects of that serious threat to peace in Africa and beyond.

The Commission has considered other issues as well, and has reaffirmed itself as a body that significantly contributes to the better and more substantial dissemination of information on the gravity and importance of disarmament issues.

At this session we shall consider several questions on which, if at least some goodwill is displayed, we should be able to adopt joint recommendations.

The draft recommendations on the issues of nuclear disarmament, the prevention of nuclear war and general approaches to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament are still before us. However, it should be stressed that the generally accepted notion that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought should be followed by concrete measures for the elimination of the instruments of nuclear war. In that sense the Commission can make significant recommendations and contribute to the launching of new negotiations as well as to the more effective conduct of the existing negotiations on nuclear weapons. The common denominator of these issues is contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and it should be used as the foundation for decisive international action for disarmament.

For years the Commission has not been able to adopt recommendations regarding the nuclear capability of South Africa. This is regrettable. The racist Pretoria régime threatens the security of Africa and the world at large. The only appropriate answer to the aggressive policy of the racist régime in South Africa is strong condemnation and the imposition of sanctions in accordance with the Charter
of the United Nations and the relevant decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly.

The issue of the naval arms race has become even more important in the light of recent events in the Mediterranean. They constitute an example of the ruthless use of force against a non-aligned country and fully reflect the instability of international security. These events reinforce our conviction that international disputes cannot be solved by force, all the more so since every armed conflict can easily run out of control and develop into a conflagration with unforeseen, global consequences.

At the recent Ministerial Meeting of Non-Aligned Countries in New Delhi, the Ministers emphasized that no motive or pretext can justify the use of force or interference in the internal affairs of Mediterranean countries. The Ministers reiterated the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and its support for the transformation of that region into one of peace, security and co-operation, free from confrontation and conflict.

The strengthening of security in the Mediterranean as well as in other seas and oceans can be achieved only by means of disengagement of foreign military forces, namely by the cessation of military activities and the gradual limitation, reduction and eventual complete withdrawal of all the military fleets of big Powers from those areas.

Yugoslavia attaches great significance to the adoption of confidence-building measures in Europe as well as in other regions of the world. Together with other neutral and non-aligned countries, it contributes to the efforts made at the Stockholm Conference aimed at promoting security and co-operation in Europe and beyond.
However, let me point out that, despite their significance, confidence-building measures cannot be replaced or serve as a precondition for disarmament measures.

Finally, in spite of a difference in approach to the issue of the reduction of the military budgets of States, we expect that this time the Commission will be able to complete consideration of this issue and adopt recommendations and conclusions.

Let me end with the statement that the vision of peace and general security for all countries and peoples, regardless of their size, wealth or power, is attainable, but that that depends on our resolve to halt the arms race. This session of the Commission is indeed an opportunity to achieve progress in that regard.

Mr. MAKSIMOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the important and responsible post of Chairman of the present session of the Commission on Disarmament. Our delegation also wishes to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Allow me also to express the hope that the work at this session of the Disarmament Commission will be successful and fruitful.

At the present session the United Nations Disarmament Commission is faced with responsible tasks. Their acute nature results from the period through which mankind is now living. As the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, recently emphasized,
"Civilization is at a turning-point in its development, and the time has come for all who are able to reason responsibly and soundly to take a clear and unambiguous stand regardless of their ideological and political differences. We must put into motion machinery for the self-preservation of mankind. Time cannot be lost."

The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic believes that to reaffirm and strengthen new approaches in this regard the United Nations Disarmament Commission must do a great deal as a consultative body in the disarmament machinery. That would be in keeping with its mandate set forth in the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly's first special session on disarmament.

Opportunities for the substantive revitalization of its work as a whole and of progress on each of its agenda items do exist. Those possibilities would be strengthened and broadened even more significantly by the proposals of the socialist States put forward during the year that has elapsed since the last session of the Commission. First and foremost, I am speaking of the programme for the full elimination of nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction by the end of the present century, put forward by the Soviet Union in January last. It is to be found in document A/41/97.
The proposed programme represents an extremely important instrument for progress on the substance of item 4 of the Commission's agenda. Very specific measures on the limitation of the nuclear-arms race and the elimination of nuclear weapons within a clearly stated time frame and on the basis of the principles of equality and equal security: that is the essence of the nuclear - or rather anti-nuclear - aspect of the programme. It provides for such measures as a ban on nuclear-weapon tests, the elimination by the United States and the USSR of medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and a freeze on the nuclear arsenals of the other two European nuclear Powers, a 50-per-cent reduction in the nuclear weapons of the USSR and the United States which can reach each other's territory, the inclusion of other nuclear-weapon States in the nuclear disarmament process, and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere and the adoption of measures to prevent their reappearance.

