DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 May 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany)

later: Mr. GYI (Vice-Chairman) (Burma)

later: Mr. WEGENER (Chairman) (Federal Republic of Germany)

- Organization of work
- General exchange of views (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We discussed the organization of work yesterday in the Committee of the Whole. Let me outline the arrangements made there, which I wish to formalize at this meeting.

On item 5 (a) and (b), regarding the reduction of military budgets, the Committee of the Whole agreed to the establishment of a working group — to be known as Working Group I — under the Chairmanship of Mr. Gheorghe Tinca of Romania.

On agenda item 7, regarding the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, the Committee of the Whole agreed to establish a working group, henceforth to be referred to as Working Group II, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Paul Bamela Engo of Cameroon.

With regard to agenda item 6, on the question of South Africa’s nuclear capability, the Committee of the Whole agreed to establish a working group on the understanding that its chairman would be elected at a later stage.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to confirm those decisions.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: For information, and to place this on the record, I should like to reiterate that, with regard to item 4 (a) and (b), concerning the overriding questions of disarmament, concerning both the nuclear and the conventional arms race, the Committee of the Whole established a Contact Group under the chairmanship of Ambassador Miguel Albornoz of Ecuador, Vice-Chairman of the Commission, to consider the items and report back to the Committee of the Whole.
With regard to item 9, on confidence-building measures, the Committee of the Whole approved the arrangement under which the Chairman of the Commission would undertake informal consultations until such an appropriate time as a consensus would emerge on a text, or be in sight, and justify the establishment of a more formal body.

Regarding agenda item 8, I am still conducting intensive consultations with all delegations concerned with a view to reaching an acceptable formula for the consideration of the item. I hope such efforts will bear fruit shortly so that all items can be subject to substantive consideration very soon.

Regarding item 8, it is my intention to reach a decision not later than the end of this week.

The Secretariat will distribute a timetable for the three remaining days of this week in the course of today's meetings, and all representatives should be aware that as of tomorrow morning four working organs - the two Working Groups, the Contact Group and the consultations on confidence-building measures - will commence to function. In that timetable we shall pair two of these subjects regularly, so that colleagues dealing with a particular subject do not have to switch subjects because of an eventual simultaneity of scheduled meetings. Members will see that timetable today, and they are encouraged to be well prepared for the various meetings that will commence tomorrow.

All the sub-organs of the Commission should terminate their work by Friday, 23 May. However, should the Assembly - and it is still possible - decide to shorten the duration of the session by one week, which would be in addition to the shortening we have already undertaken to provide, then we should have to advance the final date of the Commission's work by one or two days, in time to adopt the
Commission's report on Friday, 23 May, which would then be the final day. So there is some flexibility that we must preserve for the working stage, and I would exhort the Chairmen of the working organs and delegations to work swiftly so that their work will not be cut short by the vicissitudes of the calendar.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): At the very outset I should like on behalf of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and to wish you every success in guiding the work of this body.

We also convey our congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau of the Commission and assure them of our close co-operation.

This year, the International Year of Peace, the Disarmament Commission is in particular faced with the task of contributing to a greater extent to promoting disarmament and international security. My delegation is deeply committed to this concern. The United Nations Year of Peace observed in 1986 should be followed by years of peace for all coming generations. This was the orientation of the recently held Eleventh Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and is the guide-line for the work of my delegation.

As was stated at the Party Congress, the international situation has been further aggravated by the policy of arms build-up and confrontation pursued by influential imperialist circles of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In view of the course of events threatening the very existence of mankind, the German Democratic Republic has made it its overriding concern to contribute through its activities to lessening the danger of war. As has been stated by General Secretary Erich Honecker,
"Through its policy of co-operation and businesslike dialogue aimed at tangible results, the German Democratic Republic will continue to work for the normalization of the international situation and a return to détente."

What is needed now, after the first summit meeting between General Secretary Gorbachev and President Reagan, is deeds in order to do justice to what has been termed the spirit of Geneva.

What is required in this context is a genuine resolve not to persist in the stereotypes of confrontation and the striving for military superiority but to approach matters in a new way and to find new forms and procedures for dealings between the different social systems, States and regions. Nowadays, it becomes ever more clear that the nuclear age has its own logic.

Due to these weapons, the question of war or peace must be seen from a completely new perspective. Peace cannot be won through an arms build-up, and nuclear war is not a means to reach political ends. Nuclear war would put an end to any policy.

Proceeding from this situation, the German Democratic Republic will continue its determined efforts to unite all forces of peace, common sense and realism for arms limitation and disarmament so as to head off a nuclear war, prevent the militarization of outer space, abolish nuclear weapons, and, through co-operation among States, overcome confrontation.

You, Mr. Chairman, certainly share our opinion that the Joint Statement of 12 March 1985 made by Chairman Erich Honecker and Chancellor Helmut Kohl is highly topical. It is said in that statement that the inviolability of frontiers and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States of Europe within their present borders are a fundamental condition for peace. War must never
again be triggered from German soil; peace must be carefully tended there. In the light of the lessons learned from history, and fully in line with the Basic Relations Treaty between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany and the European package of East-West Treaties, the German Democratic Republic will always live up to this special responsibility. Thus the German Democratic Republic is in favour of terminating all nuclear tests as a first step towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons. It demands the halting of the deployment of nuclear systems already emplaced in Europe and the progressive dismantlement of them. It supports the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and through initiatives is contributing to the setting up of a zone free of battlefield nuclear weapons in Central Europe and a zone free of chemical weapons in Europe.
(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

To help reach those aims the German Democratic Republic supports the important proposals of the USSR, as contained in its comprehensive programme to rid the world of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000, in its recent initiative to ban chemical weapons and reduce conventional arms and armed forces in Europe, and in the plan for the establishment of a system of international security.

As was stated at the Eleventh Socialist Unity Party Congress, those proposals are

"consonant with our ideal of a world without weapons or violence, a world in which all nations can freely determine their own path of development and their own way of life."

These proposals, especially the three-stage plan for entering the next millenium free from nuclear weapons, are the alternative to nuclear destruction. They offer the chance of common survival.

That alternative is acceptable to all because it puts aside everything by which States could be divided and because, in the overriding interests of peace, it protects the legitimate security interests of all States. There can be no losers, only winners.

In Berlin, the capital of the German Democratic Republic, General-Secretary Mikhail Sergeiievich Gorbachev proposed the considerable reduction of all components of the land forces and tactical air forces of the European States and the corresponding forces of the United States and Canada stationed in Europe, and the disbanding of the troop formations and units thus reduced, and the liquidation of their armaments or their deposit on their national territories. That proposal shows how the level of military confrontation, which is especially dangerous in Europe, could be lowered considerably.
This serious offer of negotiations is also an answer to the often-used sham argument that Western Europe cannot give up nuclear weapons because it would feel less secure in view of the armed forces and conventional armaments of the Warsaw Treaty States.

A new approach to fundamental questions of our time is reflected also in the moratorium on all nuclear explosions which was unilaterally imposed by the USSR and twice extended. Despite the negative response on the part of the United States and the continuation of its tests, the readiness of the USSR for such a moratorium on the basis of reciprocity and for the start of negotiations on a nuclear test ban remains valid. We appreciate that decision by the USSR, because it testifies to its humanist sense of responsibility for the destiny of peoples. We expect that the Disarmament Commission will call explicitly for an immediate moratorium on nuclear explosions by the USSR and the United States and for the start of relevant negotiations without delay.

It is fully justified to say that all these initiatives, proposals and offers of negotiations are totally in line with the concerns of the International Year of Peace. These represent the positive deeds which, as stated in the proclamation of the International Year of Peace, are required for the promotion of international peace and security. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the deeds of certain administrations and Governments in some Western countries. It gives rise to serious concern that they are continuing their course of heating up the arms race and spreading it to outer space, and destroying the existing military and strategic parity. Despite world-wide rejection the so-called Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) programme is continuing unabated. States supporting that course and participating in the plans to militarize outer space are burdening themselves with a great responsibility. Meantime, it has become well known that the SDI is not needed at all for the development of advanced technology. Rather, the peaceful
exploration and utilization of outer space affords wide enough scope and a promising field for such development.

The German Democratic Republic commends the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries for expressly supporting at their recent meeting in New Delhi such measures of the highest priority as the cessation of nuclear weapon tests, nuclear disarmament, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the non-first-use of nuclear weapons. The valuable initiatives taken by the six Heads of State or Government deserve appreciation and support as well.

