DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 6 May 1986, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany)

later: Mr. BUTLER (Australia)
(Vice-Chairman)

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

- General exchange of views
- Programme of work
- General exchange of views
- Organization of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I am a little saddened to see that despite my admonitions a quorum has barely been reached. However, the first speaker, the representative of Japan, has kindly consented to begin his statement now, and I call on him.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. IMAI (Japan): It is indeed a pleasure, Sir, to see you in the Chair this year. With your well-known ability to handle multilateral conferences, you will, I am sure, lead us through a very successful session.

This year is already the eighth in which we have met in the Disarmament Commission since its establishment in 1978 as a result of a decision of the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament. The Commission has meanwhile achieved several concrete results in such subjects as the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the Second Disarmament Decade and the relationship between disarmament and development.

At the same time, it is also undeniable that the Commission has not fully lived up to the original expectations. We feel it necessary and appropriate to remind ourselves of the importance of this subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, whose function it is to deliberate on matters of disarmament and whose participants encompass all the Member States, and thus renew our efforts further to activate this body.

To that end, one possible approach may be to concentrate our efforts on those items on our agenda on which early accord may be possible, while dealing with items with limited prospects of progress only every other year, so as to provide time for reflection and to see if new and more realistic approaches and ideas to resolve the difficulties may be forthcoming. We feel that such flexibility is all the more necessary in order to avoid the danger of returning to the pre-1978 state of limbo and inactivity of the Commission.
(Mr. Imai, Japan)

With such a perspective in mind, I note that this year's agenda includes the question of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, while there is a proposal to shorten the time for our work from the normal four weeks to three, due to budgetary constraints within the entire United Nations system. That means that we should not only deal with the question of improving the efficacy of the Commission's work, but also direct our attention to the broader issue of how we are to deal effectively with the matter of disarmament in the overall framework of the United Nations.

First, of course, we need to remind ourselves of the role of the various disarmament bodies as set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We should then strive to create a momentum through the activities of the United Nations towards arms control and reductions so that the nuclear-weapon States and those within the military alliances of East and West will be drawn into serious negotiations on disarmament.
At the same time we should channel our efforts for disarmament through the three bodies with competence in this area - the General Assembly or its First Committee, this Commission and the Conference on Disarmament. It is important to avoid a situation in which various international organizations take up different aspects of disarmament in an unco-ordinated manner, leading to confusion in the handling of this vitally important subject. We feel that the issues of disarmament are well understood and extensively discussed and that prolonged repetition of the same arguments at multiple international forums is not very productive.

With the known difficulties in the financial situation there is more reason for Member States to restrain themselves from making casual requests for the United Nations to do extensive but not necessarily vital work. Those studies that need not be carried out under the auspices of the United Nations, and which lack the support of concerned Member States, should advisedly be postponed, while the States most interested should consider presenting national papers to assist deliberations in an appropriate forum.

We are encouraged by the efforts undertaken so far in the disarmament activities of the United Nations to bring about more efficiency and effectiveness in the work. An example is the recent practice of clustering draft resolutions in the First Committee, which has, however, not yet led to a reduction in the overall number of draft resolutions. With regard to improving the work of the Conference on Disarmament, considerable improvement can be expected if we can simplify the process of report-writing and become more reasonable and objective in that work.

The fact that we need to take up the question of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in this manner indicates the gravity of the situation, and I have thus chosen to deal with this matter first. The important thing is, if I may say so, that the countries with major military
capabilities maintain a positive attitude towards the possible role of the
United Nations in this regard.

Now I should like to proceed to other items on our agenda, beginning with
item 4.

The leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union met in Geneva in
November 1985 and issued a joint statement making clear the intention of the two
States with a particular responsibility for nuclear disarmament to work together
for the attainment of this goal. In the joint statement the leaders noted
"proposals recently tabled by the United States and the Soviet Union" and
"called for early progress, in particular in areas where there is common
ground, including the principle of 50-per-cent reductions in the nuclear arms
of the United States and the USSR appropriately applied, as well as the idea
of an interim INF agreement.

"During the negotiation of these agreements effective measures of
verification of compliance with obligations assumed will be agreed upon."

This is a matter which the Disarmament Commission should duly recognize and record.

The two States are continuing their negotiations in Geneva, and we understand
that the fifth round is to commence in two days' time, that is on 8 May. Since
disarmament negotiations involve much that is political in nature, this fact, taken
together with the asymmetry of the force structure of the two States, the need to
maintain the strategic balance and to develop agreed concepts, including various
definitions, makes for complex negotiations covering a wide range of subjects.
Though those negotiations will not be simple, we hope that the two States will take
due heed of world opinion fervently calling for the realization of nuclear
disarmament and reach specific disarmament agreements at the earliest opportunity.
That wish should be reflected in the related recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

The General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament have repeatedly called upon the United States and the Soviet Union to provide information at opportune moments on the progress in their bilateral negotiations. This spring the two sides have respectively taken steps to inform the Member States of the Conference on Disarmament in this regard, and we appreciate this action on their part. We believe that the Disarmament Commission should express the wish that the two States continue to provide the relevant information in the future as well.

The clear position of my country in favour of the early realization of a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests has been stated on many occasions in the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament and in other forums, and with a view to advancing the work of the Conference on Disarmament we had a proposal by Foreign Minister Abe in 1984 for a step-by-step approach and have presented many working papers on the subject. Further, we have made efforts for the realization of an international seismic data exchange system as a necessary measure to ensure verification of compliance of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. In April we took the necessary budgetary measures for the international exchange of level II data or the data which will allow more in-depth analysis of various seismic events.

Seen against the background of our strong desire and active effort, the situation in the Conference on Disarmament with regard to this question is, to say the least, disappointing. However, we have noted an emerging understanding among those concerned that the structure, scope, compliance, verification and other aspects of a comprehensive test-ban treaty are the issues that should be considered. We strongly hope that the States concerned will take due consideration of this emerging common understanding and begin practical work at the earliest opportunity.
(Mr. Imai, Japan)

The drafting of a comprehensive test-ban treaty requires extensive work, as can be seen by taking as an example the issue of verification alone. Given such a perspective, we feel that the past two and a half years, during which the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to conduct substantive work on this question, have been a very negative factor. We hope that practical work under a realistic mandate may begin at an early opportunity so that the various ideas and concepts presented in the many working papers, which are now buried unattended, will be identified and carefully examined, thereby leading to substantial progress in our work. We believe that the United Nations Disarmament Commission should recommend that all States adopt a realistic approach so as to break the present deadlock on this question in the Conference on Disarmament.

Last year the General Assembly was able to adopt a single resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space which reflected the positions of the States concerned - this without a single negative vote. Further, at the end of April the Conference on Disarmament established an Ad Hoc Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space on the basis of a mandate which enables realistic assessment of the question.

We welcome the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee. We realize only too well the difficulty of analysing and categorizing actual activities in outer space and of considering measures for their regulation. Thus I feel it would be appropriate for the United Nations Disarmament Commission to welcome the spirit of co-operation shown by States which resulted in the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee, and to express its desire to see the early attainment of an agreement in those areas identified as being suitable for consideration by the Conference on Disarmament.

With regard to the work of the Conference on Disarmament on chemical weapons, it is imperative that we not expand the scope excessively and thus not lose sight of the basic objective of these negotiations.
For example, in the course of this year's work the identification of substances to be regulated has begun, and in this sense the work has progressed a step beyond the abstract to something more concrete. We feel it important that in this process those substances which have substantial commercial use should be dealt with in a different manner from those substances having exclusively military uses. The definition of chemicals to come under different levels of international control should be developed with similar considerations in mind.

The issues concerning the organization responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the convention would be dealt with more effectively if those functions which are of primary importance were considered separately from those functions of an implemental and procedural nature.

In any case, at the moment the chemical weapons negotiations are proceeding at a rather slow pace, and I feel that the Disarmament Commission should express its great interest in seeing enhanced progress.

I should like now to turn to the question of the reduction of military budgets. My country believes that in order to deal with this question States should publicly acknowledge their military expenditures and provide for fair calculation and comparison of those expenditures; at the same time, due account should be taken of the particular military and political situations in the various regions of the world.

We consider the standardized international reporting instrument developed by the United Nations to be an extremely useful tool for understanding the actual military expenditures of States and for making the necessary comparisons. We have been submitting our own report accordingly. I wish to note that some States have refused even to provide information on their military expenditures, insisting instead that political will alone will suffice to deal with this subject. Should that be the case, it is difficult to see the purpose of our exercise under agenda
item 5, the aim of which is to develop principles for State conduct in the field of
the reduction of military budgets. We call upon those States to participate in the
deliberations from a realistic perspective, so that we may conclude our work during
this session, as was requested in the relevant resolution of the General Assembly.

Mistrust among States needs to be alleviated so that the foundations for
advancing disarmament negotiations may be laid down. In this regard we welcome the
fact that we are again to take up the task of elaborating guide-lines for
confidence-building measures under item 9 of our agenda. My country considers the
essential core of confidence-building measures to be the enhancement of openness
and transparency in relation to military matters, with due consideration being
given to the particular political and military situations of the various regions of
the world.

We feel that the basis for this work at the current session should be the
composite draft text by the Chairman, drawn up during our work two years ago, which
contains much material which was commonly acceptable. Many of the sections where
there are alternatives or reservations relate, for example, to such disarmament
measures as non-first use of nuclear weapons and other such measures. If we bear
in mind that confidence-building measures are not meant to substitute for specific
disarmament measures but rather to create an environment conducive to disarmament,
this kind of confusion between the two should be eliminated. Furthermore, our work
is not so much to develop confidence-building measures per se, but rather to work
out guide-lines for future work on confidence-building measures. I trust that
given such understanding we shall be able to complete our work during this session.

We feel that there is a need for some discussion on how we are to deal with
agenda item 8, on the naval arms race. The report of a group of experts has
recently been published, and we think it deserves careful perusal. My country for
one considers it important that, in addition to a reaffirmation of the principles
set out in the United Nations Charter and in the Final Document of the tenth Special session of the General Assembly, the following points be taken fully into account in any discussions on this question: first, that information on the actual force structure of the naval forces needs to be made public; secondly, that the situations in the different regions of the world and the legitimate interests of coastal and seafaring States should be given proper attention; and, thirdly, that present-world stability is based on a balance in the organic whole of nuclear and conventional weapons systems, at sea, on land and in the air.

To consider separately only those armaments which are at sea would be tantamount to artificially ignoring the organic relationship among the various weapons systems and the resulting global balance. We think that this is not a correct approach to the question. We should rather adopt an approach that would allow for consideration of naval forces as part of an integral disarmament process involving both nuclear and conventional forces.

I have set out the views of my country with regard to some of the issues on our agenda, as well as on our work here in the Disarmament Commission. As I mentioned in the beginning, we hope to see our efforts concentrated on a limited number of items on our agenda and a realistic approach adopted so that we shall be able together to activate further the work of this deliberative body on disarmament.

Mr. SIDDIKY (Bangladesh): Let me at the outset, Sir, extend to you warm congratulations on your unanimous election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Bangladesh and the Federal Republic of Germany have traditionally maintained close friendship and co-operation. Your own long-standing association with the United Nations and your contributions in the field of disarmament reinforce our conviction that under your able stewardship the Commission will successfully carry out its mandated task.
We should like also to congratulate the other Commission officers on their well-deserved elections.

I would also convey our deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Mansour Ahmad of Pakistan, for the skilful manner in which he guided the deliberations of our Commission last year.

My delegation attaches particular importance to the current session of the Disarmament Commission, which is taking place during the International Year of Peace. It will be recalled that at its fortieth session the General Assembly proclaimed this year as the International Year of Peace, but it also adopted a detailed programme for its observance. In pursuance of the Assembly's call, Member States and all United Nations bodies and subsidiary organs have taken steps to observe the Year in a fitting manner. The Disarmament Commission, whose deliberations have a direct impact on international peace and security, should therefore make a determined effort to make a positive contribution in fulfilment of that cherished objective.

My delegation takes this opportunity to share with other members of the Commission our views on the items included on our agenda. The agenda we adopted yesterday rightly focuses on a number of important disarmament issues. We hope that these items will be comprehensively discussed and deliberated upon at the current session.

During the course of the year we have witnessed yet another escalation of the arms race, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. The super-Powers and other militarily significant States, contrary to the expectation of the vast majority of the members of the international community, have continued to develop and accumulate in their arsenals the most sophisticated and lethal weapons. Such accumulation has not given them any additional security; on the contrary, it has
created greater insecurity for all of us. We are all painfully aware that the current global nuclear arsenals, estimated to number over 50,000 warheads, can destroy our civilization many times over. Various studies, both within and outside the United Nations, have also demonstrated that any outbreak of nuclear war, however limited in scale, would inevitably escalate and threaten the very survival of mankind. The nuclear Powers, particularly the super-Powers, acknowledge the fact that a nuclear war cannot be won and hence must never be fought. But they still continue with the build-up of their nuclear warheads to attain so-called superiority.
Dialogue and meaningful negotiations are the only viable options in this nuclear age and it was in this context that we welcomed the resumption of bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers and the summit-level meeting between their two leaders in Geneva last year. There is no denying the fact that the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament rests with the two super-Powers, which between them control 98 per cent of the world's nuclear weapons. It is our expectation that considering the vital importance of the issue, they will make a renewed effort to reach agreement in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, which, in turn, would have a favourable impact on international peace and security.