It should be stressed moreover that all those measures are unambiguously real in nature - they concern, so to speak, physical disarmament - and are not rhetorical or palliative measures. To a great extent, the steps proposed in the programme take account of the proposals of other countries, first of all the non-aligned States, some of which are reflected in the formulations considered by the contact group on this item. All these measures could serve as an appropriate basis for recommendations of the Disarmament Commission.

It is natural that a radical reduction in strategic nuclear weapons by the USSR and the United States can be possible only if both parties renounce the development, manufacture and testing of space weapons. Also necessary is a ban on the development of non-nuclear weapons based on new principles of physics with destructive capabilities approaching those of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction.
It is necessary that chemical weapons be eliminated. Important steps towards that goal are set out in the proposed programme.

The link between nuclear and conventional disarmament highlighted in agenda item 4 is clearly reflected in the Soviet Union's new proposals. Agreements on significant reductions in all categories of ground forces and tactical aircraft of European States on territory from the Atlantic to the Urals and of corresponding United States and Canadian forces in Europe would lend a significantly comprehensive character to the disarmament process, thus enhancing the security of all the States of the region. Moreover, the military formations and units thus reduced would not be redeployed to other areas; they would be disbanded, and their weapons destroyed or stockpiled on national territory. Along with conventional weapons, operational and tactical nuclear weapons would be reduced as well. That proposal is a clear answer to those who speculate on concerns about the conventional weapons aspect of the general balance of forces.

An important integral part of these efforts to eliminate the threat of war is necessarily the curbing of the naval arms race. For example, there absolutely must be negotiations in the Disarmament Commission on the limitation and reduction of naval weapons and on the extension of confidence-building measures to the world's seas and oceans. The magnitude of the threat to the cause of peace posed by the military naval factor was demonstrated unequivocally by the acts of aggression carried out by the United States against independent Libya, a State Member of the United Nations. The Byelorussian SSR takes this opportunity once again to express its categorical condemnation of that aggression. The limitation and reduction of the threat from the seas consistently sought by the socialist countries would significantly strengthen the security of coastal States, a significant number of which are non-aligned or developing countries.
Our delegation hopes that at the present session of the Disarmament Commission, the overtly negative approach of a certain group of countries to the resolution of this problem will change, opening the way to the formulation of concrete recommendations on appropriate negotiations.

The time has long been ripe for clear recommendations on the reduction of military budgets. Current difficulties in this area can be overcome through such steps as the reduction of military budgets by a specific sum or the declaration of a specific sum for reductions of military expenditures accompanied by agreements on the limitation and reduction of weapons.

Also, confidence must become an inseparable element in relations among States. A range of confidence-building measures, including broad measures in the political, international law and military technology areas, would significantly improve the situation in many regions of the world and would promote the consolidation of general security.

A grave threat to that security is posed by the danger of the expansion of nuclear weapons. Specifically, the nuclear ambitions of South Africa threaten not only neighbouring African States but world peace as well. There is genuine concern at reports on the military nature of the nuclear collaboration between South Africa and the United States and Israel. A group of countries has blocked the elaboration of specific recommendations by the Commission on the nuclear capability of South Africa, and this is at variance with their avowed dedication to strengthening security throughout the world and their negative attitude towards the odious apartheid régime.

If the Commission were to promote the adoption of concrete measures in all these areas, it would be making its most important contribution to strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The United Nations must become a force for the generation of efforts in this field on which security
and the destiny of mankind depend. There can be no substitute here for meaningful measures and actions to promote disarmament, certainly not wasting efforts in a game of bureaucratic structuring and restructuring.

The peaceful future of the world can be ensured only by the establishment of a comprehensive system of international security. The basis for such a system as proposed by the USSR in document A/41/185 includes political, military, economic and humanitarian measures, and it should serve as the point of departure for an international dialogue. The objective of a comprehensive system of international security is the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the prevention of another world war and the creation of a range of measures to build confidence among nations and co-operation in the dissemination of the ideas of peace, disarmament and world security.
Joint efforts are required to achieve stable progress in those areas. In this connection, the United Nations Disarmament Commission can make its contribution.