All these ideas should be duly reflected in the documents to be prepared by the Disarmament Commission for the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

The comprehensive agenda of this session of the Disarmament Commission should cause us to focus when dealing with its items on substantive questions which should lead to relevant conclusions and recommendations.

Of crucial importance for the further consideration of agenda item 4, on nuclear and conventional disarmament, is the programme submitted by the USSR for the elimination of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. That programme should be thoroughly discussed in the appropriate Contact Group with the aim of formulating concrete recommendations. All nuclear-weapon States should be called upon to enter into a dialogue on that programme. The efforts to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons also include the appeal directed only recently by the Warsaw Treaty member States to the States of Europe, the United States and Canada that nuclear-weapon-free zones be established in Europe. The proposal submitted by the USSR, on a considerable reduction of conventional armed forces and armaments in Europe complements the programme for the liquidation of all nuclear weapons. In particular those who make their agreement to the programme of nuclear disarmament dependent on a reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments should respond positively to that proposal.
In view of the forthcoming International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, my delegation deems it appropriate to bring the consideration of agenda item 5, "Reduction of military budgets", to a successful conclusion at this session of the Commission. This, however, requires that all sides focus on the essential question - the reduction of military budgets - and also give due attention to the release of resources for the support of developing countries. It does not serve the envisaged aim to concentrate the discussion on transparency and comparability and to divert attention from problems which have to be solved so urgently.

A positive example would be the implementation of the proposal submitted by the Warsaw Treaty member States at their meeting in Sofia in October 1985, namely that the USSR and the United States should not increase their military budgets with the beginning of the new financial year.

In the light of the massive terror perpetrated by the South African régime inside South Africa and its growing aggressiveness against neighbouring States, South Africa's nuclear capability is assuming an especially dangerous dimension.
We expect that those Western States that have thus far prevented the finalization of the relevant recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will reconsider their position and thereby fulfil their obligations undertaken at the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Subjects of topical importance are the curbing of the naval arms race, the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans. The recent aggressive acts perpetrated against sovereign States underline the imperative need to take resolute measures against the destabilizing presence and activities of warships operating far from their own shores as well as in areas of conflicts or tension. The Disarmament Commission can contribute considerably by making relevant recommendations aimed at bringing about negotiations on curbing the naval arms race, limiting and reducing naval armaments and extending confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, and, thus, increasing the security of littoral States as well as of peaceful navigation.

The basis for such a discussion is contained in the working paper submitted last year by the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic, and in the study since submitted by a United Nations group of experts. It is now time that those documents become the subject of a businesslike discussion in a relevant working group.

The consideration of the agenda item "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament" is viewed by my delegation in the sense that the contribution of such a representative forum as the world Organization to the termination of the arms race and achieving disarmament should be augmented. The German Democratic Republic supports any efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Disarmament Commission. Here in the Commission, as well as in other
relevant sub-organs of the General Assembly, what is required in the first place is not organizational changes but, rather, the political willingness of States to reach substantive agreements on the cessation of the arms race and on disarmament, and to fulfil disarmament agreements completely.

The German Democratic Republic will always be among those States that are guided by that objective to bring about, at long last, the badly required turn to the better in the world.

Mr. BESSMERTNYKH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The work of the Commission is taking place at a very critical juncture. The serious challenge confronting the international community in the crucial area of security can, in terms of its magnitude, only be compared to the opportunities that lie before mankind to preserve peace and to avert the nuclear threat.

The existing situation in the world cannot fail to cause concern. Tensions in the world are not abating; on the contrary, they are increasing. The level of military confrontation is constantly on the increase. The leadership of some imperialist States tends to worship military strength and to resolve problems through arbitrary actions and violence. It takes a long time and it is not easy to mend the fabric of international stability and order that has been damaged by such aggressive actions.

The fuse for those extremely negative tendencies is the arms race whipped up principally by the United States, which is about to get out of control at any moment. A senseless build-up of increasingly sophisticated means of destruction gives rise to distrust and even hostility among States and peoples. A wrong perception of security as a means of inflicting as much damage upon others as possible while remaining oneself a winner gives rise to the reckless pursuit of the
chimera of military superiority. What suffers most is dialogue, since some would like to use negotiations solely as a diplomatic smokescreen to serve military strategy.

The vicious circle of tensions, armaments and then a higher level of tension holds no promise for the cause of peace. In the nuclear age, a failure to stop the arms race and a continued adherence to the old stereotypes of the past in security matters means that one is dooming human civilization to a long and painful existence in fear, if not to a tragic end.

One must wonder whether it is possible to reverse this process. Is there any hope for that? The Soviet Union, aware of the entire complexity of the situation, still answers "Yes" to that. As was pointed out by Mikhail Sergeiyevich Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: "We cannot take 'No' for an answer to the question of human survival." Hope lies in the growing awareness by the peoples of the world of the dimensions and causes of the existing threat and in their readiness to join together for survival. It can be found in the specific plans already proposed by the Soviet Union for breaking out of the nuclear trap, plans that should form the basis for practical work, including that by United Nations bodies entrusted with the problem of disarmament.

Today, it is not enough merely to move forward in the field of security. It is essential to move swiftly, taking guidance from clear-cut objectives and in several areas simultaneously. That is precisely the logic of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which states that our Commission was established because of the

"urgent need that existing disarmament machinery be revitalized and forums appropriately constituted for disarmament deliberations and negotiations with a better representative character." (S-10/2, para. 113)
The Final Document also refers to the need to ensure "maximum effectiveness" as an incentive for establishing new machinery, whose major element is the Disarmament Commission, made up of all States Members of the United Nations.

What is needed today is to determine how to achieve those objectives in practice and how to work effectively at the present time to promote disarmament. First of all, in our view, what is needed is a fundamentally new philosophy of security. Here, we are not speaking of theoretical concepts, but, rather, of the need to base ourselves on the realities of the present-day world. As we see it, reliable security can be built only on a political, not a military, basis. It cannot be strengthened at the expense of others, but, rather, by taking their interests into account; for the security of any one State depends directly upon the security of all. National security, to quote the words of the USSR Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eduard Shevardnadze, "is an illusion if it is not part and parcel of global security".

Secondly, what is needed - and this has been proposed by the Soviet Union - is a carefully considered programme for real disarmament for the immediate future and including, first and foremost, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. In our view, the present level of security is in reverse proportion to the rate at which such weapons are being stockpiled and modernized.
Dialogue and negotiations are the driving force behind the process of replacing military means to ensure security with political and legal means. To use a metaphor, it is time for all of us to draw up a detailed international disarmament chart specifying locations and time schedules which would then identify exact starting and destination points of possible routes leading to the elimination of nuclear, chemical and conventional weapons, as well as to the prevention of the emergence of new and dangerous types of weapons, above all, space weapons.

Thirdly, the Soviet Union calls upon all States, and particularly the major military Powers, without waiting for formal agreements, to act on the basis of setting a good example and display maximum restraint in the field of security. This includes unilateral steps to slow down the arms race, to reduce the level of military confrontation and to recognize the need not to extend military rivalry to new and as yet uncontaminated areas.

Fourthly, together with the measures in the military field aimed at achieving both vertical and horizontal disarmament - that is, measures encompassing all types of weapons, all countries and all regions of the world, without exception - it is important to find ways of co-operating in the development of a political, economic and humanitarian basis for a future comprehensive system of international security. Nowadays, it is hardly necessary to persuade anyone of the fact that without disarmament, without a just political settlement of international crises and regional conflicts, without creating genuine guarantees against attacks on sovereign States, it is difficult to count on military potentials of all countries being reduced to levels of reasonable sufficiency.
And, finally, it is an irrefutable fact that now, for the first time in history, the peoples of the whole world are directly confronted with the full force of the problem of survival. That is why all States, big and small, socialist and capitalist, developed and developing, should take action against a build-up of nuclear arsenals. This is the guarantee of success in the ongoing struggle, which is unprecedented in its scale and importance.

The year 1986, which has been declared the International Year of Peace, will serve to counter inertia and complacency. We should not forget that militant circles, representing the selfish interests of the military and industrial complex of imperialism, are still actively trying to undermine the possibilities for reducing nuclear weapons, as was the case with the unique opportunity to stop nuclear explosions, which was called for by the Soviet Union.