Bangladesh is irrevocably committed to general and complete disarmament and we firmly believe that global peace and security can only be ensured through the elimination and destruction of nuclear weapons and their stockpiles. Bangladesh, a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, is deeply disappointed to note that the cherished objective of the non-proliferation Treaty has still remains unfulfilled and that nuclear proliferation, both vertical and horizontal, continues unabated. It should be self-evident by now that limitation of nuclear armaments and the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty are absolutely essential to our common endeavour to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race. However, pending conclusion of such a treaty, the nuclear Powers should refrain from the testing of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems and there should be a freeze on the production, deployment and research and development of nuclear weapons. This process should be followed by a gradual reduction of all nuclear arsenals. The question of verification, like all other important questions, can be resolved through negotiations. The vast majority of Member States of the United Nations that are parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, in keeping with their Treaty
obligations, have not acquired nuclear weapons. They are legitimately demanding that effective and credible assurances be extended to them against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. The recent tragic accident in a nuclear reactor has once again demonstrated that any atomic radiation may suddenly threaten life on a continent and in the world at large. It was also a grim reminder to all of us that we live in a dangerous world where the use of a fraction of existing nuclear arsenals could lead us to the precipice of self-destruction.

Let me now turn to the question of conventional disarmament. My delegation has at preceding sessions expressed its deep concern at the phenomenal growth in the conventional arms race, the development of high-technology conventional weapons and indiscriminate arms sales. These developments have led to armed conflicts and wars in various parts of the world, resulting in the death of many millions and in much destruction. The issue of conventional disarmament, therefore, should receive our priority attention. Our failure in the past to act firmly has compounded the situation. In consideration of its importance and urgency, we should take immediate steps to redress the situation. The United Nations report on various aspects of the conventional arms race calls for our serious consideration.

The Commission is once again deliberating on the question of the reduction of military budgets. My delegation has always extended its full support and co-operation to the Romanian delegation - the initiator of the proposal - and we have always taken an active interest in this issue. The Commission had already made some progress on this item at preceding sessions and we hope that a renewed effort will be made to conclude our deliberations on this item successfully through the adoption of suitable recommendations during the current session. In the past, the Bangladesh delegation had emphasized that any reduction in military budgets and the redirection of these resources to the socio-economic sectors would undoubtedly
help both developed and developing countries alike. My delegation has always fully associated itself with all the initiatives that have been taken on the question of the relationship between disarmament and development and we are looking forward to the successful convening of the forthcoming international Conference in Paris.

My delegation had also emphasized at preceding sessions the particular importance which we attach to the question of South Africa's nuclear capability. This item has been on our agenda for a number of years but it is a pity that we have not yet been able to adopt suitable recommendations due to lack of consensus. The apartheid régime of South Africa, on the other hand, has intensified its repression at home and has continued its illegal occupation of Namibia. Its policies of aggression against other African States have clearly threatened both regional and international peace and security. The Pretoria régime, which is not a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, is making every effort to acquire nuclear weapons. In consideration of the importance and urgency of the issue, we appeal to all member States to demonstrate moderation and vision so that we can adopt appropriate recommendations by consensus at the current session. Time is of crucial importance on this issue and we must act now before it is too late.

The agenda item relating to the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament is once again before us for our deliberations. We had a fruitful and constructive discussion on this item at the last session. During our past deliberations it was underlined that the question of disarmament, which has global dimensions and implications, can only be addressed in a multilateral context. The United Nations, therefore, has a central role to play in the field of disarmament, and every effort should be made to strengthen its disarmament machinery for halting and reversing the arms race with a view to achieving general and complete disarmament. Disarmament is a moral imperative in this nuclear age,
and concerned United Nations bodies have already made concrete and positive contributions to this end. Nevertheless, through institutional reforms, we should try to enhance their effectiveness. We believe that the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament, should be allowed to continue with serious and meaningful negotiations on crucial disarmament issues. In consideration of its special role, Bangladesh has applied for membership of that body. The Disarmament Commission, a deliberative body, on the other hand, could play a highly positive role in facilitating the negotiations on various disarmament issues through comprehensive discussion and deliberation. The First Committee of the General Assembly, as we are all aware, is the declaratory body which considers various disarmament issues and recommends adoption of resolutions on them by the General Assembly. We firmly believe that the Committee should encourage all delegations to enter into serious and meaningful negotiations, so that those resolutions, as far as possible, can be adopted by consensus.

During our current deliberations on this item, we should make a concerted effort to make positive contributions towards strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

As regards the two remaining items, namely, the naval arms race and disarmament and confidence-building measures, my delegation has already expressed its position on those issues at preceding sessions. We feel that all aspects of the question of the naval arms race should be deliberated thoroughly and exhaustively and the United Nations study on the issue should be considered in its entirety. Similarly, as regards confidence-building measures, we believe a comprehensive approach should be taken to consider not only various military issues but also other related economic and social issues. The current session, therefore, should consider these two important items comprehensively so that we can adopt suitable recommendations by consensus.
(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

The tasks ahead of the Commission are indeed diverse and difficult but we sincerely believe that, with the necessary political will and moderation, we should be able to achieve concrete and meaningful results so as to redress the situation at least partially. In the International Year of Peace, let us then make a collective effort to bring new momentum to our common endeavour to enhance international peace and security through disarmament.
Mr. BUI XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam): Permit me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important Commission.

I wish also to extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Commission.

In our assessment, this year's substantive session of the Disarmament Commission takes place in a still very complicated international situation. Almost nothing of what we had hoped for in the way of some positive developments in late 1984 and 1985 has been realized.

With regard to disarmament, deadlock continues to prevail, while the arms race has not slowed down for a single instants. We all know that concrete and material preparations have been made and a large fund has been allotted to the "star wars" programmes. The conception promulgated by the "star wars" proponents is based on a dangerous and seriously false hypothesis that security can be achieved through the accumulation of weaponry, by a precarious balance of deterrence, or doctrines of superiority. Moreover, taking into account the intensive modernization plans of offensive nuclear weapons undertaken by those very "star wars" proponents, one can hardly believe that the "star wars" programmes are not aimed at military-strategic superiority. In either case, the result would be an unprecedented arms race in outer space and on earth, with unforeseeable consequences.

Today international security has become more fragile owing to the increased recourse to the threat or use of force in international relations by the imperialist forces.

The current ominous state of world affairs is not everyone's fault. The overwhelming majority of the members of the international community are striving after effective measures to prevent the arms race from extending into outer space and to terminate it on earth. One can recall the famous appeals made by the
leaders of Argentina, India, Greece, Mexico, Sweden, and the United Republic of Tanzania. The recent meeting of non-aligned Ministers, held in New Delhi from 14-18 April 1986, came out with numerous important disarmament proposals concerning the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, the banning of all nuclear-weapon tests, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

One of the two Powers which have the largest nuclear arsenals, the Soviet Union, put forth in January of this year a comprehensive, realistic and substantially important programme for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the reduction and elimination of many other types of armaments during the next 15 years. The Soviet Union is currently assuming a unilateral undertaking not to be the first to place any kind of weapon in outer space. The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam supports entirely all those initiatives of the Soviet Union.

We think it unfair to point the finger of criticism at everyone, when the fact is that one side had unilaterally imposed a moratorium on all nuclear tests until the other side conducted its tenth nuclear-weapon test; and that one side has proposed to dismantle all military alliances in the world, and so on. In this regard, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam supports the proposals made by the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Socialist Republic of Romania to turn Europe into a chemical-weapon-free zone. Some claim that those proposals are just propaganda, but why do they not come up with a counter-proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons in a shorter period of time - let us say within 10 years?

The Disarmament Commission has met for seven consecutive years. No doubt we should make the best use of the universal composition of this body and the advantage of concentrating on a limited number of disarmament items to work out concrete recommendations.
Agenda items 4, 5 and 6, namely, the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and other disarmament measures, reduction of military budgets, and the nuclear capability of South Africa, have been inscribed on the Commission's agenda from its inception.

Progress on agenda item 4 requires that the principles and priorities in the field of disarmament as set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament be preserved and strengthened. To come to grips with the new dangerous developments in the arms race, measures concerning the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be given special attention.

Annex II of the report of the last session of the Disarmament Commission (A/40/42) offers a good basis for further work on agenda item 5. The multifaceted consequences of the present level and magnitude of military expenditures, in particular those of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily important States, are well known.

There are also available a good number of proposals to freeze and reduce military budgets and transfer part of the resources saved thereby to economic development. Measures to ensure compliance with agreements concerning reduction of military budgets can be discussed and agreed upon during negotiations on those agreements.

A successful conclusion of the Commission's work on the question of the reduction of military budgets would constitute a significant contribution to the forthcoming International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which is to be held in Paris in two months.

The grave consequences of South Africa's capability to produce or acquire nuclear weapons are indisputable. To stop the further development of South Africa's nuclear-weapon capability, an end must be put to all kinds of collaboration
with South Africa in both the military and nuclear fields. In assuming its full responsibility, the Security Council should enforce and extend its arms embargo against South Africa to cover the nuclear field.

My delegation shares the view that the United Nations role should constantly be strengthened. At the same time, it is my delegation's basic assumption that disarmament progress depends primarily upon the political will - in other words, the policies - of the States involved. Since at present we have a rather appropriately constructed disarmament machinery, our main task should be to ensure a more sincere and constructive participation in the disarmament process by those who have long hindered it. It is true that there has been a considerable increase in the number of meetings of United Nations disarmament-related bodies and the volume of resolutions adopted by the Organization on disarmament issues. But Viet Nam sees this situation as a reflection of the harder nature of the struggle for international peace and disarmament. We cannot stop discussing and introducing resolutions on measures concerning nuclear-weapon tests, prevention of an arms race in outer space, denuclearization of Africa and so on just because some people prevent those measures from being implemented.

My delegation believes that the initial results of the discussion on the issue of curbing the naval arms race at the last session of the Disarmament Commission allows us to consider the issue in a more detailed and thorough way. The General Assembly has adopted resolutions 38/158 F, 39/151 I, and 40/94 I on this issue.
The study prepared by the Group of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General in document A/40/535 covered a wide range of complex topics. Alongside the analysis of some aspects of the current naval forces and naval arms systems, the study examines the implication of the naval arms race for security and for the peaceful use of the seas. The experts also approached possible measures of disarmament and extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans. My delegation none the less finds that a more in-depth review of the use of naval forces by some Powers against developing countries and national liberation movements may further bring out the adverse effects of the naval arms race for international security and stability. In some parts of the study, the application of the theory of geopolitics may have blurred the essence of the matters considered. Here we want to emphasize the distinction between those who cause and promote the naval arms race and use their navies as instruments of their policies of aggression and expansion and those who are therefore forced to take necessary defensive measures. We wish that the proposals put forth by the three Indo-Chinese countries – namely, the People's Republic of Kampuchea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam – to turn South-East Asia into a zone of peace, stability and co-operation had also been reflected in paragraph 251 of the study which focuses on South-East Asia.

Those are our very preliminary comments on the study on the naval arms race. Together with the proposals that have already been made or may be made in time to come, the study can be used during discussion of and negotiations on the issue. We listened with great interest to the statement delivered yesterday by the Ambassador of Sweden and we concur in many ideas contained in her statement, especially those concerning issues which should be considered during negotiations on curbing the naval arms race. At this session of the Disarmament Commission, the question of curbing the naval arms race should be dealt with in an appropriate subsidiary body
with a view to identifying possible disarmament measures and discussing appropriate forums for negotiations.

We attach great importance to measures aimed at building confidence among States. The confidence-building process, whether on a global or regional scale, should be comprehensive, involving political, economic and social measures. As we are all agreed that the main cause of international instability lies in the arms race and the greatest threat to international security is the nuclear threat, we should naturally give priority attention to measures aimed at halting the nuclear-arms race and at disarmament. Without being considered in isolation from global confidence-building measures, regional measures would greatly contribute to regional peace, stability and co-operation if they are achieved on the basis of agreement among all concerned States in the region and free from outside interference.

I have dealt at considerable length with all the issues on the agenda for this session of the Disarmament Commission and with the international situation that demands a greater contribution from the Commission itself. My delegation is pledged to contribute to the work of the Commission.

Mr. CANALES (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to express my delegation's satisfaction at the Chairman's election to conduct the work of this session of the Disarmament Commission and to extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Commission.

As a small contribution by my delegation to the efforts that are being made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman towards overcoming the financial crisis currently affecting the United Nations, my statement will be as brief as the importance of the items before us allows.

