DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 9 May 1989, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BAGHENI ADEITO NZENGeya (Zaire)
later: Mr. ADJOYI (Vice-Chairman) (Togo)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. BELLINA (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): I warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this important body. Your election not only acknowledges your well-known diplomatic qualities and your wide-ranging ability in this delicate subject, but also emphasizes the dedication of your country and Africa to peace and your continued efforts to bring about an increasingly secure and just world.

I also congratulate the other officers of the Commission, whose wealth of experience in this subject augurs well for a successful conclusion to our work.

There have been encouraging successes on the international scene in the field of disarmament and international security. The climate now prevailing should enable us to make important advances in our deliberations. I cite, in that connection, the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles; the commitment of those two States to continue their discussions on the elimination of other strategic nuclear weapons; the Vienna talks on co-operation and security in Europe; the solemn declaration made in San Salvador by the five Central American presidents, reaffirming the Esquipulas Accord; and the important progress made in the Conference on Disarmament with regard to chemical weapons, as well as the important conclusions reached by the international conference on that subject held in Paris at the beginning of this year— all of which is eloquent proof of what can be achieved when the intelligence of nations and their willingness to recognize the interdependence of States enable them to cast aside the false conceptions of security that have brought mankind to the verge of destruction.
At its third special session devoted to disarmament, which many delegations expected to produce fundamental guidelines to be followed in the disarmament process for the rest of this century, the General Assembly was unable to agree on a final document. Thus, even though the international climate is propitious for disarmament negotiations, the sad fact remains that we are still far from freeing mankind from the threats to its existence posed by the continued arms race.

Of all those threats, it is the nuclear weapon that continues to expose mankind to the most serious dangers. That is why the whole international community has the legitimate right and the urgent responsibility to participate in negotiations that could lead to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the delegation of Peru believes it imperative that the Disarmament Commission strive even harder to break the deadlock in the negotiations on the topic.

My delegation firmly believes that multilateralism, so often underestimated in this connection, is an effective means of negotiation that should be taken into account if the agreements reached are to be truly lasting.

The Commission has made important progress on the item relating to the reduction of military budgets. We are sure that there will be agreement on the only point still under discussion - the nature and correct timing of the exchange of information on military budgets. For that purpose the universal system for submitting reports, agreed by the General Assembly in 1980, could provide a clarity that would make possible that necessary exchange of information.

We must reach agreement on the subject as a matter of urgency, because the spiral of military expenditures in the third world is resulting in standards of living unworthy of human beings, whose lives could be considerably improved if
(Mr. Bellini, Peru)

States were made more aware of how they are using their wealth. We must therefore take into consideration the concept of integral security that we of the developing countries long for: détente with economic justice and respect for human rights, without any intervention in the internal affairs of others and without economic coercion. It is a concept of security that involves respect for the right of all peoples to their independence and self-determination and which requires all States to respect their international obligations, in compliance with the principles and norms of the United Nations Charter and international law.

If we work to that end we can guarantee all human beings a minimum of dignity and well-being, because any peace that ignores acute underdevelopment is precarious, however important political agreements between Powers and blocs may be. That is my country's view, and that is why it has chosen to carry out its time-honoured duty to its people rather than add to a sterile and fratricidal arms race.

Another matter of serious concern is the continued refusal by the racist Pretoria régime to place its nuclear installations under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency thus threatening the security of the African continent and rejecting the Cairo Declaration of 1964. We cannot go on allowing a State that uses methods violating the most elementary human rights to enjoy the co-operation of other States, contrary to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, endangering the territorial integrity and independence of other African States.
My delegation has a special interest in the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. That role is of prime importance, and the machinery established for that purpose has actively helped resolve difficult situations. That machinery can be made to function at its best not only through administrative or procedural reforms, but also through reaffirmed political will. If we do not comprehend that fact, we risk, through administrative reforms supposedly leading to greater efficiency, weakening the political content of the multilateral disarmament machinery.