That is how we see the main goals to be achieved on the way towards a more secure peace. This conceptual approach is embodied in the practical policy of the USSR for preventing military catastrophe and curbing the arms race.

Mikhail S. Gorbachev's statement of 15 January 1986, contained in document A/41/97, setting forth concrete proposals for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere in the next 15 years, as well as other far-reaching measures aimed at strengthening international security, contained in document A/41/185, comprise major foreign policy initiatives of the Soviet Union, a kind of fusion of its philosophy for creating a secure world in the nuclear and space age by concrete actions. The twenty-seventh Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR enriched and developed these proposals and declared that the Soviet Union intended to work purposefully for their realization. This is the pivotal, central direction of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union for the years to come.
We are deeply satisfied with the encouraging response to and interest in the Soviet initiatives shown by the world public and broad political circles in various countries.

The reason for such a positive response is no secret, since the Soviet formula for freeing mankind stage-by-stage from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is aimed precisely at fulfilling the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the world.

In this connection let me draw the attention of the members of the Commission to some aspects of our initiatives aimed at removing those obstacles still blocking the way to a nuclear-free world.

Of primary importance in determining the timing of the process of total elimination of nuclear arsenals, the scope of each of its proposed stages and their interrelationship is the criterion of undiminished security for all at any stage of the implementation of the programme.

Reductions would begin with a radical – 50 per cent – cut in the relevant arsenals of the USSR and the United States, with other nuclear-Powers joining in the process only at a later stage. Moreover, in view of the position given earlier by these States, reductions in their nuclear arsenals would first involve the destruction of tactical nuclear weapons, whereas the nuclear weapons they themselves identify as strategic would be destroyed only at the third stage parallel to the total elimination of the nuclear arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Soviet programme for nuclear disarmament is a realistic and, therefore, a preferable alternative to the proposals advanced by those who only in words promise to make certain reductions in nuclear systems while by their deeds demand - as a kind of advance payment - that a blessing be given to the development of no less dangerous and even more unpredictable weapons, namely, space strike weapons.
It has been asserted in the United States that it will take about 10 to 15 years, or even less, to determine the practical feasibility of developing and deploying space weapons. Moreover, it appears that the "experiment" has been conceived in such a manner that it would leave only the debris of such pillars of strategic stability as the 1972 anti-ballistic missile (ABM) Treaty and other relevant agreements. Based on common sense, we propose that nuclear weapons be done away with within the same span of time as it would take to develop a "space shield", which the United States claims is designed to counter those weapons.

The programme for nuclear disarmament put forward by the Soviet Union is pragmatic in nature. Basically, it implies substantial progress at the negotiations on nuclear and space weapons being held in Geneva.

The Soviet position on the issue of ridding Europe of nuclear weapons also proves that we are flexible and ready to take another step to accommodate our partners. We would prefer that this objective be attained without undue delays: both medium-range and tactical weapons in Europe should be done away with simultaneously. If, however, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries are uncomfortable with such a radical solution, we could also propose an alternative: to eliminate Soviet and United States medium-range missiles in the European zone without linking the issue to the other components of our comprehensive programme. It is to be understood that all the relevant missile systems would be physically destroyed.

It is to be regretted that here, too, the United States and its allies have backed away from their previous position. If in the past they rejected compromise solutions by citing the deployed Soviet SS-20 missiles, now that this pretext is untenable, they actually insist on an unhampered accelerated build-up in the nuclear arsenals of the United Kingdom and France.
As regards Soviet medium-range missiles deployed in the Asian part of the Soviet Union, they are there for a purpose, primarily because the United States has in that region nuclear systems capable of reaching the territory of the Soviet Union.
(Mr. Bessmertnykh, USSR)

In order to guarantee that Soviet medium-range missiles stationed in Asia do not form part of the nuclear balance in Europe, the Soviet Union is ready to assume an obligation not to deploy SS-20 missiles to the West of 80 degrees East longitude. Naturally, from behind that line those missiles cannot reach the vital areas of the Western European NATO countries.

Frankly speaking, we do not consider that the present number of SS-20 missiles in the eastern part of the USSR is a magic number. The level of these missiles depends directly on the military and strategic situation in the region. Should there be a decrease in the number of nuclear systems our missiles counter, then we shall also have fewer missiles. Finally, and most importantly, the very essence of our proposal regarding the phased elimination of nuclear weapons presupposes that there will be no nuclear weapons anywhere, including in Asia.

Until recently the opponents of nuclear arsenal reductions camouflaged their intentions by an exaggerated concern over the lack of progress in the field of conventional disarmament. However, it is known that, at the Vienna talks on mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries have put forward a compromise solution, which immediately opens the way towards an initial agreement which although fundamentally important is not very large scale. The Western countries continue to remain as intransigent as before.

Recently the USSR put forward a new and major initiative for considerable reduction of all ground forces and tactical aviation deployed from the Atlantic to the Urals. Here the two processes - nuclear and non-nuclear disarmament - are in fact mutually enhanced. In particular, the latest Soviet proposal envisages that theatre nuclear weapons will be reduced hand in hand with conventional armaments. So, even if there is an imbalance in this area, it is not in the conventional forces or armaments but in the readiness of the sides in fact to agree to their reduction.
The Soviet Union attaches no less importance to saving our planet from chemical weapons, both those that now exist and new types as are now being introduced, such as binary weapons. The talks on the prohibition and elimination of this barbaric weapon now under way at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament have been inadmissibly slow. For our part, we are now giving them a powerful additional impetus. The essence of our new proposals is to eliminate, as soon as possible, both those weapons as such and the industrial basis for their production. As a further development of the innovative provisions of the 15 January 1986 statement, we are now making a proposal to start the destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles not later than six months, and the demolition or dismantling of State- or private-owned facilities for their production not later than 12 months, after an appropriate international convention enters into force. Moreover, as early as 30 days after that date all parties shall disclose the exact location of all such facilities.

We should like to address specifically the issue of verification, and not only as applied to the elimination of chemical weapons. A thorough analysis of the whole range of proposals and initiatives recently put forward on security problems would lead to an unequivocal conclusion: the Soviet Union is in favour of strict verification of compliance with obligations in the disarmament field - and here disarmament is emphasized, not rearmament or additional armament.

Whether in nuclear, chemical or conventional disarmament, we stand for the strictest, even stern, verification through both national technical means and international forms, including, as appropriate, on-site inspection.

Let us now consider some military restraint measures which can accelerate the process of limitation and reduction of armaments without substituting for it.
Mr. Bessmertnykh, USSR

The logic of efforts to avert the nuclear threat has made the issue of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests the most prominent one in international relations. The findings of eminent experts and simple common sense point to the fact that this is the shortest way to decelerate radically the arms race and to prevent the development of new weapons, including space weapons. Moreover, today there exist all objective prerequisites for resolving the question of a comprehensive ban on nuclear explosions without prejudice to anyone's security.

To set a good example the Soviet Union took an important step last August: it suspended some major defence and economic programmes and unilaterally declared a moratorium on all nuclear explosions. Trying to keep alive that unique chance for the cause of peace, we have twice extended our moratorium, in spite of - frankly speaking - the defiant attitude demonstrated by the United States, and not only at testing grounds.

The United States side failed to avail itself of the opportunity it had to proceed to real, rather than propagandistic, disarmament. It blew up that chance on 10 April and again on 22 April in Nevada. In such circumstances the Government of the USSR was forced to relinquish the unilateral commitment it had voluntarily assumed, since we cannot jeopardize our own security.

However, as Mikhail Sergeiyevich Gorbachev stressed in his reply to the leaders of Argentina, India, the United Republic of Tanzania, Sweden, Mexico and Greece on 1 May:

"... the Soviet Union is doing its utmost to make a bilateral Soviet-American moratorium a reality. We are ready at any moment to come back to the question of a mutual moratorium if the United States does not conduct nuclear tests."
Our proposals presented to the United States and other nuclear Powers immediately to start negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban are still valid and are becoming even more relevant. Any form of such negotiations - bilateral, tripartite, or multilateral - suits us. The main thing is to ensure that in the final analysis their contents are reflected in an agreement without loopholes or ambiguities.

We believe that the Commission can express its authoritative view regarding the early start of negotiations on all aspects of nuclear disarmament and a nuclear test ban, including necessary verification measures. Such a step by the Commission would also greatly contribute to the creation of a general atmosphere conducive to maintaining and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation régime.