Despite the considerable efforts of the international community, the arms race has grown so huge and so dangerous that we must now reconsider the commitments we
have made and clearly accepted by consensus in the Final Document approved at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

We are obliged to note that, to our great regret, little or nothing has come of our efforts. The only thing that has increasingly become clear is that the vast and growing arsenals of conventional and nuclear weapons are monopolies belonging exclusively to the great Powers. The small countries are relegated to the status of mere spectators, unable to do anything beyond exercising moral pressure. Consequently, this Commission's sessions have become a ritual of good intentions and endless, repetitious debate which have in no way contributed towards reducing the threat of total annihilation. Apart from meeting their own responsibilities, there is little that the small countries can do to limit the arms race. The ultimate decision lies in the hands of the great Powers.

However, we consider that we have the right and moral obligation as members of the international community to make our voice heard as we call on the great Powers to adopt more flexible positions to enable them to overcome the impasse that has arisen in recent times.

Our delegation considers that the Geneva talks have not progressed as speedily as the world would have wished. We realize that this is due to the technical complexity and enormous interests at stake in a negotiation of this significance. However, we also believe that it is necessary to point out that, while it is difficult to build up world confidence, it is very easy to destroy it through immobility. Hence, there is the need for the great Powers involved to show concrete results and to do so in the near future.

The Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at the special session devoted to disarmament clearly established that the priorities in negotiations on disarmament were as follows: nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; conventional weapons, including those which may be
(Mr. Canales, Chile)
deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects; and the
reduction of armed forces. It also established that nothing should prevent States
from holding simultaneous negotiations on all priority matters.

The call for general and complete disarmament is undoubtedly an idea with
which we can all agree, but we also realize that in practice this is impossible
since we have not achieved the conditions necessary to make progress towards
building the confidence that is required to move forward significantly.

We cannot fail to refer to the very grave emergency situation, with its
attendant dangers of radiation, mankind has undergone in recent days; indeed, it is
not clear whether that emergency has yet been overcome. Inevitably, this lead us
to reflect on the significance and unpredictability of atomic energy out of control
and on the urgent need to establish verification and reporting guide-lines allowing
for supervision.
In our increasingly interdependent world, we believe that openness is vital, particularly in situations such as the one to which I have referred. The concealment of the true dimensions of a catastrophe of this type is unacceptable, since such an occurrence produces effects that transcend national borders and affect other nations and, indeed, other continents.

The continued increase in military expenditure produced by the increased purchase of armaments, encouraged for the most part by the weapons-exporting Powers, poses a great challenge to us to curb the arms race at the regional level in order to channel the resources thus freed to overall development.

We do not feel that there are any grounds for expecting that the great Powers will begin the oft-promised disarmament process. That is why we have firmly supported the initiative taken by the President of Peru, Mr. Allan Garcia, who last July proposed the conclusion of a regional agreement to reduce expenditures on armaments and to declare a freeze on their acquisition.

In order to ensure that statements led to practical actions, the Governments of Chile and Peru have agreed to the holding in both countries in turn of meetings involving the chiefs of staff of their armed forces as part of a gradual and continuing process designed to reach understandings whereby mutual trust can be strengthened and a future regional agreement to limit weapons expenditures made possible. The first of those meetings is now being held at Lima, Peru.

Our country is a firm supporter of strengthening the powers of the United Nations. There can be no question that the United Nations has an active and growing role to play in the field of disarmament, since it is the natural setting within which the international community can assert its rights under the Charter. In the case of disarmament, in particular, the United Nations is the only universal
forum equipped with the tools to enable it fully to achieve its objectives. Unfortunately, we believe that in this particular case it is not the tools that are to blame for lack of progress.

Mr. CAMPOA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me say at the outset that our Chairman's personal talent is well known to us all, just as we are familiar with his ability to serve the causes that are part of his lofty diplomatic career. We are enormously pleased that his personal qualities have been put at the service of this important deliberative body for multilateral disarmament. We wish him every success and assure him of our wholehearted co-operation.

The naval arms race is well-known, obvious, serious and extremely dangerous because it leads to the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons that, in turn, entails the threat of nuclear war in geographical areas that have thus far been free from that type of risk.

The study on the naval arms race by the Group of Experts contains a systematic analysis of this question. The international community, whose awareness of the seriousness of the threat posed by naval armaments has resulted in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, now has available to it a document that will help to identify practical measures to curb the militarization of the seas. In particular, ways can be considered to avoid the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons that results from the unrestricted movement through the seas and oceans of naval units equipped with nuclear weapons.

Non-nuclear-weapon littoral States have been forced into coexistence with nuclear-weapons systems carried by naval units that pass through maritime spaces adjacent to them. Such a situation has increased the dangers of nuclear war, expanding the theatre for confrontation to the oceans. Furthermore, littoral States seriously suffer under the threat entailed by such weaponry.
The Disarmament Commission has been requested by the General Assembly to consider this question and to identify practical disarmament measures in the sphere of naval armaments. There can be no doubt that delegations here present have an opportunity to make a major contribution to the process of naval disarmament.

Today, the Disarmament Commission has before it the challenge of adopting concrete measures to deal with this major question, which has hitherto not been given proper attention by multilateral United Nations organs. We are all familiar with the machinery set out in the Final Document and the great responsibility incumbent upon the Disarmament Commission. Only in so far as the Commission can convey, through its report to the General Assembly, an adequate series of measures in this area will it be possible to initiate a process that can lead to agreements to halt the naval arms race and assist the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon countries to rid themselves of the threat posed by the movement of nuclear-equipped naval units belonging to the two great military alliances.

Experience has clearly taught us that, where disarmament is concerned, the role of the United Nations depends upon three distinct factors, all of which must be present if progress is to be made in that connection.

First, it is necessary to have an adequate machinery through which the Members of the United Nations, properly assisted by the appropriate departments of the Secretariat, can deliberate and take decisions.

We believe that any machinery involved in the consideration of any particular question can be improved. Where disarmament is concerned, that has been the view of Member States, since they have called for a series of reforms, dating back to the Final Document of 1978.

It is also necessary, however, that there be a readiness on the part of Member States to make full use of a particular machinery. It is appropriate to point out in this connection that, where disarmament is concerned, there are two distinct
courses. There is the United Nations course, with its multilateral competence, there is the bilateral course provided by the two military alliances. Consensus exists on the complementarity between the two. In other words, there is general agreement that both the multilateral and bilateral courses are necessary because through the first Member States can participate in discussions on a question that involves world security, in which all have a stake, and through the second the two military alliances can make a beginning towards the reduction and elimination of weapons that they alone possess.
(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

However, a successful multilateral and bilateral relationship on disarmament requires that those two aspects be linked and that there be channels of information between them, since it is difficult to harmonize two actions when those concerned in each have no knowledge of the other.

In that respect, we must say that the multilateral field, comprising the bodies set up within the United Nations system, should strengthen its initiative to be represented on a matter of interest to all nations. But that depends primarily on a strong will to do so, and that will is the result not so much of machinery as of initiative, firmness and imagination. For, above all, the political will of the countries without arms is, clearly, less important than the political will of the countries today possessing a near monopoly of nuclear and non-nuclear arsenals. No progress can be made on disarmament without the political will of those countries.

Finally, the third element is provided by current international conditions. It is clear that international tension, renewed conflicts and lack of trust prevent disarmament initiatives getting anywhere.

Rearing in mind the three elements that I have described, the Argentine delegation will make its main contribution in the analysis of agenda item 7.

Mr. GARCIA ITURBE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to lead the Commission's work at the current session. I also congratulate and thank the other officers of the Commission, particularly the representatives of Peru and Ecuador, who represent the Latin American Group.

When we began the Commission's work, Mr. Chairman, you rightly stressed the importance at this time of making as much progress as possible here, as that would be an important contribution to improving the international situation and to trying to bring about a peaceful climate in relations between States.
(Mr. Garcia Iturbe, Cuba)

You also said, Sir, that it is more important than ever this year, which has been declared the International Year of Peace, that we make every effort to improve international relations and thus remove so far as possible the risk that an armed conflict could provoke a large-scale war, resulting in the destruction of mankind.

We are living in a world in which the danger of nuclear war is ever-present, in which the nuclear arsenals of all the nuclear Powers amount to more than 50,000 nuclear weapons, with a power such that they could destroy the world many times over. The pace of technological development of those weapons is such that apparently we are not satisfied with that dangerous possibility and want to increase it.

Recently, in January this year, the Soviet Union, as a sign of its genuine desire to eliminate the threat to which I have referred, proposed to the United States the opening of talks on the total elimination of nuclear weapons through a three-stage plan to conclude in the year 2000. That would mean eliminating from the face of the earth the threat of its destruction by a nuclear war. However, the United States response to that commendable Soviet initiative, intended primarily to preserve world peace, can be described as flippant and lacking in seriousness, since, presented with a proposal of such importance, the United States showed not the slightest interest in seeking a formula whereby it would be possible to reach agreement.

With respect to the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, my country has always made it clear - and we repeat - that we support measures to bring about the total elimination of nuclear weapons and therefore any measure that could lead to nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, we support the ending of all test explosions of nuclear weapons and the use for the benefit of developing countries of the economic resources now being invested in such weapons, both to increase the productive capacity of those countries and to pay off their external debt.
The work relating to nuclear-weapon issues done by the Conference on Disarmament last March clearly showed the scant interest of the present United States Government in negotiating on those issues, by its agreeing to a mandate that was not the one laid down in 1982 and 1983 and constantly adopting a position tending to obstruct any possibility of negotiation.

On the other hand, there is an attempt to impose a new danger upon the world, this time through the arms race in outer space. Not satisfied with sowing the seeds of a possible war in the seas and on the continents, the United States wishes to spread them to space, on the pretext that the system it wishes to set up there will prevent destruction, when in fact it is simply the first line of attack in any possible aggression and therefore, rather than preventing war, could provoke it.

It has always been the contention of the United Nations that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes. Accordingly, one of the main themes of the resolutions adopted on the subject is precisely that all States with space programmes should refrain from developing, testing or placing weapons in outer space. As we all know, exactly the contrary is being done by the Reagan Administration through the so-called strategic defence initiative.

With regard to the question of military budgets, my delegation repeats what it has said in previous years: we emphasize the importance of beginning a process aimed at reducing military budgets, on a mutually agreed basis, either in absolute terms or in percentage terms. We also believe in the need to reallocate resources now devoted to military purposes for economic and social development, particularly to help the developing countries. Measures must be taken to bring about an immediate freeze in military expenditures and their future reduction, without that process being hindered by theories about transparency and accessibility, which only take attention away from the subject and postpone the solution of that vital issue.
We believe that the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development that is to take place in Paris in mid-1986 will be very helpful. It will make clear the need for the poorest countries of the world to receive economic resources that can only be made available - and that common sense dictates should be made available - through the reduction of military budgets.

With respect to the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, we think it very important for us to consider the matter here. Everyone knows that South Africa's nuclear capability is not merely an instrument that can be used in acts of aggression against other African countries. It also represents a tool of internal oppression to perpetuate the racist policy imposed by the South African Government upon the majority of the inhabitants of South Africa. It has been able to achieve that domination largely thanks to the co-operation it is receiving from certain Western countries, particularly the United States and Israel.

With regard to the consideration of the role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament, we consider the machinery we now have in the United Nations to be adequate to discharge the tasks allotted to it. If we do not make progress in this field of major importance, it is not because of organizational or administrative difficulties but the lack of political will shown by a small number of States that see in disarmament a serious danger: the danger of ending the tensions and frictions of the world, which would be detrimental to the vital economic interests of those countries.

Our delegation reaffirms its interest in seeing adopted effective means of limiting the naval arms race. We trust that at this session the Disarmament Commission will give due consideration to that item in view of the importance of this matter for the preservation of peace, as was explained at length and quite rightly by the representative of Argentina.
(Mr. Garcia Iturbe, Cuba)

The position of the United States delegation in connection with this item comes as no surprise to us, particularly if we glance at the Reagan Administration's plans to construct naval units in the future.

For 1990, the United States navy plans the completion of a 600-ship armada, that is, to increase its navy to 600 vessels. That plan envisages 15 aircraft-carrier battle groups; four surface-action battle groups headed by cruisers; a large number of amphibious transport ships that could rapidly deploy Marines and an amphibious landing brigade.

Why is the United States planning this enormous naval build-up? The purpose is clear. It wishes to strengthen United States naval power. It is thus seeking to impose on peoples the old policies of gunboat diplomacy and the big stick, since it dreams of returning to the good old days in which the Marines were used to stifle any event that might threaten its interests.

With respect to the adoption of confidence-building measures, we consider such measures to be a major contribution to peace and disarmament. It is necessary to reduce international tensions. We must eliminate threats of bringing countries to the brink of war. There must be a halt to aggressive policies that endanger independence and international security. More specifically, if we want to encourage trust between States and to bring about the peaceful settlement of disputes there must be a halt to aggressive military manoeuvres, intimidating manoeuvres that go on and on. I refer to those that have been under way for some time now, those carried out by the United States against the Nicaraguan people in the waters adjoining our country and at the naval base in Guantanamo, which is maintained despite the wishes of our people and Government.