We cannot become mere spectators to the actions of the super-Powers. We must encourage flexible interaction between the multilateral and bilateral disarmament spheres in order to find a constructive balance between the political will of the super-Powers and the right of all States to tackle a problem whose effects know no borders.

Peru shares the serious concern of other Member States about the accumulation of conventional weapons throughout the world. Although nuclear weapons threaten to snuff out all human life, conventional weapons pose the immediate threat to international peace and security.

My delegation considers it urgent that we complete consideration of conventional disarmament in all its aspects, not only because of the geo-strategic implications of conventional weapons - which include such vital issues as the threat of a conventional conflict becoming a nuclear conflict - but also because of the harmful economic and social consequences of the arms race, especially for the developing countries.

We must be aware that the developed countries possess the largest conventional arsenals and constantly apply new technologies to the production of such weapons. For that reason they bear a special political and moral responsibility with respect
to conventional disarmament. True, the developing countries' acquisition of conventional weapons impedes their socio-economic development, but those expenditures are insignificant compared with the astronomical sums spent by developed countries on the acquisition and deployment of similar, especially high-technology, conventional weapons.

In that context, the Disarmament Commission should encourage regional processes and unilateral initiatives undertaken without prejudice to the more global principles of general and complete disarmament.

An important aspect of the problem is the negative effect of arms transfers on the precarious stability of certain regions, and the existence of illegal trafficking, which fosters and encourages the continuation of the bloodiest regional conflicts and which supplies weapons to groups with no legitimate right to the use of force, thus exacerbating States' internal conflicts. Consequently, our work on conventional disarmament must focus in depth on all aspects of arms transfers - particularly those that take place outside the laws governing such sensitive transactions, or those that exceed States' legitimate security needs.

This is a particularly important session, for it is clear that there exist the elements necessary for us to add substantive content to the deliberations of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, thus avoiding cheating our peoples, who have placed their trust in us, and who would be the ones to suffer from our failure.

Therefore, my delegation, aware of the important responsibilities we must shoulder, wishes to declare its fervent desire to participate actively in the work of the Commission and contribute to its successful conclusion.
Mr. ADJOVI (Togo) (interpretation from French): Because of the especially close ties of friendship, brotherhood and co-operation between our two countries, and our own personal mutual respect, it is a pleasure for me to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for its 1989 substantive session. Because it reflects outstanding knowledge of the items before us and great diplomatic skill, your previous work in guiding work on disarmament deserves my delegation's praise. I am convinced that your personal qualities guarantee the success of our work, and assure you of the full co-operation of the delegation of Togo as you carry out your new and sensitive duties.

I also warmly congratulate the other officers of the Commission.

The historical significance of the 1989 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission gives us food for thought. Our work is taking place during a transitional period in the history of disarmament efforts. Indeed, 1989 represents a transition from the 1980s - the second half of which marked a break with the past: the beginning of genuine disarmament - to the Third United Nations Disarmament Decade.

It seems to me that those considerations should spur greater individual and collective efforts to promote and consolidate consensus on pending issues, with a view to hastening and completing bilateral, regional and multilateral discussions in other deliberative and negotiating bodies.

My delegation's contribution to the present exchange of views will address four items on the Commission's agenda: South Africa's nuclear capability; the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament; consideration of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade; and conventional disarmament, especially the question of international arms transfers.
It is a political fact of great significance that Africa was the first region to opt firmly to prevent the introduction of nuclear weapons to its territory and thus for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the transformation of the continent into a denuclearized zone.
(Mr. Adjoyi, Togo)

However, 25 years after the Cairo Declaration proclaiming denuclearization, we are obliged to note that the desired goal still remains in danger as a result of the acquisition of nuclear capability by the racist régime of South Africa.

Apart from encouraging that country to pursue its nuclear programme as it wishes, the continued profound differences in evaluations of the issue are an obstacle to the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime and a powerful barrier to those African States not yet parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Those States will doubtless not accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as long as South Africa's nuclear threat continues to loom on the continent.