The world community indeed has all grounds for seeing a link between the refusal by some Western countries to join a ban on nuclear-weapon tests and their open complicity with the Pretoria régime and some others in their acquisition of such weapons.

It would be extremely timely and important for the Commission to consider in an active and constructive way the question of the limitation of naval armaments. For more than a decade now the Soviet Union, together with other socialist countries, has been emphasizing such an important area of military activities and competition as the naval arms race and naval activities in various parts of the world's oceans.

It can hardly be viewed as normal when naval forces of major Powers, and of some other countries as well, are cruising at large distances from their shores and are almost constantly engaged in large-scale manoeuvres which by their very nature are at times indistinguishable from preparations for acts of armed aggression against sovereign littoral States. Indeed, very recently the world witnessed how "aircraft-carrier diplomacy", the policy of naval blackmail and pressure, resulted in the United States attack against an independent Arab country.
(Mr. Bessmertnykh, USSR)

It is no longer possible to avoid meaningful negotiations on the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and on the extension of confidence-building measures to the world's seas and oceans. In anticipation of such negotiations, appropriate consultations could be arranged at the Conference on Disarmament, and the Secretary-General's special study carried out last year on naval activities also contributes to that objective.
The withdrawal of nuclear-armed ships from certain parts of the world ocean, limitation of anti-submarine activities, reduction in the numbers of operational ships in the fleets of major Powers - these are some of the ideas which have already been expressed by the Soviet side regarding this topical problem.

It is necessary now, even before the start of comprehensive negotiations, to take urgent steps on a priority basis to lower military tensions in the Mediterranean. As was stated on 26 March 1986 by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"If the United States, situated as it is thousands and thousands of miles from the Mediterranean, were to withdraw its fleet from there, then the Soviet Union would do so at the same time. We are ready to enter into talks on this question without delay." (A/41/257, p. 2)

The problem of the reduction of military budgets remains topical and is worthy of immediate attention. Readiness to proceed to such reductions constitutes not only a tangible step towards the limitation of the arms race but also a clear indication of the intentions of Governments regarding their own or foreign public opinion.

Some are clearly reluctant to open the way to the idea of the reduction of military budgets. On the contrary, everything is done to preserve the momentum in favour of increasing military expenditures. In the diplomatic arena such a policy line is camouflaged by various manoeuvres aimed at erecting artificial barriers. But the time has come to make a choice; it is no longer possible to vote for disarmament with one hand and to push for new military appropriations with the other.

A special role in improving the current difficult international situation is being played by the United Nations as a universal instrument for accomplishing the noble aim contained in its Charter - "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".
No individual groups of States nor any exclusive or non-exclusive "clubs" are capable of bearing the burden of creating a lasting peace. Only collectively, through the efforts of all States, is it possible to strengthen international security and achieve productive co-operation.

Regarding the established procedure and institutional arrangements for considering the question of disarmament and security in general, in our opinion the existing machinery is quite in accord with the current tasks of the Organization. Of course it, too, can be improved. However, it is inadmissible, under the pretext of a so-called rationalization of procedures, to attempt to neutralize United Nations activities in the field of disarmament and render them ineffective. The main thrust should be to demonstrate a readiness to strive for tangible and conclusive results.

We favour breaking out of the inertia of formalism and routine, and revitalizing the functioning of the whole machinery for the consideration and solution of disarmament matters, including so important an element as the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

The Soviet Union, which has proposed large-scale peaceful initiatives and adopted bold unilateral measures, has not come to the current session of the Commission empty-handed. By its practical contribution, the USSR is prepared to promote the intensification of the Disarmament Commission's activities and to strengthen its authority and influence in solving disarmament problems.

We hope that the current session will be fruitful and highly effective. I should like now to touch on one additional aspect.

It is the profound conviction of the Soviet Union that one of the most important elements of a comprehensive system of international security - and the need for creating such a system is something about which I spoke earlier - is the consolidation of confidence among States, co-operation in disseminating the ideas of
peace, disarmament, and strengthening the spirit of mutual understanding and
agreement. Unfortunately, however, we must note that certain circles, primarily in
the United States, are mounting fresh attempts to destroy confidence and sow
enmity. This, inter alia, was attested to by the scandalous hullabaloo raised in
connection with the unfortunate incident at the Chernobyl atomic electric station
in the Soviet Union. That incident has been exploited for clearly unsavoury
political objectives. Fabrications, fantastic stories and clear gloating, which
run counter to elementary moral norms, are aquirng the scale of an undignified
propaganda campaign. Any normal person can but be revolted by this campaign.

The Soviet delegation is sincerely grateful to all representatives who during
the session of the Disarmament Commission have expressed their sympathy and shown a
dignified understanding of events.

The CHAIRMAN: I would express the hope that those delegations
participating in the general exchange of views would increasingly focus on our
actual agenda items so that we can purposefully be led to a consideration of the
work at hand.

MR. McDOWELL (New Zealand): Mr. Chairman, I wish to congratulate you and
the other members of the Bureau on your respective elections. I trust that under
your energetic guidance the Commission will make progress.

Our task this year is pretty difficult. We have a particularly heavy agenda
to deal with and quite possibly less time than usual in which to do it. In this
year, proclaimed by the General Assembly as the International Year of Peace, it is
especially important that we achieve some perceptible results at our session.

Most of our work will be done in the subsidiary bodies established on the
different items of our agenda. But this general exchange of views offers us a good
opportunity to look more broadly and to see what progress has been made towards the
fundamental question facing the international community: how to stop the arms
race. That is the gut issue. That is what we are here for.
We all have a vital stake in this. No country can hope to escape the consequences of a nuclear war, not even a country as distant from potential areas of conflict as New Zealand. The shocking events of last week, when radioactive particles spread across much of Europe from the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl, brought home to us again the inherent dangers of nuclear technology. The escape of radioactivity into the environment in any part of the world as a consequence of the failure of that technology applied to peaceful purposes – wherever that may occur – causes widespread apprehension. It is easy to understand the universal terror at the prospect of nuclear technology used for the purposes of war. The studies on nuclear winter make grim reading.

We all seek the goal of disarmament. There is a responsibility incumbent on all of us to contribute to the negotiation of agreements that will enhance global and regional security, help stop the arms race and reduce the risk of nuclear war. The primary responsibility, however, falls on the nuclear-weapon States – especially the United States and the Soviet Union. They have by far the most sophisticated military forces and the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons. They have the greatest contribution to make.

The United States and the Soviet Union have been meeting in Geneva over the past year in their resumed talks on nuclear and space arms. They have set themselves a laudable objective: to work out agreements "aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth". Various statements have been made in the public arena. But, as a common denominator, both sides have said that they want to reduce their nuclear arsenals by at least 50 per cent. When President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev met in Geneva last November, they reaffirmed their commitment to a successful outcome of these talks.

All of that was encouraging.
We find no encouragement at all, however, in the announcement by both sides, after the first round of this year's talks ended in March, that little progress had been made. A further round of talks begins next week. We have a right to expect that the negotiators will do some serious work, and that this round will be more productive.

It is not easy to reach agreements that are equitable, balanced and verifiable. That serves to make more important the preservation of the achievements of previous negotiations. Particularly important among these is the anti-ballistic missile Treaty that came out of the SALT I talks. Both sides have said they intend to continue to comply with that Treaty. We also welcome the signs that both sides intend to abide by their undertakings not to undercut the limits agreed at the SALT II talks. That is good news also. We hope the questions raised about compliance with those agreements will be resolved before the agreements themselves are threatened.

My Government has not been impressed by the progress so far at this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament. It took the Conference 12 weeks just to agree to resume the important work it began last year on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The pace of the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention has scarcely been more heroic. Yet the urgent need for such a treaty was reinforced earlier this year when the Secretary-General's team of specialists confirmed that chemical weapons had again been used by Iraqi forces in the Iran-Iraq conflict. We urge the Conference to speed up its negotiations on that vital convention.

But our greatest disappointment with the Conference on Disarmament's performance has been its continuing failure to agree on a way of discussing the
test-ban item. It is now two and a half years since the Conference did any work at all on this, the first item on its agenda. That is an appalling record.