It is also necessary to ensure that no State commits aggression against another, or shells a population indiscriminately causing a massacre, as occurred recently in the case of United States aggression against Libya. That aggression
was condemned by the Non-Aligned Movement at the Ministeral Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau held recently in New Delhi.

This is the International Year of Peace, and it is necessary for us to work so that at the completion of our proceedings we shall have done everything possible to meet the historic task of making a substantial contribution to the adoption of measures to guarantee peace and disarmament. That means that our countries need to be able to devote themselves to building societies in which our citizens can live an increasingly lengthy and pleasant life. I think that under your able leadership, Sir, if we work correctly, and if we all do our best, it will be possible for us to achieve significant results by the time we end our work.

Mr. DUMEVI (Ghana): We should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues on the Bureau on your election to guide the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The Ghana delegation pledges its fullest co-operation as you discharge your heavy responsibilities.

Statements by previous speakers have clearly underscored the serious concern of the international community over the growing arms race. At the time of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, the figure of $365 billion was mentioned. Two years later we heard about a figure of $450 billion. Today the arms race is estimated at about $800 billion per annum.

After two special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the picture is still alarming. It is equally disturbing to think of such colossal military outlays when millions of human beings lack the basic necessities of shelter, food and medical care.

Several speakers have also rightly touched upon the continuing deterioration of the international climate marked by the growing mistrust between the two super-Powers and the two military blocs and the escalation of regional conflicts fuelled, regrettably, by covert support for armed bandits working to overthrow legally constituted Governments.
When the United Nations launched 1986 as the International Year of Peace, the expectation was that Member States would, for a change, exercise the maximum restraint in the conduct of international relations in such a manner as would dispel rather than deepen mistrust and gradually establish a political climate conducive to the peaceful negotiation of disputes.
(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

We are almost half way through the Year, but are nowhere near the attainment of the stable political climate we had all dreamt of. Instead we have become, as the events of recent weeks exemplify, all too familiar with shows of force and gunboat diplomacy. The Disarmament Commission is therefore meeting at a very critical time. We have a duty to make not only frank observations on the agenda items before us but also constructive proposals which could serve as the basis for meaningful negotiations.

In this connection, my delegation would like to address itself to agenda item 5, dealing with the reduction of military budgets, and to agenda item 6, relating to the question of South Africa’s nuclear capability. But let me say at the outset that the selection of those two agenda items does not mean that my delegation attaches any less importance to the remaining items.

The Ghana delegation has closely studied the report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission on its 1985 substantive session (A/40/42). It is clear from paragraph 28 of the report that consensus exists on some areas of the contentious issue of freezing and reducing military budgets. Almost all delegations here assembled share the serious concern over the growing arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race. It is clear also that a substantial majority agrees that it is possible to achieve reductions in military expenditures without prejudice to the right of all States to undiminished security and territorial sovereignty.

There is also general agreement that reduction of military budgets would significantly curb the arms race and release funds for the economic and social development of all nations. However, serious divergencies exist concerning the principles which should govern the actions of States to freeze and reduce military expenditures, among them the principles of transparency, comparability and verification. The view has been expressed that for reductions of military
expenditure to be meaningful there should be regularly available data which can be compared. It has been argued that to that end the standard reporting instrument established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/142 B should be used by all States since it provides a format suitable for international comparison. Against that argument, however, the view has been advanced that questions of transparency and comparability should be resolved only in the course of negotiations and that consequently those concerns should not in any way be used as a pretext for holding back negotiations. The view has also been expressed that the issue of verification and related concerns could best be resolved during negotiations.

The wide divergency of views as regards the approach to freezing and reducing military expenditures reflect the deep suspicion and mistrust between the two military blocs. Flowing from this one should also mention the apparent fear that neither military bloc should have an advantage over the other. It is quite clear that unless this mistrust and suspicion are reduced no perceptible progress can be made.

The Government of Ghana firmly believes that it is in the interest of all to conclude an agreement that would bring about a halt to further increases in military expenditures and their subsequent gradual reduction. While Ghana has no specific proposals to offer at this stage it is our view that the two military blocs should show greater commitment by adopting a flexible attitude, without being too rigid in their positions. Furthermore, we think they should continue to talk with each other, with a view to forging common ground for negotiations. In this connection, it is the view of Ghana that a judicious combination of several methods of verification, as well as other compliance procedures as set out in General Assembly resolution 40/152, should be employed. Additionally, these procedures
should in our view be non-discriminatory and should not in any way interfere in the domestic affairs of participating States.

The indications that the planned summit meeting between the super-Powers might take place in spite of the recent unhappy events are welcome signals. We would hope that proposals emanating from either side will be carefully examined and given a chance. Easy dismissal of proposals on the grounds that they are only good as propaganda scoring points should in our view give way to serious reflection in a spirit of give and take. In sum, it is our view that, given the present political climate, the United Nations Disarmament Commission might wish to reiterate its recommendation for a demonstration of greater commitment by all States, particularly militarily powerful Member States. At the same time, pending conclusion of an agreement, all States should exercise maximum restraint in any military programmes they may draw up.

I turn now to agenda item 6, relating to South Africa's nuclear capability. The conclusions and recommendations of the Commission, as set out in annex III of its last report, are in our view still valid in many respects. It is our view, however, that the recommendations need to be strengthened in view of the continuing deterioration of the political situation in that country. The fact of the matter is that the apartheid régime's intransigence and contempt for the views of the international community result from the confidence it has acquired over the years in its military arsenal, including its nuclear capability. There is a close relationship between the apartheid system and the complex military machinery on which it is based. Ghana continues to believe that an effective weapon for dealing with the problem of apartheid with all its ramifications would be the application of mandatory economic sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter. Unfortunately, there are political purists who claim that sanctions would not work in South
Africa. Some even want us to believe that the reported cosmetic changes by the Botha régime are harbingers of realistic reforms ahead and that the international community should therefore relax and give Botha a chance. Yet these are the same people who, both at national and international conclaves, have been advocating economic sanctions against a State Member of this Organization in the name of combating terrorism.

That dramatic turnabout is perhaps one of the greatest hypocrisies of our time. There can be no doubt that nuclear weapons in the hands of a régime such as apartheid South Africa, which is desperate to perpetuate an obnoxious system, pose an ominous threat to African States. Those who have encouraged and assisted South Africa to acquire its nuclear capability should be made aware of the implications of their act.

I should like to state in conclusion that in the final analysis there would be disarmament if those who possess arms sincerely wished to disarm. The best we can do is appeal to them. In the view of Ghana, those who have the weapons, particularly nuclear weapons, owe it as a duty and responsibility to the international community to heed the several appeals of the United Nations and other forums. It is Ghana's view also that in spite of the frustration we must persevere and continue to press them until good counsel prevails.
Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): First of all I should like to take this opportunity to express my great pleasure at seeing you, Sir, in the Chair of this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation is confident that the deliberations of this forum will benefit from your competent guidance, together with the able assistance of the other officers of the Committee. Let me express my delegation's readiness to co-operate with you for the successful conclusion of the current session.

At the outset it is appropriate to emphasize that the international community has for the last year or so witnessed some important developments in the field of disarmament. Several rounds in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union have been held and specific proposals have been submitted. My country attaches particular importance to substantial reductions in the total number of nuclear weapons and to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Norway strongly supports, therefore, the principal objectives of these bilateral talks.

We are also encouraged by the mutual commitment undertaken in the joint summit statement to create further momentum in the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Above all, it is important to expedite the talks in areas where there seems to be common ground thus offering the best opportunity for achieving concrete results, such as deep cuts in strategic arms and the idea of an interim intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) agreement.

Turmoil in various parts of the world should, in our view, not be allowed to slow down the process towards arms control and disarmament that has been set in motion, which stands in contrast to the impasse the world experienced in the early 1980's.

Of course, we are aware of the fact that it would be misleading to expect rapid progress. The international disarmament agenda is ambitious and substantial
problems certainly do remain unresolved. Yet, for this reason, it is essential to concentrate on areas and topics most conducive to success. It is evident that practical results can be achieved in multilateral diplomacy when a spirit of compromise prevails over confrontation in a negotiating process. This was demonstrated by last year's Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the adoption by consensus of its Final Document.

The negotiations on chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament provide an example of an area where considerable progress has been made since a negotiating mandate was agreed upon in 1982. Norway attaches the utmost importance to these negotiations and hopes for the early conclusion of a global and comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. At the same time, we regret that the Geneva Conference has not hitherto been able to resume its substantive work which was initiated on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty in 1982 and 1983.

This summer the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development will take place in Paris. Given the priority Norway attaches to this subject-matter, we consider it particularly positive that the Conference will for the first time provide an opportunity for a comprehensive review of this important issue at the political level.

Last year's session of the Disarmament Commission can hardly be considered as a successful one, and measured by agreement on specific recommendations its achievements were very disappointing indeed. We should allow the Disarmament Commission to serve according to its purposes, as stated in General Assembly resolution 37/78 H, to deal with a limited number of subjects so that these subjects can be studied in detail. In our opinion, part of the difficulty in achieving concrete results is to be found in the lack of restraint in introducing new topics in the process before ongoing issues have been finalized.
Let me now turn to the agenda for this session. The first substantive item on the agenda deals with nuclear and conventional disarmament. On this general disarmament item the Commission failed last year to reach a consensus on a complete set of recommendations. Further attempts should be made this year to define areas where agreement exists. The task before us is to assist ongoing negotiations in both bilateral and multilateral forums. It is also to be hoped that the commitments to reach concrete results in these forums will have a positive effect on the Disarmament Commission's deliberations.

Questions related to the reduction of military expenditures have been on the agenda for many years. Norway is among the countries that actively participate in and strongly support this work. The establishment of an international system for standardized reporting on military budgets has been essential for progress on this issue. Wider participation in the reporting instrument by States from different geographic regions and representing different budget systems would contribute to increased confidence between nations and thus facilitate future efforts aimed at the conclusion of an international agreement - or agreements - on the reduction of military budgets. In this connection I should like to emphasize that agreed methods for measuring and comparing military expenditures constitute a prerequisite in this respect. For this reason, it is a requirement that agreements on balanced and verifiable reductions of military budgets be based on the principles of transparency and comparability.

Norway welcomes the report submitted by the Secretary-General to the fortieth session of the General Assembly in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 37/95 B on the refinement of the reporting system. We co-operated in this exercise by providing the information requested by the Expert Group for carrying out its task. We are convinced that the Group's work on constructing appropriate tools for
international comparison of military expenditures will be very useful in future international efforts concerning the reduction of military budgets.

Another item that has been on our agenda for some years now is the question of South Africa’s nuclear capability. It is highly regrettable that the situation in South Africa during the past year has gone from tense to explosive. The South African Government, ignoring the legitimate demands of the people, has resorted to greater violence while attempting to divert world attention by undertaking some adjustments within the existing abhorrent apartheid system based on racist supremacy. Such internal practices are not only morally wrong, but also a threat to international peace and security, especially the security of neighbouring States.
In this situation Norway shares the deep concern that South Africa might acquire nuclear weapons. Effective international efforts are necessary to prevent that régime from developing its nuclear capability in a way that threatens international security. We regret that South Africa is unwilling to place all its nuclear activities under full-scope IAEA safeguards and thus abide by the nuclear non-proliferation régime.

It is a matter of considerable regret to us that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been able to reach consensus on this very important item. For our part, we are ready to continue the useful discussions which took place during the Commission's last session with a view to finalizing this item on the agenda at this session and presenting appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-first session.

Paragraph 27 of the Final Document adopted by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament states that:

"In accordance with the Charter, the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament." (Resolution S-10/2)

It is proper and fitting to remind ourselves of this aspect this year as disarmament issues undoubtedly constitute an important part of the International Year of Peace.

The role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament should be kept under continuous review. We welcome the opportunity to consider this matter in our deliberations. Contributions by the Disarmament Commission will be highly valued at the third special session on disarmament. At that session a comprehensive review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament will certainly take place, including issues of a more institutional nature. Meanwhile we should concentrate on questions most amenable to discussion in this forum, and we are of the opinion that one core issue to be discussed during the present session is the
streamlining and rationalization of the First Committee's work procedures. As Chairman of the First Committee during the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, I proposed some measures to improve procedures and practices aimed at making the Committee's work more efficient. Some of those initiatives have been implemented, but in our view there is still room for improvement.

The item on the question of the naval arms race was inscribed on the agenda for the first time last year. This year's discussion of the matter can take into account the report of the Secretary-General which was submitted to the General Assembly at its fortieth session in pursuance of resolution 38/188 G. Norway as a major maritime user attaches importance to questions related to the oceans. In our view, it is of particular importance when considering naval armaments to take into account geographical dissimilarities between the major naval Powers. It is also necessary to consider the development of naval armaments in their interrelationship with land- and air-based weapon systems. In brief, as is stated in the United Nations study, measures of naval arms limitation and reduction must be considered in the overall context of halting and reversing the arms race in general.