It is therefore more urgent than ever for nuclear States to step up their pressure on South Africa to make it submit all its nuclear installations to the guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The strengthening of the role of the United Nations in disarmament is fundamental to the primary objective of our world Organization, which is the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context it is important to make rational, full use of the enormous potential for action available to the United Nations through its various mechanisms dealing with disarmament affairs.

In my delegation's view, ways and means of action deserve particular attention. The first course of action would be the advancement of greater interaction between the efforts and initiatives of disarmament undertaken outside the United Nations and those activities being carried out in the field of disarmament in the United Nations.
Here, without prejudice to the mandate given in the Charter, the Secretary-General could be invited to take part as an observer, at an agreed upon stage, at disarmament negotiations. In addition, the United Nations could make available to Member States its expertise concerning verification that agreements on arms limitation and disarmament are being respected.

Such an approach is of interest for two reasons: on the one hand, it would reflect the political will of negotiating States to reconcile their national interests with those of the United Nations, to which they have committed themselves; on the other, it would allow the Organization to be better informed regarding developments in disarmament efforts and to contribute, where necessary, to their consolidation.

The second means of action would be the organizing of periodic consultations at the Security Council level on major disarmament issues having a direct impact on international peace and security, which would make it possible to end certain impasses.

The third means of action would be the enhancement of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament through increased and clearer participation, as observers, by States that are not parties.

The fourth and final means of action proposed by the delegation of Togo, which merits particular attention, is increased human, financial and technical resources for the Department for Disarmament Affairs, which would enable it carefully and effectively to cope with its increased responsibilities. We should not ignore the fact that each consensus we achieve, which requires subsequent action, leads to supplementary work the carrying out of which requires appropriate resources.

The effectiveness of the Department for Disarmament Affairs should, then, not be sacrificed on the altar of the United Nations financial crisis.
Along the same lines, the regional centres of the United Nations for peace, disarmament and development should also be given the appropriate financial and human resources to enable them to play their roles effectively.

Here we wish to thank those States that provide assistance to the Centres and to appeal to all other States to demonstrate greater determination and commitment and to make substantive contributions to the Centres to enable them to carry out their programmes and advance peace, security and disarmament throughout the world.

As regards the role of the United Nations in disarmament, improvement in the efficiency of disarmament machinery is certainly essential but it cannot take place without the clearly expressed, real political will of States. The political aspect of the role of the world Organization therefore provides one way of establishing an appropriate framework and goal for action. My delegation remains firmly convinced that it is possible to overcome the enormous differences that continue to exist on this matter by finding a formula that reaffirms the political will that must underlie improvement of the effectiveness of disarmament machinery.

The Third United Nations Decade for Disarmament provides a new opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the promotion of the establishment of international peace and security by allotting to armaments only a minimum of the world's human and economic resources. In my delegation's view, the following criteria should guide disarmament efforts in the next decade.
The first such criterion would be the creation of factors to promote disarmament. On the conceptual level one would need to take further account of the relevant notion that security can no longer be viewed solely in military terms. That assumes an in-depth knowledge of security requirements and, therefore, of both military and non-military threats to security. In addition, guidelines must be drawn up for working out confidence-building measures among States and for developing and adopting appropriate machinery for the verification of respect for arms-limitation and disarmament agreements.

The second criterion involves strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and adequate use of the system of collective security provided by the Charter.

The third is the establishment of an agreed timetable for arms limitation and disarmament within the framework of a process of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In any event, no effort should be spared to ensure that the first years of the third Decade will be marked by the consecration of efforts and initiatives begun earlier, in particular the conclusion of the agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in American and Soviet strategic nuclear arsenals; the conclusion of the international convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction; the implementation of the action programme of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and, lastly, the conclusion of bilateral, regional and international agreements establishing confidence-building measures among States.

Under the question of conventional disarmament the Disarmament Commission will be considering the question of international arms transfers. That question is extremely important inasmuch as such transfers have a direct impact on
international peace and security. For the arms-producing and arms-exporting countries such transfers represent substantial sources of revenue, and for the importing countries, including most of the developing countries, they represent considerable military expenditures, which hamper their development efforts.