The current year marks the forty-fifth anniversary of the day Fascist Germany attacked the Soviet Union. The Byelorussian people, who, together with other peoples of the USSR, participated courageously in the struggle for victory from the first day of the war, has known all the disasters and horrors of war. We know the price of peace, and we struggle for it persistently. Our delegation will make every effort possible to ensure that this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will be successful, and to that end we shall co-operate with all interested delegations.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I should like, at the outset, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on having assumed your function to preside over our Commission. We know your long experience and your determination to make effective progress in disarmament matters.

The Disarmament Commission is a deliberative body. It is not a negotiating body, like the Conference on Disarmament, but a deliberative body. It was created for the purpose of dealing with the question of disarmament.

However, I wish to bring to the Commission's notice that the Charter itself speaks about disarmament and indicates who should deal with the question. Article 11 notes that the General Assembly "may" consider the principles governing disarmament, and so on, and, of course, this Commission is a branch of the General Assembly. However, when the Charter uses the word "shall", it does so in Article 26, which calls upon the Security Council to deal with the question of disarmament.

As far as I know, the Security Council has not so far dealt with the problem of disarmament. Although the Charter says that the General Assembly - and hence
the Commission - "may" deal with disarmament, it stipulates that the Security Council "shall" do so; and yet the Council had not dealt with any disarmament question.

I emphasize the importance of the Security Council's dealing with disarmament for the simple reason that the Security Council does not operate by consensus, as does the Commission or any other, in which, if there is no consensus, no result is possible. The Security Council works through the vote, and that vote can be blocked by the vital power of the veto. All well and good, but if the Security Council were to deal with disarmament as it should under the Charter, then, of course, it would be very difficult to veto again and again any measure dealing with disarmament. Anyone who vetoed would be shown to be against disarmament, whereas in the Commission, or any other Committee dealing with disarmament, results must be achieved by consensus and no one knows who has put a stop to something.

Therefore, it is very important that Article 26 of the Charter be implemented. It clearly states that the Security Council "shall be responsible" for disarmament. I wanted to bring this to the notice of the Commission as a deliberative body.

Last year and the year before, I submitted draft resolutions that were adopted by an overwhelming majority, without a vote being cast against, calling for the Security Council to deal with the question of disarmament in accordance with Article 26 of the Charter. Last year, draft resolution A/C.1/40/L.9 was adopted by the First Committee on 1 November 1985 and, as resolution 40/151 A, by the General Assembly on 16 December 1985. That resolution referred to General Assembly resolution 39/63 K of 12 December 1984, which, inter alia,

"Calls upon the Security Council to hold a series of meetings devoted to the consideration of the escalating arms race ... with a view to ... bringing it to a halt".

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)
In view of the fact that the Security Council had not as yet complied with it, resolution 40/151 A called for the implementation of resolution 39/63 K of 1984. Now it is 1986, and nothing has been done by the Security Council.

The purpose of my statement today, therefore, is to emphasize the need for the Security Council to comply with those 1984 and 1985 resolutions of the General Assembly which call upon it, and particularly its permanent members, to initiate due procedures in conformity with the provisions of the resolutions and to proceed to adopt measures for the regulation of armaments in accordance with the Charter.

I repeat: Article 26 of the Charter must be applied. Two resolutions have been overwhelmingly adopted by the General Assembly calling upon the Security Council to proceed to deal with the question of disarmament. Yet, as far as I know, there has been no effort made by the Security Council to deal with that question. The purpose of my statement is to bring to the notice of this deliberative body, the Disarmament Commission, the fact that this question of disarmament should be considered by the Security Council in accordance with Article 26 of the Charter, which clearly states that it "shall" do so.

The CHAIRMAN: The representative of Ecuador, Vice-Chairman of the Commission, has asked to make a statement, and I now call upon him.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to salute you, Sir, in your exercise of your functions as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. You are indeed a guarantee for the success of our continued and effective efforts here.

I should like to thank the Group of Latin American States for the support they lent me and for having put forward my name for the office of Vice-Chairman. I should also like to thank in particular Mrs. Graciela Uribe de Lozano of Colombia, who, with her characteristic kindness, praised my election in such generous terms.
(Mr. Albornoz, Ecuador)

I should like to say that I will do my utmost to co-operate in the work of the Commission, for here we are dealing with the survival of mankind, a subject that is a primary responsibility of the United Nations, which itself is a creation based on a faith in the capabilities of man peacefully to settle disputes and achieve development, which must be the major commitment underlying all of our activities.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.