The last agenda item relates to confidence-building measures - an issue to which my country has for many years attached great importance. Confidence-building measures is an ongoing process and the United Nations clearly has a role to play in discussing and developing measures designed to increase confidence between States. The Disarmament Commission is, in our view, a well-suited body in this respect. Although much of the practical and conceptual work on confidence-building measures so far draws on the European experience, the relevance and applicability of the term are not restricted to Europe alone. On the contrary, it is an approach that could contribute to the strengthening of peace and security in other areas as well and, indeed, on a global level.
In our opinion, the Chairman's composite draft from the Disarmament Commission's 1984 session could serve as a useful basis for our deliberations this year. In our efforts we should bear in mind that the Stockholm Conference on Security—Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which will end in September of this year, is now in a decisive phase of its work. Furthermore, a positive outcome of that Conference will create favourable conditions for a satisfactory outcome of the follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe in Vienna this fall. In our opinion, our discussions of appropriate types of global confidence-building measures at the Disarmament Commission could benefit from the work of the Stockholm Conference, and our deliberations ought to be allowed to continue at a later session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Mr. CESAR (Czechoslovakia): Permit me to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Commission on your election to important offices in the Disarmament Commission.

Perhaps never before in the post-war decades has the situation in the world been so explosive, complicated and unfavourable, as in the first half of the 1980s. This year we have entered the second half, yet the international situation remains tense and grave.

The communiqué from the Warsaw meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty member States of 20 March 1986 expresses concern about the escalation of the arms race, especially in the nuclear field, and the steps now being taken with the aim of extending it into outer space. The United States and its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are speeding up the arms build-up in all respects. Grave concern arises because of the continued deployment of United States intermediate-range missiles in several countries of Western Europe. Yet, at
the same time, events of extreme significance took place between this and the last session of the Disarmament Commission that could and should give an impetus to achieving concrete disarmament agreements in practically all the main fields. Direction towards this desired reversal has been shown by the steps taken by the Soviet Union in order to improve the international situation, strengthen confidence, and create conditions for further negotiations.

A unilateral moratorium was imposed on the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Europe and their number was reduced. A unilateral moratorium on all nuclear tests was in effect from 6 August 1985 through 31 March 1986, as extended after the Soviet-United States summit, despite continued testing by the United States. Finally, in reply to the appeal of representatives of six countries, the Soviet Union pledged to abide by it even after the expiration of the second deadline – until the first United States nuclear explosion after that date. The chance of progress at that stage was marred, as is well known, by the nuclear explosion carried out by the United States on 10 April 1986.

In spite of all that, the Czechoslovak delegation is convinced that there are real prospects for solving this question. The Soviet Union has already declared that it is willing to restore the moratorium if the United States halts nuclear testing. There are other possibilities for negotiations other than at the bilateral level, such as the resumed trilateral talks with the participation of the United Kingdom, or at the multilateral level, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. However, success in any forum is conditional upon the agreement of the United States to comply with the will of the entire international community. That is basically the only way leading directly to nuclear disarmament.
The world community placed extraordinarily high hopes in the Geneva summit meeting of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the President of the United States, Ronald Reagan. Statements made by the United States after the summit meeting and its concrete steps in the international arena testify to its continued course towards worsening still further the situation and putting off the possibility of concluding the respective agreements. We consider that a summit meeting should produce more than mere statements which one of the parties may later render null and void.

The proposals put forward by the Soviet Union last January amounted to the most significant step in recent times and probably in the entire post-war history. Addressing the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, the General Secretary of the Party's Central Committee and President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Gustav Husak, said

"Together with all peace-loving forces in the world, we have welcomed the far-reaching complex of Soviet proposals for the elimination of nuclear weapons by the end of this century, as embodied in the statement by Mikhail Gorbachev on 15 January 1986. We see in it a real opportunity for mankind to enter the third millennium free from fear for its future."

However, certain positive reactions by the West to that proposal have become bogged down in all kinds of reservations, "follow ups" and "conditions", which are practically blocking the solution of the key issues of disarmament. Most dangerous of all is probably the linkage of the limitation of strategic nuclear arsenals to approval of "star wars" programmes. A mere limitation of an existing system is made conditional upon the development of a new, more dangerous and more effective system, which for that matter also supposes the use of nuclear weapons, even in outer space.
Nuclear disarmament is the main issue before the world today and should receive adequate attention by the Disarmament Commission. It is our opinion that this should be clearly expressed in the conclusions of this year's session of the Commission.

After less than three months, the Soviet Union supplied new proof of the seriousness of its approach to the disarmament question. Responding to the argument that Western Europe allegedly cannot give up nuclear weapons, including those of the United States, since, if it did, it would feel less secure from the armed forces and conventional weapons of the Warsaw Treaty, the Soviet Union put forward on 18 April 1986 new proposals concerning that sphere too. They involve all components of land forces as well as the tactical air forces of European States and respective United States and Canadian forces stationed in Europe. The units and elements covered by those limitations would be disbanded and their armaments dismantled or stored in the respective national territories. The validity of those measures would extend to the entire territory of Europe. Along with reductions in conventional weapons, nuclear weapons of an operational-tactical nature would be reduced as well. No less importance is attached to the proposals for the elimination of chemical weapons.

In view of Czechoslovakia's geographical as well as political position in Europe, this proposal is of special significance for us. For the same reason, we value the relevant provisions on reliable verification by both national and international means, including on-site inspections if necessary. Czechoslovakia commends the already expressed favourable opinions on that proposal, in particular those voiced by the States directly concerned. We firmly believe that the Western countries will come to understand the seriousness of those initiatives and not let the historic opportunity that is being offered here slip away.
The main issues today include the need to prevent extension of the arms race into outer space and to use space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind. The Foreign Ministers Committee of the Warsaw Treaty member States pointed out in its communiqué of 20 March 1986 the great responsibility that was assumed by the initiators of the programme aimed at deploying weapons in space as well as by those joining in its implementation. It has also highlighted the danger that would result from implementation of projects similar to the so-called European defence initiative that have been proposed in certain Western European countries. It must be realized that implementation of those plans would not enhance security, since an increase in the military capabilities of one State or group of States to the disadvantage of others is nowadays neither possible nor admissible. At present, only collective security can work, and the sooner this fact is recognized by the representatives of all States, the sooner it will be possible to establish it in real terms. On the contrary, implementation of the plans I have just mentioned would lead to an escalation of the arms build-up in the most dangerous spheres. That in turn would result in a notable decrease in security and an increase in the threat of nuclear war.

As a European State, Czechoslovakia opposes in the strongest terms continued increases in the quantity of nuclear weapons on that continent. The present course is in contradiction to the proclaimed interest of the United States in solving this issue. As is well known, the Soviet Union has agreed to consider it separately, without linkage to other problems. We consider that complete elimination of Soviet and United States intermediate-range missiles, both cruise and ballistic missiles, would be the first step in that direction. However, it is necessary that the United States undertake not to supply its strategic and intermediate-range missiles to other countries and that two other European Powers refrain from increasing their respective nuclear arsenals.
Mr. Cesar, Czechoslovakia

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic considers that the goal to free Europe from nuclear weapons would also be promoted by creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in parts of the continent. We therefore support the proposals for the establishment of such zones in northern Europe and in the Balkans, and also along the borderline dividing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) States from the Warsaw Treaty States in Central Europe. Measures of this kind would certainly not solve the situation, but they would definitely help.

Chemical weapons pose another world-wide problem. It is certainly feasible to eliminate those weapons as well as the industrial background for their production completely before the end of this century. It is therefore necessary to intensify negotiations on the conclusion of an international convention on the banning of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles. We advocate the conclusion of multilateral conventions prohibiting the transfer of chemical weapons and their deployment on the territory of other States. Yet despite efforts made at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, negotiations on that issue are at a stalemate.

Czechoslovakia has proved its interest in solving this issue not only by its active participation in the work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, but also by submitting jointly with the German Democratic Republic a proposal to establish a chemical-weapon-free zone in Central Europe. We also support a similar proposal by the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the Socialist Republic of Romania to establish a chemical-weapon-free zone in the Balkans. Such steps are aimed at enhancing the process aimed at a world-wide ban on chemical weapons - which is our ultimate goal.
It is becoming increasingly important to solve the question of prohibiting of
the development and production of new types of weapons, not only weapons of mass
destruction but also armaments based on new physical principles with a destructive
capacity approaching that of means of mass destruction.

In addition, the problem of the non-increase in and reduction of military
expenditures, primarily on the part of States with large military potential,
remains on the current agenda, for that issue is becoming more and more pressing
with each new fiscal year. It holds an important position in the preparations for
the forthcoming Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and
Development. It is high time that concrete negotiations were started in that
direction.

As for conventional weapons, which I have already mentioned with reference to
the Soviet proposal of 18 April of this year, I should like to touch upon yet
another aspect of that problem and related issues. The Vienna talks, which have
entered their thirteenth year, remain deadlocked, while two three-million-strong
military groupings face each other in Europe. We are convinced that the
aforementioned Soviet proposals, together with the latest initiatives put forward
by the socialist countries at the Vienna talks, could break the deadlock and
contribute to the conclusion of concrete agreements.

For a number of years the agenda of the Disarmament Commission has included
the question of South Africa's nuclear potential. Thanks to direct co-operation
with some Western States, South Africa can continue to develop that potential. We
see a solution in South Africa's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the submission of all its nuclear facilities to the
safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The aforementioned
States should then immediately discontinue co-operation with South
Africa in that field. An especially grave threat is posed by the joint action of South Africa and Israel in this sphere.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic highly appreciates the role of the United Nations in disarmament efforts. We see some still uninvestigated areas in this field, especially in the implementation of concrete General Assembly decisions. It is necessary to make more effective use of the existing system, rather than merely trying to reorganize it. Even the best system simply cannot work perfectly without the political goodwill and cooperation of all States.

Czechoslovakia attaches particular importance to the question of the naval arms race and disarmament. The recent United States aggression against Libya and the presence of United States naval forces in virtually all parts of the world make it imperative to solve that problem. Moreover, until a short while ago that area had been somewhat overshadowed by other significant problems. The reality is that large quantities of nuclear weapons, both strategic and intermediate-range, are based in the seas and oceans, even on submarines deep beneath the surface. We regard this as a priority problem, and the Czechoslovak delegation will treat it as such.

The elaboration of relevant confidence-building measures is another important question. In this connection we have been closely following the work of the Stockholm Conference. We are convinced that it has all the prerequisites for achieving concrete results in the near future. Of course, relevant confidence-building measures cannot be arrived at in a vacuum. They should stem from a concrete international situation and, above all, should allow for and facilitate the implementation of the disarmament process. Such measures would be meaningful and highly timely.

Those, in brief, are the positions of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic that underlie its current approach to the work of the Disarmament Commission. We hope
that the conclusions the Commission reaches this year will be conducive to the solution of the important issues facing all of mankind. Especially in this, the International Year of Peace, a strong impetus should be given so that peace is not just highlighted from time to time, but so that it may become a lasting feature of international life.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I think that at this juncture a word is in order about the further arrangement of work this afternoon. Members will realize that there are still a great number of speakers left on the list. This has come as some surprise to the Secretariat and to me, since we had inquired of delegations beforehand how long they wished to speak and had drawn up our programme accordingly. Experience had also seemed to be a guide.

However, although there are fewer speakers this year than in the two preceding years, the time speakers are taking up is much greater. We have thus created a backlog. To my regret, the backlog is due to the fact that many delegations have not heeded my appeal to address the agenda items in question but have chosen to give relatively comprehensive statements on general problems of disarmament, with which our Commission is not called upon to deal.

However that may be, we must now see how we can deal with the time remaining to us. Members will have noticed that in the Journal this afternoon's meeting was scheduled to last until 7 p.m. But I think it would be cruel, both to the interpreters and to those who listen attentively and whose patience would be overly taxed. I would therefore suggest that we adjourn today at 6.30 p.m. That would still leave a number of speakers who could not be accommodated today. I would surmise that today we would still be able to hear the representatives of Canada, China, India, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and, I would hope, Hungary.
(The Chairman)

That would leave some delegations that have already, for reasons of their own, asked me whether they could speak at a later date. I have told them I would put their names on speakers' list for the plenary meeting scheduled for Friday morning, 9 May. I am speaking of Brazil, Pakistan and Uruguay. We would then still have Denmark, Nigeria, Mongolia - I presume, although it is not on my list, Australia, Sri Lanka and Zaire. The Secretariat will ask those delegations whether they would be greatly inconvenienced if they were to be asked to speak on Friday so that we would have another chunk, so to speak, of the general exchange of views at that juncture.

Even that schedule can be met only if delegations provide the discipline necessary to stick to the agenda items in question and streamline their statements accordingly. I hope that delegations will respond to this appeal.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. ROCHE (Canada): We will try to assist you, Mr. Chairman, in your streamlining effort by being brief. We want to express our happiness at seeing you in the important post of Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. We recognize your long and deep experience in arms-control and disarmament questions, and we will, of course, give you complete co-operation in achieving some concrete results at this session of the Commission.