New Zealand deeply regrets that that long-sought-after goal, to which commitments were made in the limited nuclear-test-ban Treaty and the non-proliferation Treaty, has still not been achieved. Attempts are sometimes made to question the importance of a test ban. We do not accept the specious arguments advanced. We remain convinced that a test-ban treaty is a vital, practical and immediate way of halting the nuclear arms race. It would supplement efforts to reduce existing nuclear arsenals; it would bolster the non-proliferation régime; and it would - most importantly - inhibit the development of even more weapons.

We recognize, unhappily, that positions on a test ban diverge. That should not mean that the Conference is paralysed completely. There are issues that can and must be addressed: scope, verification and compliance. The Conference should be able to resume its consideration of those issues on the basis of an understanding that work on those central questions will lead to the elaboration of a test-ban treaty.

We cannot talk about testing today without referring to the moratorium on all nuclear explosions observed by the Soviet Union for the past nine months. The Deputy Foreign Minister has just referred to that. We must say that a moratorium is no substitute for a legally binding and properly verifiable treaty banning all nuclear tests in all environments for all time. New Zealand nevertheless welcomes any moves that could bring a halt to nuclear testing. We hope that the Soviet Union will further demonstrate its commitment to end testing by lending its support to efforts to establish a global seismic monitoring network. We believe such a network would make a major contribution to international efforts to stop testing.
(Mr. McDowell, New Zealand)

It would do much to clear up some of the confusion that still exists about the verification requirements of a test-ban treaty.

Testing is of particular concern to New Zealand and to other countries of the South Pacific region, because one of the nuclear-weapon States continues to hold its tests in our region. Recently France conducted yet another test explosion in the South Pacific. We must again register our deep disappointment that France continues to ignore the unanimous opinion of all independent, self-governing countries of the South Pacific that are opposed to the tests at Mururoa Atoll.

At Rarotonga in August last year the leaders of South Pacific Forum countries endorsed the South Pacific nuclear-free-zone Treaty. They thereby gave concrete expression to the region's determination that it should never become an arena for nuclear confrontation. This is a real example of a group of countries doing what they can within their power to enhance peace and stability in their region.

The Treaty has already been ratified by three Forum members and signed by a further six. Consultations have recently been held with the five nuclear-weapon States on the draft Protocols attached to the Treaty. When the Forum meets in August later this year it will consider the adoption of the Protocols. We hope that through this process we shall be able to secure a commitment from the nuclear-weapon States to respect the Treaty and the zone it establishes.

An important element of the Treaty is that each party retains its sovereign right to decide for itself the question of access to its ports and airfields of nuclear ships and aircraft. The policy of the New Zealand Government is that nuclear ships shall not come into New Zealand harbours; nuclear weapons shall not enter New Zealand. It is a policy supported by the majority of New Zealanders and is designed for New Zealand circumstances.
I should now like to respond to your appeal, Mr. Chairman, to make a few comments on the items on our agenda.

For over three years we have been trying to draft a comprehensive paper of recommendations on item 4, dealing with the arms race. Last year we managed to tidy the paper up a bit, but we did not come much closer to a final product. The paper we produced is studded with brackets and conflicting formulations. Quite frankly, we question the wisdom of pursuing this effort, which, after all, is very similar to what is being done in Geneva in the negotiation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. We think it is time to look for a fresh approach to the item.

Items 5 and 6 - the reduction of military budgets and South Africa's nuclear capability - have also been with us for a long time. They are important. They deserve a better fate than a repetitive wrangle over the same points year after year. We hope the Commission can find a way of bringing them to an appropriate conclusion this year.

Last year we were only able to make a start on item 7, "Review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament". We commend the delegation of Cameroon for bringing this item to the Commission and for the thoughtful and provocative paper it submitted last year. The paper has a number of interesting suggestions for rationalizing the functioning of the United Nations disarmament machinery, particularly with regard to disarmament studies and publications. Those ideas take on added importance at this time of financial crisis in the Organization. We look forward to a stimulating discussion in the Working Group on this item.
On item 8, the naval arms race, we have for our consideration the study produced by the Group of Governmental Experts appointed by the Secretary-General. It provides a useful analysis of various issues relating to naval armaments and suggests a number of directions in which the discussion of the question can be taken. Those discussions should be based, in our view, on the rules of international law as set out in the Convention on the Law of the Sea, which settled the law across a wide range of previously contentious issues.
The last item is item 9, on confidence-building measures. Mr. Chairman, you played a major part in advancing our work when we last considered this subject two years ago. We will listen carefully to your suggestions on how the subject might be developed this year. Confidence-building measures can do much to strengthen international relations and to avoid unnecessary tension. We note that the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe is supposed to be entering its final stages. We hope its work will be successful. While the situation in Europe is unique, agreements worked out there can provide some useful examples of what might be achieved in other parts of the world.

In the debate in the General Assembly last week, many speakers referred to the crisis of multilateralism that underlies the financial crisis. We hope the Assembly will shortly take steps to put the Organization on a firmer financial footing for the rest of the year. If we are going to really improve the functioning of the Organization, however, we, its Member States, must commit ourselves to making the institution work better. In this Commission our task is to produce firm recommendations for the Assembly. To be successful in that, we must lend the necessary political commitment to the task.

Mr. GVI (Burma): It is a particular pleasure and privilege for me to see you, Sir, a friend and colleague of my days in the Geneva Disarmament Conference, for whom I have a high regard, assume the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. The active role you have been playing in disarmament affairs with exceptional knowledge and skill and with forthrightness will no doubt have a positive influence on the outcome of our work.

As we begin this year's session emphasis on positive developments should provide us with the stimulus that is necessary for progress in our work. From this perspective, the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly has
provided us with the opportunity to reaffirm our faith in the principles and purposes of the United Nations; the relevant resolution of the General Assembly proclaimed 1986 the International Year of Peace. It is spelled out in that resolution that disarmament is an essential factor for the promotion of international peace and security. Bearing that in mind, the Disarmament Commission can no doubt make a positive contribution by redoubling its efforts this year.

The Commission is an essential component of the multilateral machinery that deals with disarmament and related issues. At the same time the interrelationship between the respective disarmament bodies and their link with the bilateral aspects of disarmament constitute the required organic whole of the disarmament process.

Much has been said about the resumption of the bilateral talks last year, which put the disarmament process back on its tracks, and that in itself is a good augury. But negotiation is not an end in itself, and tangible results are to be expected. We all know that disarmament negotiations cannot be conducted in a vacuum. From this broader perspective the present situation is such that disarmament negotiations and the arms race are taking place side by side, and policy decisions continue to be made which further intensify the arms race, thus defeating the very purpose of negotiations. A favourable international climate is conducive to disarmament, and yet the use of force is prevalent in the current international scene.

The high watermark of the disarmament process was the adoption of the Final Document at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which in view of its comprehensive character, and since it has the unanimous endorsement of the Assembly, constitutes the scripture for disarmament. The re-establishment of the Disarmament Commission, with its defined functions and terms of reference, has had a revitalizing effect, and the fact that
soon after its reconstitution the Commission could expeditiously fulfil its work on
the elaboration of a comprehensive programme on disarmament was sufficient to
justify its worth.

Proposals and ideas on disarmament, like armaments themselves, are also
proliferating. This development can be attributed to greater awareness and
universal aspirations concerning disarmament, as well as the arms race itself, and
also to the fact that strategic and military doctrines have become more complex.
Efforts on disarmament require finding commonly acceptable solutions from a vast
array of ideas and proposals, and we can say that the Disarmament Commission, with
its recommendatory role and its decision-making process, by consensus, is
distinctly endowed with the advantage of arriving at commonly acceptable solutions
than would otherwise have been possible if its functions were to find more precise
language and texts such as would be necessary in drafting resolutions or
agreements. Given the political will, the Disarmament Commission's ability to
arrive at agreed decisions by consensus makes it amenable to finding areas of
convergencies, and its recommendatory role to the General Assembly and the
Disarmament Conference could contribute positively to the work of those bodies.

For several years the Commission has been dealing with, among other things,
items on various aspects of nuclear and conventional disarmament; the reduction of
military budgets; South Africa's nuclear capability and confidence-building
measures. We believe that these items have reached a sufficiently mature stage of
consideration and that the Commission should be able to arrive at agreed
conclusions and recommendations on at least one or two of these items and justify
its work for this year.

The priority we attach to it and the comprehensive nature of the item dealing
with the various aspects of nuclear and conventional disarmament requires us to
make some observations. Work in the Commission last year could go only as far as
the compilation of proposals. In its report the Committee of the Whole has recommended that this year the Commission should review its approach to this item with a view to achieving agreed recommendations, and we believe that the Commission could begin its work with such a review.