This session is occurring at a time when the prospects for agreement on new and substantial arms-control and disarmament measures are uncertain. Whereas there are some grounds for cautious hope, there is also need to ensure that the sense of urgency in pressing on with serious negotiations in both bilateral and multilateral contexts is not weakened or lost.

It is a reality of our time that the heaviest responsibility for reducing international tensions and anxieties through the conclusion of arms-limitation and disarmament measures rests on the shoulders of the United States of America and the
USSR. Naturally, Canada welcomed their agreement in January 1985 to resume negotiations on the key arms-control and disarmament issues. It should be cause for satisfaction that those negotiations are still under way and that the detailed and substantive proposals and counter-proposals which have been made seem to reflect a readiness on both sides to agree to major reductions in their respective nuclear arsenals as a step towards implementing the agreed negotiating objectives.
The fact that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev have met, and have agreed to meet again this year and next, underlines the seriousness of purpose of the two sides. Progress, of course, as the seven-year SALT II negotiations showed, will be slow and arduous. But the Canadian people want to see at least some signs of progress. Canada urges the two sides to persist energetically in that negotiating effort. In that connection, it would be an encouraging sign if there were less public posturing and more concentration on the submission and discussion of concrete proposals in the privacy of the negotiating room. Other nations must pursue their negotiations and deliberations in this Commission and other multilateral forums in ways which support, reinforce and in no way undermine the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to conclude substantial arms control and disarmament agreements.

At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva the recent record of work has been mixed, although it may be marginally ahead of where it was last year. Substantive negotiations towards a comprehensive, verifiable chemical weapons ban are proceeding, though not with the sense of urgency which recent reports of chemical weapons use and proliferating chemical weapons capability would warrant. Agreement on a renewed mandate for an ad hoc committee on outer space has again been achieved, although only after prolonged procedural delay. Regrettably, there is as yet no agreement for an ad hoc committee which could commence substantive work on the important nuclear-test ban item. At a minimum, there ought to be agreement on renewing a mandate which will enable the Group of Scientific Experts to continue its valuable work, which has helped to lay the groundwork for eventual negotiations. I would also note that little has yet been achieved in the negotiation of a radiological weapons ban.
At the mutual and balanced force reductions talks in Vienna the response to the proposals put forward by the Western side in December has been far from adequate and casts doubt on whether the other side is serious about seeking an agreement in that forum. At the Stockholm Conference progress towards the negotiation of a substantial set of measures has been much too slow. In the First Committee at the fortieth session of the General Assembly the proliferation of resolutions continued. The fragmentation of views on arms control and disarmament issues was reflected in the continuing drift away from the consensus of the Final Document of the first session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Obviously, not enough time and effort is being devoted to reaching common approaches to those issues. Where is the political will that everyone talks about? What is the real reason for this lack of progress? Those fundamental questions must be of concern to the Commission.

There is, however, a bright side to this gloomy picture. Especially worthy of note, in our view, was the unanimous adoption by the General Assembly at its fortieth session of a new resolution on verification in all its aspects. The adoption of that Canadian-initiated resolution reflects the growing awareness within the world community of the importance of verification both in facilitating the negotiating process and in helping ensure compliance with arms control treaties. Indeed, verification and related issues of compliance loom as the single most important area of deliberation and debate in the arms control and disarmament process in the coming years. To deviate from a policy of full compliance is to threaten the credibility, and hence the viability, of arms control.
This new attitude towards verification has been evident in the amount of attention it has received in public statements by world leaders since the adoption of the resolution. The basis for a productive discussion of that central issue at the next session of the General Assembly has thus been laid. Canada proposes that verification could also usefully become a subject for special attention in the Disarmament Commission.

The Commission, of course, has no responsibility for the negotiation of agreements. Ours is a deliberative body. But that is not to undervalue the Commission's potential importance. If used properly, this can be a forum where emerging concerns and related policy priorities can be registered at an early stage. It can be a sounding-board for new ideas and approaches, some of which may eventually be taken up by those responsible for negotiating agreements. We can also do valuable work in the assembling and analysis of information on developments pertinent to the arms control and disarmament process.

Canada hopes, then, that this year's session of the Commission will be the occasion for practical achievement and progress on several of our agenda items. The financial pressures which the entire United Nations system is now experiencing, and which may result in a curtailment of the time available to us this year, make it all the more important that we set about our tasks promptly in a serious and businesslike spirit. Only if Governments and the public see our work as useful and relevant will there be the continued political support necessary to the survival of this institution as a serious deliberative body.

Let me say a few brief words about certain items on the agenda.
Last year, as in the year before, we made little progress in our efforts to finalize a working paper which would set out principles which should govern States in freezing and reducing military budgets. A persistent stumbling-block in the exercise has been the reluctance of some to accept the link between the reduction of military budgets and the systematic provision of comparable information about military spending. I would note that that link was clearly reaffirmed at the fortieth session of the General Assembly with the adoption of resolution 40/94 K, which urges States

"to consider implementing additional measures based on the principles of openness and transparency ... facilitating the availability of objective information on, as well as the objective assessment of, military capabilities". (resolution 40/94 K, para. 2)

That appeal to Member States is a recognition of the fundamental importance of openness to the broad range of arms control and disarmament issues.

Canada has completed the standardized reporting instrument on military spending. That is an earnest of the seriousness of our intent. It also reflects our judgement that until completion of the standardized reporting instrument becomes a virtually universal practice any real progress on this agenda item remains highly unlikely. We urge States that have not yet commenced the practice to do so.

The item on South Africa's nuclear capability has been on our agenda for some time, reflecting legitimate and widespread international concern on the subject. Canada's consistent, firm opposition to the apartheid policies of the South African Government is well known. Canada will likewise oppose racist policies and practices under any other name. South Africa's failure thus far effectively to reassure the international community of its peaceful nuclear intentions, by full adherence to the international nuclear non-proliferation régime, is an ongoing
cause for anxiety and ought to be remedied. With 131 signatories, the
non-proliferation Treaty has the broadest international support of any multilateral
security treaty. The fact that the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was able to produce a consensus
Final Document, albeit one which registered some divergence of view, reflects the
widespread acknowledgement in the international community of the need to preserve
and strengthen that régime. South Africa's full adherence to the Treaty would not
only allay many apprehensions, but would be an important strengthening of the
Treaty. It would be a further example to others that have their own particular
reasons for not becoming signatories. We hope there can be consensus on this
agenda item at our present session.

Much serious and useful work on confidence-building measures has been done in
this forum. Canada's approach on the item reflects our strong belief that
confidence-building is an end in itself and that effective, militarily significant
confidence-building measures to that end, while they may produce collateral
benefits, are of themselves self-justifying. Our deliberations on this item, of
course, relate to efforts to agree on confidence-building measures in other forums,
particularly the Stockholm Conference. Canada hopes that work on this item in the
Commission can be brought to practical fruition this year.

The Disarmament Commission will be continuing the review of the role of the
United Nations in the field of disarmament which it began at its 1985 session.
Because of lack of time last year, the Commission managed only to make a start on
this important subject. Nevertheless, it achieved agreement on a programme of work
which consists of a checklist of topics for appropriate recommendation. It is our
task to build on that success and to elaborate concrete recommendations and
proposals. Last year my delegation put forward specific ideas on a number of
subjects, and we shall wish to pursue them at this session.
Given the financial situation facing the United Nations, this item takes on even greater significance now. We believe that the strengthening of the United Nations role in disarmament can be achieved through reforms which, by tightening the United Nations management of disarmament issues, should produce not only greater efficiency and effectiveness but some savings as well. With this in mind, we would hope that the United Nations Disarmament Commission will be able to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-first session at least an interim set of recommendations if it is unable to complete its consideration of this item this year.

The comprehensive study on the naval arms race commissioned at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly has now been completed. At its fortieth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 40/94 F, adopted with near unanimity, commended it to our attention. Canada is grateful to the governmental experts who authored the study for their serious and industrious efforts. While some aspects of the study could not be supported by the Canadian Government, we share with most United Nations Members the view that it merits attention and discussion in this forum. We hope there can be early agreement on a procedural framework which will make this possible.

We have started the 1986 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in a very businesslike manner. Everyone knows how complex are the problems on our agenda. Solutions are difficult but not impossible if we will take to heart the meaning of the International Year of Peace. Every delegation in the Commission has a responsibility to move our agenda forward. The world expects no less of us.

Mr. FAN GUOXIANG (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The annual session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is now under way. First of all allow me to join previous speakers in saying how pleased I am to see you, Mr. Chairman, presiding over this session. Under your guidance, a good deal of
meticulous pre-session consultation was conducted before the opening of this session, which will help the Commission start its consideration of the substantive items on the agenda as soon as possible. It is our hope that the same down-to-earth spirit will prevail during the session so as effectively to promote progress in the substantive work of the session. To this end the Chinese delegation will render its best possible co-operation to you, Sir, and to our other colleagues.

Reviewing the developments in the past year, I think we may depict the present situation in the field of disarmament as follows.

On the one hand, the general atmosphere has somewhat improved, offering a bit of optimism; on the other, nothing has been achieved in the concrete implementation of arms reductions.

During the past year, bilateral negotiations have been conducted between the Soviet Union and the United States, and a summit meeting between them as been held. Both sides maintained that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought", and they agreed to accelerate their negotiations so as to "prevent an arms race in outer space and to terminate it on earth, to limit and reduce nuclear arms and enhance strategic stability". They also agreed to call for "early progress, in particular in areas where there is common ground, including the principle of 50-per-cent reductions in the nuclear arms of the United States and the USSR appropriately applied, as well as the idea of an interim INF agreement".

That the Soviet Union and the United States have reached common cognition of the question of nuclear war and undertaken some responsibilities for disarmament is a noteworthy development.

However, all those concrete objectives remain unrealized to date. The two sides still have deep differences over a series of questions such as the scope of
the reduction of their nuclear weapons and whether nuclear-arms reduction should be linked with a ban on the research and development of space weaponry. In the meantime their arms race is still continuing and even extending into a new sphere, outer space. Such a situation is detrimental both to disarmament talks and inconsistent with the expectations of countries throughout the world.

China is consistently opposed to the arms race. It stands for disarmament, nuclear disarmament in particular. Like other countries of the world, China is concerned about the progress in disarmament negotiations. At a rally in Beijing marking the International Year of Peace on 21 March, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang once again outlined the Chinese Government's basic position and views on disarmament as follows.

First, the nuclear arms race constitutes a grave threat to world peace and security. The ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament should be the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.

Second, the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess the largest nuclear arsenals, should take the lead in halting the testing, production and deployment of all types of nuclear weapons and drastically reduce all types of nuclear weapons they have deployed anywhere inside and outside their countries and destroy them on the spot. This will make it possible to create favourable conditions for the convocation of a broadly representative international conference on nuclear disarmament with the participation of all the nuclear-weapon States to discuss measures for further nuclear disarmament and the complete destruction of nuclear weapons.

Third, in order to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in any circumstances and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. On this basis an
international convention should be concluded with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States, ensuring the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

Fourth, there should be a simultaneous and balanced reduction and on-the-spot destruction of the medium-range nuclear missiles deployed in Europe and Asia by the Soviet Union and the United States.

Fifth, along with nuclear-arms reduction there should be a drastic reduction of conventional arms. The conventional arms of all countries should be used only for self-defence and not to threaten the security of other countries.

Sixth, outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind. No country should develop, test or deploy space weapons in any form. An international agreement on the complete prohibition of space weapons should be concluded through negotiations as soon as possible.

Seventh, an international convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons should be concluded at an early date. Pending this, all countries capable of manufacturing chemical weapons should pledge never to use chemical weapons and to stop the testing, production, transfer and deployment of such weapons.

Eighth, to effect the implementation of arms reduction, it is essential for disarmament agreements to provide for necessary and effective measures of verification.

Ninth, as the question of disarmament concerns the security of all countries, it should not be monopolized by a few big Powers. Disarmament agreements between them must not jeopardize the interests of other countries. All countries, big or small, militarily strong or weak, should enjoy equal rights to participate in the discussion and settlement of problems related to disarmament.

The above nine points regarding our position on disarmament have been formulated taking into account the desire of all the peoples of the world and the
position of all the parties concerned. We are convinced that they constitute a practical approach towards genuine disarmament and lasting peace.

It is true that arms reduction can help relax the international situation and facilitate the development of all peoples in a peaceful environment. However, disarmament is not the only issue affecting world peace and security. It is self-contradictory in the extreme for a country vociferously to advocate disarmament and put forward various proposals while acting in contravention of the principles of the United Nations Charter and in violation of world peace and security.
Premier Zhao thus said in his speech that
"In order to relax tension and eliminate regional conflicts it is imperative
to observe strictly the principle of equality among all countries, big and
small, in international relations and to refrain from interfering in the
internal affairs, or encroaching upon the sovereignty, of other countries in
any form. Only thus will it be possible to contribute to the maintenance of
world peace."

In his speech, Premier Zhao further declared that China would no longer conduct
atmospheric nuclear tests in the future.