With regard to confidence-building measures, the Commission would need to build on what was done in 1983 and 1984 and should endeavour to narrow the divergencies on the various approaches to the problems under consideration.

Last year the Commission initiated consideration of the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, although a report could not be completed as requested by the General Assembly due to the fact that the Working Group did not have sufficient time to carry out its work. It is hoped that the Commission will be able to make more substantial progress this year, and the working paper prepared by the representative of Cameroon provides a useful basis to begin work. It is appropriate that the role of the United Nations should be the subject of re-examination. We do not, however, believe that lack of progress on disarmament should in any way be attributed to any deficiency in the disarmament machinery.

It cannot be doubted that political will is an essential factor in the achievement of disarmament. This has been acknowledged in paragraph 10 of the Final Document, which states:

"Although the decisive factor for achieving real measures of disarmament is the 'political will' of States, especially of those possessing nuclear weapons, a significant role can also be played by the effective functioning of an appropriate international machinery designed to deal with the problems of disarmament in its various aspects." (Resolution S-10/2, para. 10)

It has also been said that disarmament affects the vital security interests of States and that all States have the right and duty to participate in disarmament negotiations.
The multilateral disarmament process carried out through existing international machinery should have assured involvement by all States in the consideration of issues that are crucial to international peace and security. However, the situation is such that the erosion of multilateralism is adversely affecting international co-operation on issues of universal importance; this is the situation also with regard to disarmament. This situation should be seriously examined in our consideration of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania)(interpretation from French): I wish first of all, Sir, to convey to you the sincere congratulations of the Romanian delegation on your election as Chairman of this important Commission, and to assure you of our full co-operation in carrying out the highly responsible tasks with which you have been entrusted. I wish also to congratulate the other Commission officers and to wish them every success in fulfilling their duties.

It is a tragic commonplace that today the world situation is a particularly serious and complex one. The arms race - first and foremost the nuclear-arms race - is proceeding at an unprecedented pace, which continues to heighten the danger of another world war, which would inevitably turn into a nuclear catastrophe leading to the destruction of the very conditions for life on earth.

The policy of force and threats backed up by force continues unabated, and armed conflicts and hotbeds of tension persist in various regions of the world. In recent months there have been serious incidents: with no valid justification, brutal force has been used against a sovereign and independent State Member of the United Nations, thus exacerbating tension and the threats which hang over international peace and security.
In the sphere of economics, the world crisis continues in one way or another to affect all States of the world. There is no doubt that the unprecedentedly enormous military expenditures are a considerable obstacle to the solution of problems of underdevelopment, the financial crisis, the external debt, unemployment and illiteracy. Never in the long history of mankind has such a threat weighed upon the existence of civilization and upon peoples and their freedom.

President Nicolae Ceausescu has stressed that, in Romania's view, the fundamental issues of the day are how to halt the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race, the disarmament process, the elimination of all nuclear weapons, the cessation of all activities to militarize outer space, and the defence and consolidation of peace.

That is all the more relevant this year, which has been proclaimed by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace. This should further mobilize the broadest social forces and all decision-making circles to open up a new prospect upon meeting the aspiration of all peoples for international peace and security. In our view, the International Year of Peace must not be limited to proclamations, which, however moving they may be, cannot change the dangerous course of events. In that spirit, the recent declaration issued by the Grand National Assembly of Romania on the International Year of Peace and distributed as a United Nations document stresses that the Year should see concrete action and genuine agreements on a halt of the arms race, on disarmament and on the consolidation of peace. In that way the Year would serve its purpose and would respond to the aspirations of peoples.

In keeping with the Romanian people's unquenchable desire for peace and co-operation, the Grand National Assembly addressed a stirring appeal to the parliaments of European States, of the United States of America and of all the
countries of the world to work tirelessly to reach agreements opening the way to disarmament and eliminating the threat of nuclear war, in order to ensure the solution of the major problems facing mankind in the interest of all peoples and of the peaceful future of mankind.

Our initial comments in this general exchange of views concern problems connected to the nuclear-arms race and to nuclear disarmament. My country's position on these issues was clearly stated in the declaration I mentioned, in recent policy statements by the Romanian Head of State, and in bilateral or multilateral political documents endorsed by Romania.

Our point of departure should be the fact that nuclear weapons have radically changed notions of security and of the balance of forces by giving them an altogether new meaning. At a time when nuclear weapons can destroy the entire world several times over, including both nuclear and non-nuclear countries, it is illusory to think that any State's security can be guaranteed by the continued stockpiling of nuclear weapons. It is equally illusory to try to use scientific and technological progress to win military superiority in the nuclear age, for faced with the threat of annihilation the other party will make every effort to take counter-measures, thus perpetuating the frenzied escalation towards mutual destruction and the destruction of the entire world. It is absolutely fallacious to assert that the lack of a world war over the past 40 years is due to the existence of nuclear arms, because in today's troubled world the merest accident beyond human control could unleash nuclear weapons leading inevitably to the destruction of life on earth.

In the nuclear age, the question is not one of military balance - or inferiority or superiority - but one of life and death. Given that alternative, clear thinkers have said time and again that there is but one solution: the
complete elimination of nuclear weapons. That is the surest way to protect mankind from a nuclear holocaust, to maintain world stability and to safeguard international peace and security. To achieve that goal we do not need to travel into outer space, engaging in an ever costlier and more dangerous escalation, but ought to take specific steps on earth to negotiate and conclude genuine agreements on the elimination of nuclear arsenals.

In this context, Romania welcomes and supports the proposed Soviet programme for nuclear disarmament and for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons by the end of this century. We hope and expect that the United States of America will join in that programme and will work towards a suitable agreement with the Soviet Union enabling all nuclear States then to participate in a programme to eliminate all the world's nuclear weapons by the year 2000.

At the same time, we consider it necessary to formulate a complex programme of general disarmament, to include - in addition to the central goal of eliminating nuclear weapons - measures aimed at substantial reductions of conventional weapons, troops and military budgets, and other measures to foster general disarmament.

Such a programme, a draft of which is under discussion at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, would open the way to nuclear disarmament, to a reduced threat of war and to enhanced confidence, enabling all nations to concentrate their energies on independent development, protected from all aggression.
It is obvious that disarmament problems cannot be resolved overnight. Nevertheless, some first steps, however small, must be taken. In this connection, we should like to emphasize the importance of the achievement, as soon as possible, of an agreement on the cessation of all nuclear tests, with the participation of all nuclear-weapon Powers, and of the conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the installation of new medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and setting up a timetable for the withdrawal of missiles already in place.

Romania is working energetically to achieve a fruitful outcome of the work of the Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe at Stockholm, the conclusion of an agreement on the reduction of troops and armaments in Central Europe within the framework of the Vienna negotiations and the intensification of the work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. We are prepared to redouble our efforts to develop co-operation and friendship in the Balkans and to make that region a zone free of nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and foreign military bases.

We are in favour of a halt to full-scale manoeuvres, of demonstrations of force at the borders of other countries, of a cessation of naval manoeuvres in international waters and of the withdrawal from the seas and oceans of the navies of the great Powers.

My country also deems it particularly important to freeze military expenditures and to proceed to reduce them by 25 per cent to 30 per cent by 1990 and by 50 per cent by the end of the century.

Recourse to such real, concrete actions, even if it did not solve the serious problems of the arms race, would build confidence and set up conditions in which programmes designed to eliminate nuclear weapons and to bring about general and complete disarmament could be implemented.
Since 1979, the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has included the problem of the reduction of military budgets. The debates held each year in the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament and our Commission have reflected the deep concern of States at the insane pace of the growth in military expenditures. That concern was expressed in the clearest terms at the recent session of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which examined, inter alia, the implications of the level and extent of military expenditures for the world economy and the international economic and social situation and ways and means of freeing, through the adoption of disarmament measures, additional resources for development, in favour of the developing countries in particular.

Despite all the problems that now exist, there is no State that does not plan to overcome, in the course of the present decade, the consequences of the economic and financial crisis and ensure a more substantive, overall development. Yet the facts show that the implementation of all the development programmes of every country—socialist or non-socialist, capitalist and developed or capitalist and developing—is possible only in a climate of peace in which enormous military expenditures can be halted and in which the material and human resources thereby made available can, with the achievements of science, be directed towards economic and social development.

That observation only serves to highlight the high-priority character and urgency of a freeze and reduction in military budgets within overall measures aimed at halting the arms race. That is an imperative task that calls for energetic and unflagging effort, notwithstanding the difficulties to be surmounted on the way, for the problems of the progress, development and well-being of each nation are inseparable from the problems of peace and disarmament.
Given the need to put an end to this plague that is sapping the energies and resources of peoples, Romania, as we know, has submitted concrete proposals designed to halt the increase in military budgets and to their subsequent reduction. Governments, in ever-greater numbers, are also beginning to examine more attentively the question of reducing military budgets. Although the views expressed or the proposals advanced are based on different approaches, in the final analysis they all reflect what we view as a normal and inevitable concern at the effects of this phenomenon which will have to be remedied, sooner or later. Given the extremely harmful effect of military expenses on the economic life of peoples and on world peace and security, we feel it is absolutely imperative to give new impetus to the efforts being made to freeze and reduce military budgets. Such a conclusion was ratified by the adoption last year, without a vote, of General Assembly resolution 40/91 A, which appeals to all States, in particular the most heavily armed States, to exercise self-restraint in their military expenditures and to reach agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain such expenditures.

In the same spirit the General Assembly, in the same resolution, requested the Disarmament Commission to finalize at this session the principles that should govern the actions of States in the field of freezing and reduction of military expenditures.

As we all know, the process of identifying and working out such principles, which is based on a joint initiative taken by Romania and Sweden submitted to the Commission in 1981, is aimed at harmonizing the positions of States in order to facilitate specific negotiations and to create the mutual confidence that can promote the conclusion of international agreements on the reduction of military budgets. This is a highly specific and well-defined task. Although the adoption of such principles might be regarded as a somewhat limited undertaking, it would nevertheless be an important contribution, since it would mark a turning-point in
the positions of States regarding a problem that is more pressing than ever before and would give greater credibility to points of view and proposals aimed at the reduction of military expenditures, a subject that will undoubtedly be one of the major topics at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development to be held at Paris.

We should like to voice the hope that the Working Group that has been re-established to consider the agenda item dealing with the reduction in military budgets will, with the contributions of all States, be able to embark upon specific negotiations on formulations of the various principles involved in order to adopt them and recommend them to the General Assembly.

While recognizing the complexity of the problem, we believe that agreement on those principles is possible. I should like, in this connection, to stress the constructive spirit in which Romania is determined to work to overcome existing difficulties in the consideration of the problem of the freeze and reduction of military expenditures, including those involving verification and the transmitting of data on military budgets.

Last year, the Commission began consideration of ways to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Romania's position and its concrete proposals on this particularly important matter, which is linked to the United Nations primary task, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, were set forth at length in my Government's response to the Secretary-General in document A/CN.10/69/Add.1.

It is Romania's opinion that, given the present circumstances, any analysis of the role incumbent upon the United Nations in the field of disarmament must be based on the fact that a cessation of the arms race, and first of all the nuclear-arms race, and the shift to disarmament and the elimination of the threat of a world war, represent the fundamental problems of our time.
In our view, the existing serious situation requires the adoption of measures aimed at increasing activity in those bodies and international conferences devoted to disarmament. More than ever before, there is now a need for ensuring that we highlight the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the disarmament field and that it exercise its functions more effectively.

Given the present decline of disarmament negotiations, the United Nations, as an Organization with a universal mission, must be increasingly involved in debates on the problems of disarmament and concentrate mainly on further stimulating the political will of all States, first and foremost the nuclear-weapon and other heavily armed States, in order to begin action aimed at preventing war, halting the arms race, the non-militarization of outer space and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In light of that need, it is inconceivable, and all the more unacceptable, that solutions to the United Nations financial crisis should be sought through limiting activities of the Organization in such essential fields as disarmament and the strengthening of peace and international security.

As we have already stated on numerous occasions, we believe that measures affecting the enhancement of United Nations activities in the disarmament field and the rationalization of its procedures and work programmes, including those of the Commission, should be based on full respect for the right of all States, regardless of their size and economic or military potential, to participate in debates and negotiations on disarmament and to raise before disarmament forums those problems the solution of which they consider essential for the maintenance of international peace and security.
The Romanian delegation intends at this session to make a contribution to reaching positive results on the question of confidence-building measures. In our view, the document to be drawn up and adopted should contain general guidelines allowing for specific confidence-building concepts designed to meet the needs of each region, with the overall objective of improving the international political atmosphere.

It is clear that confidence cannot be gained through an increase in both the quantity and the quality of armaments. Genuine, lasting confidence capable of instilling a feeling of security for all States can doubtless be achieved only through the implementation of measures to halt the arms race and reduce arsenals, first and foremost, nuclear-weapon arsenals.

That is why we maintain that no confidence-building measure can take the place of disarmament agreements.

Regarding the consideration of the question of limitation of the naval arms race, which is one of growing importance and relevance given recent serious events, the Romanian delegation considers that it must be viewed as an integral part of efforts aimed at the reduction of military activities throughout the world and at disarmament. The measures to be recommended in this area too must be based on the purposes and principles contained in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

It is in that spirit that Romania favours the reduction of naval arms and activities so as to put an end to all military manoeuvres by naval fleets in international waters and lead to the undertaking of firm commitments no longer to violate freedom of navigation in international waters, which must be used solely for peaceful purposes.
Finally, we believe that the problem of South Africa's nuclear capability represents a lasting threat to the security of the countries of the African continent and to international peace and stability.

My delegation deems legitimate the African countries' insistence on the United Nations adopting the necessary measures to prevent access by the racist régime of Pretoria to nuclear weapons and the extension of the nuclear-arms race to Africa.

Those are the observations my delegation wished to make within the context of this general exchange of views. However, we reserve the right to intervene on the agenda items of the Commission during their consideration by the Committee of the Whole and in the Working Groups.

I should like once again to assure you, Sir, of our full co-operation during the Commission's work and to express the hope that the results we shall achieve will contribute to promoting the cause of disarmament, peace and international security.

Mr. Tsvetkov (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation I should like first to congratulate the Chairman on his election to this important post. We are convinced that, thanks to his diplomatic talents, vast experience and wisdom, he will lead the work of the Commission to a successful conclusion.

This session of the Disarmament Commission is taking place at a very difficult and decisive moment in international relations, when mankind is faced, as it has never been faced before, with the choice between survival and mutual destruction.
(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The Soviet-American summit meeting in Geneva has played an extremely important and pivotal role. Aware of the special responsibilities borne by the USSR and the United States for the future of peace in the world, we consider that that meeting was the major political event in international affairs in 1985. We are pleased with the results of that meeting. They have opened up great possibilities, not only for Soviet-American relations but also for the international situation in general. The peoples of the entire world are now entitled to hope that the decisions taken at that meeting will be implemented through effective agreements.

Remaining faithful to the spirit of Geneva, the Soviet Union has, by its unilateral initiatives, demonstrated in practice that it is sincerely interested in achieving tangible results. In Mikhail Gorbachev's statement of 15 January last, the USSR set forth a remarkably constructive proposal on the elaboration, adoption and stage-by-stage implementation of a nuclear disarmament programme. To this end, we should like to stress the special contribution of the concept of global security developed at the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that takes into account the political, military, economic and humanitarian aspects of peace and stability at the present time.

Also, we wish to stress that the development, manufacture and deployment of space strike weapons, including anti-satellite devices, would not only imply fuelling the arms race but also undermine any hopes of curbing it and increase the insecurity of all countries and peoples of the world. We categorically reject the assertion that the development of space weapons would result in the elimination of nuclear weapons. The People's Republic of Bulgaria shares the view that space should remain weapon free and be used solely for peaceful purposes, for the well-being of mankind as a whole.
However, we regret that, despite it all, the military race continues unabated. In its quest for military supremacy over the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the United States is creating new weapons and new weapons systems. The United States Administration's plans to extend the arms race to space threaten to destabilize the strategic situation in its entirety and enormously increase the risk of a destructive nuclear war.

All that could certainly not be motivated by the need to catch up after a certain lag in the military field. Actually, these actions are intended to acquire a first-strike nuclear capability. The continuing emplacement of American medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe is part of that dangerous strategy. That spurs on the arms race, destabilizes the military and political situation, and increases the risk of nuclear war.