The above position and actions taken by the Chinese Government fully testify
to China's willingness to contribute, together with other countries in the world,
to promoting disarmament and safeguarding world peace and security.

I wish now to turn to some of the issues on the agenda of the current session
of the Commission. Agenda item 4 - the question of nuclear and conventional
disarmament - is an all-embracing one, involving the matter at the core of our
deliberations. Over the years a considerable amount of work has been done in
drafting a set of proposals under this item. However, arduous efforts are still
needed before much progress can be expected under the present circumstances. The
discussions on the comprehensive programme of disarmament during this year's spring
session of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva have testified to this point.
As far as item 4 is concerned, no matter what changes may be made to the text of
the relevant document or what new wordings may be coined, and no matter that old
brackets may be replaced by new ones, the key issue for its solution remains the
same, namely, whether the two super-Powers have the good will for disarmament, and
whether they will undertake their responsibilities for disarmament. In this sense,
agenda item 4 serves as a touchstone. We hope that all sides concerned will
demonstrate a full spirit of co-operation so as to promote the greatest possible
progress on this issue.

Item 5, namely "Reduction of military budgets", has been under deliberation
for years, and it is clear to everybody where the divergencies lie. One group of
States has shown some flexibility and resilience this year in its general approach
towards verification. This is a welcome development, and we hope it will be
conducive to reaching an agreement on the proposals for principles regarding the
reduction of military budgets. The Chinese delegation is ready to work for such an
agreement.

A solution to the question of South Africa's nuclear capability is long
overdue. In view of the fact that the South African authorities are obdurately
pursuing the policy of apartheid, cruelly persecuting and killing the local people
and continuing their illegal occupation of Namibia, we can never understand - and
indeed we strongly oppose - acts designed to shield the South African authorities
in all possible ways. In fact, this question goes beyond the mere sphere of
disarmament, involving the fundamental conscience of mankind. It is our hope that
the consideration of the issue this year will bring about some change.

Consideration of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament
bears a more practical significance in the light of the present situation. The
Chinese delegation has never belittled the significance of improving and
strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament from the
technical, procedural and organizational approaches and is ready to give positive
consideration to all reasonable suggestions in this regard. We believe, however,
that whether the United Nations can play its important role and discharge its
responsibilities in the field of disarmament is determined mainly by political
factors, or in other words by the political will of all countries. Therefore, we hope that in the relevant proposals to be submitted to the General Assembly by this Commission the right of the United Nations and the multilateral negotiating body to consider and negotiate on all the major disarmament issues of far-reaching significance should be reiterated and reaffirmed. The appropriate relationship between the United Nations deliberations and multilateral negotiations on the one hand and bilateral, small-scale or regional disarmament negotiations on the other should be made clear.

With regard to item 8, on the naval arms race and disarmament, last year's study by the United Nations expert group can serve as a reference. Naval armaments, in a nutshell, are nothing more than two categories of weapons: nuclear and conventional. For this reason, we believe that naval arms reduction should follow the direction for nuclear and conventional disarmament as envisaged in the Final Document of the tenth special session. The key to the issue lies in the first place in the undertaking of a commitment by the countries with the largest nuclear and conventional arsenals, and in their true fulfilment of their special responsibilities in nuclear and conventional disarmament. We hope that this year the relevant deliberations will at least affirm this principle.

Having worked on the question of confidence-building measures in 1983 and 1984, we now have available some documents which can serve as a basis for our further work. Different parties have their own positions and emphases on this issue. What we should do now is absorb and blend positive ideas from all sides, tackle the matter in its entirety and make comprehensive recommendations taking into consideration all the political, military, economic, social and cultural dimensions. China has consistently maintained that relations among all countries
should strictly follow the five principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Those principles are of fundamental significance also to the building of confidence among States. Provided there is adequate trust and co-operation, it should be possible to work out guiding principles for consensus under this item. Let us first demonstrate a confidence-building spirit in the deliberations on this question of confidence-building measures.

There is a variety of issues in the field of disarmament, differing in form but related to one another. The question of disarmament taken as a whole cannot but affect such questions as security, development and regional hotspots, and vice versa. In the final analysis, progress in and realization of disarmament requires the sincerity and desire - in other words, the good will - of all countries, particularly the countries possessing the biggest arsenals, and of all sides, first and foremost the two big military blocs that are locked in direct confrontation and rivalry. Political will is not an abstract or elusive concept. It should be demonstrated concretely by actual deeds in the interest of the all-round promotion of common progress in all issues within the field of disarmament and in related questions beyond it.

As part of the whole disarmament endeavour, the work of this Commission is also in urgent need of the concrete manifestation of such political will. Let us work together and make this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission a success.
Ms. KUNADI (India): It gives me great pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair for this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Your profound expertise in issues in the field of disarmament, your boundless energy, and your long experience in this field will surely go a long way in making the deliberations of the Commission under your chairmanship a success.

I should like also to take this opportunity to congratulate the other Commission officers and to pledge to all the fullest co-operation of the Indian delegation.

The pressure of time and a heavy workload on the agenda of the Commission have resulted in our agreeing to a short general exchange of views for this session. I shall accordingly confine this statement to some brief comments on the items of our agenda which, in our view, should be handled with the highest priority, as well as those which should be treated with great care.

In the first category comes item 4 of the agenda. This item is the most crucial item on the agenda not only of the Disarmament Commission but of any international disarmament forum today.
The consideration of the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race, in all its aspects, the task of expediting negotiations aimed at eliminating the nuclear threat, and the work on elaboration of a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, have remained on the Commission's agenda for too long as non-starters. The previous annual reports of the Commission have almost standardized the unfruitful compilation of this item which represents nothing but the state of stagnation in the Commission. Such a mechanical approach to what are clearly the burning issues of our times should be given up during the present session and we should instead focus our energies on selected aspects of the nuclear-arms race with a view to drawing up well-defined guidelines for further substantive work by the negotiating forum, namely, the Conference on Disarmament.

The role assigned to the Commission by the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is to pave the way for further follow-up on the relevant decisions and recommendations of the special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. This deliberative role should be seen as distinct from the negotiating role assigned to the Conference on Disarmament. Every effort should be made not to confuse the two functions. At the same time, the problems being encountered in the Conference on Disarmament on the main issues deserve to be seen in their proper perspective in the Commission so that we can all work together to give the necessary input to the Conference on Disarmament. To cite an example, the question of the commencement of negotiations on a nuclear-test-ban treaty has eluded the Conference on Disarmament for the past several years despite the mounting international concern on this issue. The larger membership of the Disarmament Commission should also bring to bear its moral and political authority on the States obstructing substantive consideration of this issue so as to facilitate early initiation of nuclear-test-ban negotiations. The Commission should scrutinize the positions of various States in regard to the
nuclear-test ban and elaborate an agreed approach which could assist the Conference on Disarmament in its task. Such a scrutiny is also necessary because the 40 members of the Conference on Disarmament bear a responsibility to all the Members of the United Nations to explain the reasons for their collective failure even to address such an important issue in an adequate manner. From among the entire gamut of issues relevant to nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war, we would consider it a very satisfactory achievement if the Commission this year were able to work out some definite recommendations on a nuclear-test ban. The three-to-four-week period assigned to the Commission is, in our view, adequate for such a task.

The other items on the agenda of the Commission, namely, items 5, 6 and 9 have received continuous annual attention through Working Groups in the past. These are very well-defined single-purpose Working Groups whose tasks must be completed without further delay. The collective failure of the Commission to inform the international community of its considered position on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability is unpardonable. There is a prevailing international conviction that the racist minority régime in South Africa is in possession of a nuclear weapons capability and the resultant power to blackmail the peoples of Africa. By pronouncing itself in clear and unequivocal terms on South Africa's nuclear capability the Disarmament Commission will not only fulfil the recommendations of the General Assembly but also make a contribution to one of the most crucial world issues of our time. We must remember that those who equivocate on this issue are in effect serving to disguise the true nature of the racist régime in Africa.

We earnestly hope that the Commission will finalize its report on the guide-lines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures this year. Your own role, Mr. Chairman, in this field has been a pioneering one and we have no
doubt that your chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission augurs well for the successful conclusion of our work on item 9. My delegation reaffirms the importance attached to confidence-building measures by the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We view the work of the Commission in this regard in accordance with paragraph 24 of the Final Document and with the fundamental principles laid down by paragraph 25 of that Document about negotiations and measures in the field of disarmament. As paragraph 40 states:

"Universality of disarmament agreements helps create confidence among States. When multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament are negotiated, every effort should be made to ensure that they are universally acceptable." (resolution S-10/2, para. 40)

In this regard we specifically caution against efforts to sidetrack the principle of universality and fragment the process of multilateral disarmament into artificially created partial approaches.

Two new issues have been added to the agenda of the Disarmament Commission since 1985. The first concerns the question of the naval arms race and disarmament and the second relates to an ambitious review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We find no rationale for the attempt to devote special attention to the naval arms race as a separate channel of a concerted disarmament effort. These attempts are superfluous and may lead to further confusion in the already complicated task of nuclear disarmament. Our approach in disarmament should be to identify weapons systems that could be eliminated in a systematic manner. The categories of these weapons systems are fairly clearly understood and are spelled out, for instance, in paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The proponents of a special initiative on the naval arms race have never clearly indicated where
the subject of their recently elaborated concern fits into the framework of paragraph 45. We fear that the drive to introduce the amorphous concept of a naval arms race and naval systems may create another illusion of activity in the field of disarmament without actually tackling the long-standing issues.

We would like to participate actively in the work of the Commission in regard to the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. Annex V of the report of the Disarmament Commission last year contains an appropriate framework within which to undertake this exercise. We would like to stress here that there are two basic aspects to the review of the United Nations role in the field of disarmament, namely, the political and institutional. It is our firm conviction that the sorry state of affairs in the multilateral disarmament effort today is due to the political problems being encountered by various international forums addressing disarmament. It would be a grave error, therefore, to exaggerate the institutional aspects while examining the reasons for the colossal international failure in disarmament in the past eight years since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The work of the Commission should naturally concern itself with devising ways to strengthen the collective commitment of the States Members of the United Nations to the process of disarmament in conformity with the Final Document. We should also take care to discriminate between the failure in the specific field of disarmament and the overall deterioration of the situation relating to international peace and security. As far as the latter consideration is concerned, it is not merely the disarmament machinery but, if at all, the entire United Nations system which has to review its role.
Those are the general points of reference for the work of the Commission, in the view of my delegation. We will of course be making specific comments when detailed discussions begin on the respective agenda items in the appropriate organizational framework.
Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Commission on your election to these important posts and wish you every success in carrying out the work assigned to you.

The problems of maintaining peace on earth and strengthening State security under existing conditions in the world today are, we believe, political problems that can be resolved only by political means, through negotiations based on the principles of equality and equal security. It is that very approach that underlies the practical policy of countries in the socialist community in areas related to curbing the arms race - primarily the nuclear-arms race - and achieving disarmament. This can be seen from a number of major foreign-policy actions taken recently by the Soviet Government - actions based on principles and designed to implement agreements reached at the Soviet-American summit meeting in Geneva.

Suffice it to recall that it was just recently the Soviet Union twice extended the unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions and proposed an immediate beginning of negotiations on a complete ban of all nuclear tests. The Soviet Union also recently proposed a compromise plan to go half way to meeting the West at the conferences in Vienna and Stockholm. It took account of the concern of European countries over the medium-range missiles and in respect of operational tactical nuclear weapons and proposed a compromise for the European area. It also put forward a proposal on a mutual withdrawal of Soviet and American fleets from the Mediterranean.

A major initiative was the specific comprehensive programme, with a clearly defined time frame, for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons everywhere, as set forth in the statement of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev, on 15 January of this year.
(document A/41/97), and also the basis for a comprehensive system for international security which was approved at the Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (document A/41/185).

Today we can note with some satisfaction that those initiatives have basically already become a subject of discussion in various international forums that deal with the problems of limiting weapons and achieving disarmament. In this connection, we express the hope that the Commission will not stand aside from this and that the results of our work will include agreed recommendations to the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly.

We are aware of how difficult such work is. Recent events have shown that the United States Administration does not like the normalization of the international situation at all, and it has been taking actions to complicate further an already tense situation. What we are referring to is, first of all, the recent nuclear explosions in Nevada, which negated a unique opportunity to get a real start on disarmament. We are referring also to the provocative United States naval operations in Soviet territorial waters on the coast of the Crimea, as well as to the aggression against Libya, a sovereign State and Member of the United Nations, which involved a subsequent deterioration of the international situation. If we look at those actions taken together, we can say quite definitely that, more than ever before, they have laid bare the militaristic, aggressive intentions of United States foreign policy.