There are still possibilities for improving the international situation; however, a new approach is needed to settle world problems: a realistic policy and a sense of great responsibility by all States, and a sincere desire to reach mutually acceptable agreements.

Showing goodwill, the socialist countries have always been ready to negotiate with a view to the limitation, reduction and mutual prohibition of all types of weapons and military activity.

A broad range of constructive proposals for peace, disarmament and détente was submitted during the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the States members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, which was held in Sofia on 22 and 23 October 1985. That showed once again the wish of the socialist countries to make a positive breakthrough in the present alarming development of international affairs. The Declaration adopted at the end of that meeting appealed to the Governments and peoples of all countries to join efforts in the struggle against
the danger of general destruction looming over mankind and to settle all international issues by political means, through negotiations and fruitful dialogue on the basis of respect for the legitimate interests of countries. It is to such a policy that the People's Republic of Bulgaria adheres with conviction.

Given the crucial tasks of our times to halt the arms race - first of all the nuclear-arms race - and to proceed to disarmament, the People's Republic of Bulgaria believes that the Commission's efforts should be aimed at preparing concrete recommendations which, if implemented, would contribute to settling today's most topical problems relating to the elimination of the threat of nuclear war.

The concrete proposals of the socialist countries on measures to prevent nuclear war have not lost any currency. Bulgaria is of the view that the adoption of a code of conduct for nuclear States would constitute an important contribution to safeguarding peace. A first and decisive step to that end would be a renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons. My country considers that nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so should follow the example of the USSR and the People's Republic of China.

The qualitative and quantitative freeze of nuclear arsenals and cessation of the development and manufacture of new types of nuclear weapons would open up the way to a genuine reduction of nuclear weapons. While stressing that a nuclear-weapon freeze would be effective if it were undertaken by all nuclear-weapon States, the People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that a first step could be taken by the USSR and the United States. That is also the view of the United Nations General Assembly, as expressed in its resolution 40/94 H.
(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

It has long been urgent to conclude an agreement on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. All aspects of the problem have been sufficiently studied and discussed by States. It has been accepted that there is no technical obstacle, including elements of control, to the conclusion of such an agreement. The Conference on Disarmament should proceed to the preparation of a complete text on a general and complete nuclear-weapon test ban. That is the task the United Nations General Assembly called for at its fortieth session.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria views as proof of especially constructive goodwill the decision by the USSR to decree, beginning on 6 August last, a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. International public opinion has described the Soviet initiative as a real step towards the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. In the view of the fortieth session of the General Assembly, the Soviet example should be followed by the other nuclear-weapon States. By extending the moratorium to 31 March 1986 and beyond that until the first nuclear test by the United States, the Soviet Union has created all necessary conditions for a successful speedy settlement of this topical problem. One can only regret that that unique opportunity was not seized. Full responsibility falls on the United States, which has acted in disregard of common sense and the appeals of the international community, refused to join in the moratorium, and continued nuclear-weapon tests, the latest having been carried out on 22 April 1986. Furthermore, it would seem that the United States does not intend to cease underground nuclear testing for the purpose of testing new types of nuclear and space weapons.

The success of efforts aimed at preventing nuclear war depends largely on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the future. The People's Republic of
Bulgaria notes with satisfaction the success of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Final Document it adopted by consensus reflects the commitment by the participating States to the Treaty's goals. Those States also reaffirmed their interest in consolidating the non-proliferation régime and further strengthening the effectiveness of that Treaty.

In that connection, it is fitting to mention the proposal of the Warsaw Treaty States that the USSR and the United States should mutually undertake to refrain from deploying any kind of nuclear weapons on the territory of States that do not possess such weapons, not to increase nuclear-weapon stockpiles, and not to replace already deployed weapons with new types.

The creation of denuclearized zones in various regions is another element in the struggle towards the elimination of the threat of nuclear war and the consolidation of peace and security in the world. On 8 April this year the Warsaw Treaty States addressed to European States, the United States and Canada an appeal for vigorous action with a view to implementing proposals on the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the European continent, including northern Europe, the Balkans and all along the line between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty in Central Europe.

This is the second year we are considering the limitation of the naval arms race in the Disarmament Commission. Having been among those who initiated the resolution on this question, my country wishes to reaffirm its interest in the adoption of effective measures in this area and to that end the undertaking of appropriate negotiations with the participation of the major naval Powers and other interested countries.

Debates on this question at the fortieth session of the General Assembly and the relevant resolutions that have been adopted have shown that for the majority of
Member States this is a serious and topical subject. Their concern arises from the threat to international peace and security posed by the continuous escalation of the naval arms race, increased military presence and naval activities by certain States in regions of conflict or tension far away from their own shores, and frequent cases in which naval forces have been used to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States and threats or acts of aggression against them.
The naval manoeuvres in the southern Mediterranean that led to direct acts of aggression against Libya is clear proof of the need most urgently to adopt effective measures in the area of naval arms. Given this need, the Soviet Union has added to the package of measures proposed by the socialist countries on turning the Mediterranean into a stable zone of peace and cooperation a new constructive proposal, that is, the simultaneous withdrawal of Soviet and American fleets from the Mediterranean and the immediate holding of negotiations on the matter. Located in the immediate area of the Mediterranean, the People's Republic of Bulgaria is directly interested in consolidating security in the region.

The problem of limiting the naval arms race is of concern to other maritime and ocean regions. It is acquiring global scope, including various aspects of naval armaments and activities. This opinion is reflected in proposals related to the adoption of certain measures in the field of naval armament contained in various documents issued by many States and in the study by United Nations experts on the question.

The current consideration of this question should not only highlight the dangerous nature of the naval arms race but also envisage concrete measures aimed at its limitation, which would then be discussed in negotiations among States. In stating that all proposals it has made so far - individually or jointly with other countries - remain valid, Bulgaria is of the view that a thorough study of naval forces and activities, in particular in regions of conflict and tension, or far from these forces' own shores, as well as certain confidence-building measures contained in the proposals made thus far by Member States and in the study by United Nations experts, could constitute a first step.
With reference to the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 40/94 I and 40/94 F, the People's Republic of Bulgaria believes that the Disarmament Commission should discuss this matter on a priority basis in a working group of the Commission in order to delimit the area and subject-matter for future negotiations and report on its conclusions and recommendations to the forty-first session of the General Assembly.

Concerning the other items on the agenda of the Commission, the Bulgarian delegation would like to make the following brief comments:

We consider that the Disarmament Commission should prepare recommendations on the start of negotiations with a view to concluding an agreement on the reduction of military budgets. The proposal by the Warsaw Treaty States made on 5 March 1984 contains concrete measures in this area. The meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held in March this year, reaffirmed the need for States not to increase military expenditures, but rather to reduce them, in particular States with a major military potential.

We share the concern over Pretoria's increasing nuclear ambitions, which represent a threat to the African continent and to world peace. We support the request that South Africa adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and place its nuclear facilities under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We condemn the continuing co-operation in this field by certain Western countries and transnational corporations with South Africa.

Believing that the United Nations is an important instrument for safeguarding and consolidating peace, we reaffirm that its role in the field of disarmament should continue and be strengthened in every regard. At the same time we should like to stress that lack of progress in the area of disarmament is due to
a lack of desire on the part of certain Western countries to agree to practical measures on disarmament and not to insufficiencies in the negotiating machinery of the United Nations. Political will is necessary in order for the United Nations to play its rightful role in a future system of collective security, not changes in structure.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that our difficult and tense times makes it imperative for States to review the situation and to bring about radical changes in their approach to international relations. There is a need for intensive action for peace and disarmament in all areas. Any possibility for positive change in international affairs should be explored. As the centre for discussion of current problems of disarmament, following up on the decisions taken at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission could play a more active role to that end.
The CHAIRMAN: It is nearing 1 p.m. We have not quite accomplished our task this morning. The many and interesting statements that we have heard were longer than the Secretariat could anticipate in making its plans. We therefore face a long and interesting session this afternoon. I would insist on our starting at 3 p.m. sharp. I do not intend to wait before calling on the next speaker, the representative of Japan. Therefore, please make it a point to be on time and thus show him the courtesy that he and his delegation deserve.

Contingency plans may be needed to deal with speakers that cannot be accommodated this afternoon, depending on the course of further statements. A timetable for the three days starting tomorrow has been circulated.

I shall now adjourn the meeting, imploring members once again to be on time this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.