The countries of the socialist community have no truck with such a policy. They have acted and will continue to act fully aware of their responsibility for the future of the human race and willing to make their contribution to curb the arms race and eliminate nuclear weaponry.
Let us take by way of example the question of nuclear disarmament, which quite rightly has priority in the Commission's work. The Twenty-Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union confirmed very clearly that the Soviet proposals to eliminate nuclear weapons by the year 2000 constituted an element of our strategy underlying the entire foreign policy activities of the Soviet Union. It would seem elementary logic that the States to which those proposals are addressed would immediately proceed to draft realistic agreements to fulfil man's dream of peace and to be free of the threat of war. However, those States agree only in words that the elimination of nuclear weapons is the goal to which all the nuclear Powers should aspire. By their actions they hedge or surround with such a complicated set of reservations and conditions to finding a way out of the deadlock of the nuclear labyrinth as to make it seem virtually impossible.

Let us look at the European side of the Soviet proposals. We cannot fail to agree that the Soviet Union and other socialist States in Europe have made major concessions in proposing to withdraw from the entire continent the Soviet and American nuclear medium-range missiles, on the understanding that England and France would not build up their missile potential there. And now the very same Governments which recently looked at the Soviet SS-20 missiles as the major hindrance to solving the problems of nuclear arms in Europe are saying that simply eliminating the medium-range missiles from Europe would not be very much and that people are just trying to get a right to build up their own nuclear potential without any monitoring.

We are convinced that we cannot really count on the possibility of eliminating nuclear weapons unless there is a prohibition on the creation, testing and deployment of first-strike space weapons. That is not a question of "linkage" in
which a solution to one question is arbitrarily based on the solution of another completely unrelated question. In this case what we are talking about is an organic interrelationship between the two problems, and those two problems simply cannot be separated one from the other. The Ukrainian delegation would like to emphasize that we, like many other delegations, consider that there should be no room for weapons in space.

The question of halting nuclear tests is becoming increasingly urgent. There is no need to prove the importance of this. During the general debate at this session of the Disarmament Commission many delegations have quite convincingly said that a halt to tests with nuclear weapons is the most realistic way of slowing down and then reversing the arms race. There has been virtual unanimity on this: that this problem is the one that has been most thoroughly worked on in the whole area of disarmament questions.
Well-known constructive proposals have been made recently by the Soviet Union and the leaders of Argentina, India, Mexico, Tanzania, Sweden and Greece. In our view there is just one thing still lacking, but one that is an extremely substantial component, before we can in fact implement a solution to this problem, that is, the political will of the United States of America. It is perfectly clear that the refusal of the present United States Administration to accept the Soviet proposal to begin negotiations on a complete ban on nuclear-weapon tests, including questions on monitoring and verification, has once again demonstrated the gap between the words and deeds of Washington.

Quite frankly, in attaching priority to curbing and reducing nuclear weapons, we cannot forget another major problem, namely, the existence in the world, primarily in Europe, of an enormous arsenal of conventional weapons. The socialist countries have more than once made constructive proposals to resolve problems relating to the reduction of conventional arms and forces. One point that is of particular significance is the new proposal put forward by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gorbachev, in his statement made in Berlin on 18 April this year.

A real practical measure for curbing the arms race in all areas would be a solution to the urgent problem of not increasing, and in fact reducing, military expenditures. Such a solution would promote the achievement of economic and social progress and improve the lamentable economic situation of the developing countries.

In the view of the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR, the path to attain these goals would include the well-known proposal by States parties to the Warsaw Treaty addressed to the countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) regarding the commencement of negotiations on mutual reduction of military expenditures and subsequent continuing reductions. The position of principle of the
socialist countries on this question was confirmed in the communiqué of the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of States parties to the Warsaw Treaty that was issued in March this year.

However, as happens elsewhere, the constructive proposals submitted by the socialist countries have encountered the obstinate opposition of Western countries. Instead of considering realistic ways of reducing military expenditures, an attempt is made to impose discussion of various kinds of accountability models or ideas about comparability that are designed solely to sidetrack the international community from finding a solution to this very serious problem.

One of the important issues on the agenda of this Commission is curbing the arms race in the seas and oceans. The relevance of this problem today has increased as a result of attempts by the United States and its closest allies to bring back gunboat diplomacy in order to exert pressure on sovereign States. This can be seen from the recent United States aggression carried out against Libya, which I have mentioned, and from the dangerous concentration of United States fleets along the coasts of countries in the Middle East, Central America and other areas.

There are possibilities for solving these urgent problems. The socialist countries have frequently proposed negotiations on specific measures relating to mutual limitations on naval activities and on curbing and reducing naval expenditures, as well as confidence-building measures.

In our view, the recent USSR proposal for the mutual withdrawal from the Mediterranean of Soviet and United States fleets was important, as was the initiative to reduce naval activities in the Pacific Ocean.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR fully supports those proposals and considers that a discussion in an appropriate subsidiary body of the Commission
would help to resolve this network of problems related to curbing naval armaments, a point referred to by the General Assembly in resolution 40/94 I.

For several years now the Commission has had before it the question of the nuclear potential of South Africa. A great deal of research on various aspects of this problem has been carried out, including research within the United Nations, and it shows that there is a serious threat to international peace and security containing within itself the possibility that the racist régime of Pretoria might acquire the potential for producing nuclear weapons.

It is no secret that the broad political, economic and military co-operation provided by Western States has helped South Africa in this area, despite General Assembly resolutions strongly condemning such co-operation. It is those very States that are basically blocking the work of the Group on South Africa's nuclear capability and trying to prevent the Commission from adopting recommendations to eliminate the threat to security, peace and stability created by such a capability.

The Ukrainian delegation expects real progress to be made at this session of the Commission. We should like to express our belief that this year, which the General Assembly has proclaimed the International Year of Peace, the Commission will achieve positive results in discussing also the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We proceed from the premise that the United Nations can make a real contribution to averting the threat to war, primarily nuclear war, limiting arms and achieving disarmament through the already existing United Nations machinery in this area.

For its part, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR is willing to make its contribution to the successful outcome of this Commission's work, to promote a constructive consideration of questions on our agenda and to draft practical recommendations for submission to the General Assembly at its forty-first session.
Everything I have said earlier relates to items on the agenda, in accordance with your appeal to us. However, I should like to refer to a matter that is not specifically on the agenda or related to it, namely, the matter of what occurred in connection with the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power-station. I am doing this because a number of delegations have directly or indirectly referred to it.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR accepts with appreciation the sympathy expressed here in connection with the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power-station. We have already had an opportunity to provide information on the situation in the area of the accident to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the General Assembly in our statement made on 30 April this year at the resumed session of the General Assembly.

At the same time, the Western media, in particular in the United States, have flagrantly disregarded the information provided by the Soviet Union. Attempts have been made to exploit the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power-station for political purposes. And so the question arises: Is somebody in the West trying to make use of what happened at Chernobyl to strengthen the position of those advocating the nuclear-arms race and to divert the attention of people from the vitally important issue of the threat of nuclear war and from the proposals made by the Soviet Union on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000?

We categorically reject this sensational and tendentious handling of the accident and those various insinuations that have absolutely nothing to do with the actual situation in the Chernobyl area.

We should like to report that the area of the Chernobyl nuclear power-station was visited by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Mr. Ryzhkov; the Secretary of the Central Committee, Mr. Ligatchev; and the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, Mr. Shcherbitsky.
They looked at the situation in the area and, together with the Government Commission and other leaders of the Ukrainian Republic and the local authorities, they considered the measures taken to deal with the accident in the fourth reactor of the nuclear-power station. They looked at the normalization of the situation in the adjacent region and the provision of assistance to the local population.

The situation as of today is that the radiation situation in the Chernobyl region is normalized. Over the past days the level has fallen still further. According to the results of regular monitoring of radioactive contamination of that area in the territory of the Ukraine, the radiation level has not exceeded the norms of radiation safety established by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Ministry of Health of our country.

There is regular monitoring of the situation regarding the bodies of water and the Kiev Reservoir.

In the area of Chernobyl, we have brought in the necessary technology and we are continuing work to clear up the emergency.

Mr. MEISZTER (Hungary): Allow me at the very outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship. Having been your immediate neighbour at the Conference on Disarmament for three consecutive years, I have had a full opportunity to observe your outstanding working capacity and profound competence in the field of disarmament, qualities that were eloquently demonstrated by you during the preparatory work for our current session and that will certainly serve you well in the accomplishment of the responsible and difficult task you are facing now. My delegation wishes you every success and pledges its full co-operation. My congratulations and best wishes go also to the other officers of the Commission.
First of all, I should like to voice my delegation's conviction—confirmed by the experience of today's deliberations—that a general debate has its very well-deserved place and role in the substantive work of our Commission. We ought to have a clear picture of the overall situation in the field of disarmament in order to be able to concentrate purposefully on the specific items on our agenda. We have embarked on the preparation of our work in a rather optimistic atmosphere. That was in the very first weeks after the summit meeting of the leaders of the two militarily most important Powers. The optimistic expectations were all the more justified in that on 15 January—that is, at the very beginning of the year that has been declared the International Year of Peace by the United Nations—the Soviet Union came forward with a comprehensive and forward-looking proposition. The quintessence of that proposal is a step-by-step and consistent process to rid the earth of nuclear weapons, a process meant to be implemented and completed within the next 15 years. That major foreign-policy action was prompted by the need to overcome the negative trends of the confrontation that have been increasing in recent years and to clear the way towards curbing the nuclear-arms race on earth and preventing such a race in outer space. It was meant to reduce the danger of war and to build confidence as an integral part of relations among States.

It was that same spirit of awareness of the dangers of a nuclear war that prompted six Heads of State or Government to address a joint message to the President of the United States of America and to the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 28 February 1986. In their joint message, those statesmen emphasized the following:

"...the very survival of our planet is at stake. As long as nuclear weapons exist, there can be no security for the world. We all live confronting the awful possibility of our extinction in a nuclear holocaust. This is why we
feel it is incumbent on us to do all that we can to avert this threat and to build a new concept of global security without nuclear weapons."

Those are valuable words, and they are as valid today as they were on the day the message was signed.

The comprehensive proposal made in January covers not only nuclear-disarmament issues but such other fields as chemical weapons, conventional weapons and armed forces. Since the month of January, the socialist countries have put forward several new and concrete proposals relating to specific disarmament issues. Without going into details, I should like to make cursory mention of them.

There was an address by the Warsaw Treaty member States to the European States, the United States of America and Canada on the issue of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Europe, especially in northern Europe and in the Balkans, and a nuclear-weapon-free corridor along the lines separating the Warsaw Treaty countries and the countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe.

On 6 February the socialist countries introduced an initiative at the Vienna talks. In mid-April a proposal was advanced relating to substantial reductions in all the land-based components and tactical air forces of the European States and the relevant forces of the United States and Canada deployed in Europe.

Finally, there is the latest proposal on chemical weapons, which was introduced recently by the Soviet Union at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

Unfortunately, none of those positive steps was reciprocated by the other party. This lack of responsiveness concerns us, but my delegation, convinced that there is no sensible alternative to an agreement aimed at the elimination of the means of a nuclear confrontation, is persistently waiting for positive signs of a willingness to embark on serious negotiations in the aforementioned fields, and I am sure we not alone in so doing.
(Mr. Meiszter, Hungary)

It is against that background that we form our reasoning concerning the role and place of the multilateral disarmament endeavours. We agree with the thesis that disarmament can be best achieved by the combined thrust of bilateral, regional and multilateral disarmament steps. It is that conviction that motivates and will motivate my delegation's position on every concrete issue on the agenda of our Commission.

The Hungarian Government has taken and continues to take a stand in favour of the elaboration of concrete measures in the interest of disarmament, both in bilateral relations and in multilateral forums. The Hungarian People's Republic is ready to consider most seriously and to participate actively in the elaboration of any disarmament proposal that takes into consideration the interests of all parties concerned on the basis of equality and equal security.

During the prior substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission my delegation set forth its detailed views on the agenda items. Those views remain valid and, guided by the wish to save the precious time of the Commission, I shall at this juncture refrain from repeating them. My delegation intends to contribute to the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission during the discussions of specific agenda items.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I have a few announcements to make before we adjourn. The meetings listed in the work timetable that was distributed will also be published tomorrow in the Journal. The Commission will resume plenary meetings on Friday, 9 May, at 10.30 a.m., and we will at that time hear the remaining speakers in the general exchange of views. There are 10 speakers, but some have indicated that they will speak very briefly, so that we can probably conclude the general exchange of views in less than two hours. The plenary meeting will be followed by consultations on agenda item 9.
(The Chairman)

The Commission has been informed by the Press and Publications Division that, owing to the financial emergency facing the Organization, press coverage for the Commission has been discontinued, so that there will be no press releases. I am afraid that we can only take note of that fact, and make up for the loss of coverage at the United Nations level by enhanced press work by our delegations.

I shall continue my consultations in order to propose to the Commission at a later point a Chairman for the Working Group created on agenda item 6. I remind the African and Asian Groups that we still need two Vice-Chairmen, one of whom has to function as a Rapporteur. I urge, in order that we may complete the Bureau as a functioning body, that the consultations be completed quickly.

During the statements made in the debate many delegations have congratulated me and commented on my election. I have refrained from acknowledging those kind words in each individual case, but many delegations have been particularly generous, and I wish to state now that I am grateful for that encouragement, and I hope to translate it into beneficial action for the Commission.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.