In voting in favour of General Assembly resolution 43/75 I on the question of international arms transfers the delegation of Togo wished to stress its dedication to the maintenance of arms at reasonable levels - that is, at levels adapted to the legitimate needs of national security.

The delegation of Togo also wished to reaffirm its deep conviction that the economic and financial constraints to which the developing countries are subjected in their development efforts would seem to call for a more rational reallocation of the limited resources available and, therefore, for a more rigorous control of the considerable military expenditures demanded by the importation of arms.

Consideration of that question by the Disarmament Commission should pave the way for an in-depth knowledge of the many negative effects of international arms transfers and for an identification of varied and appropriate measures to control and regulate such transfers.

With regard to the potential effects of the arms trade on international security, it should be noted that the 150 regional conflicts that have battered the developing world and claimed more than 20 million lives since the end of the Second World War have also involved enormous efforts to acquire armaments. A look back at the intensive arms trade that has supported the Iran-Iraq war gives us some understanding of how international arms transfers can contribute to sowing the seeds of widespread conflagration and exhausting the human, economic and financial resources of the belligerents.
(Mr. Adjovi, Togo)

Here, it is important to recall that, according to certain statistics, the conflict between Iran and Iraq has cost those two countries more than a million lives and more than 700,000 wounded, as well as more than $US 400 billion.

The negative effects of arms transfers on economic development can be highlighted by the following statistic: between 1975 and 1985, 40 per cent of the indebtedness of the developing countries was due to arms imports. In assessing the deleterious effects of international arms transfers, special attention must be paid to the increase in the illicit and clandestine arms trade, which is an alarming destabilizing factor, particularly when used for terrorist or mercenary ends.

As for measures designed to control and regulate international arms transfers, the following courses of action may prove to be effective: first, the conclusion of regional and subregional agreements establishing confidence-building measures among States and thereby likely to promote transparency and a better dissemination of information on the military potential of States. Here, the promotion and strengthening of regional or subregional economic integration are likely to eliminate sources of distrust and hostility and factors that create tension through community awareness and complementary of interests.
Secondly, gathering together the views of Member States on appropriate measures to control and regulate arms transfers can help us to grasp the scope and limits of opportunities for action.

Thirdly, the establishment or strengthening, by countries that produce and export arms, of machinery for strictly controlling illicit or clandestine arms trafficking would to some extent strike at the root of the matter.

When one remembers that the horrendous experience of the throes of war led men of goodwill to use the most noble sources of their creative inspiration to incarnate their hopes for peace, freedom and justice in the founding of the United Nations, one wonders why other generations of men have exhibited such short-sightedness by using their knowledge to produce ever-more-sophisticated means for annihilating human civilization. And when one considers the enormous gap existing between the magnitude of the efforts to advance disarmament and the slow rate of progress achieved, one wonders about the timeliness and effectiveness of the undertaking. But when one realizes that the persistence of differences of views and controversy and the shock produced by setbacks and obstacles make the pursuit of dialogue all the more indispensable, then one can dream of what is possible.

And that "possible" lies simply in the political will of States, as was recently illustrated by the Soviet-United States initiative on nuclear disarmament. So long as the political will remains, we the States Members of the United Nations can be certain that there is no impregnable fortress in the field of disarmament.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the attention of members of the Commission to the envisaged distribution of work among the Working Groups.
(The Chairman)

All members doubtless have before them document 8520A, prepared by the Secretariat and issued by the Documents Service. This document is a response to two major concerns expressed at one of our meetings yesterday when we considered questions relating to the organization of work.

It will be recalled that the first concern related to not having more than two simultaneous meetings of Working Groups. The other concern related to the active participation of all delegations in the various Working and Consultation Groups. To that end, conference rooms equipped with interpretation facilities must be provided so that all delegations will be able to use the working language of their choice.

I must call attention to a slight change in this document. Tomorrow morning, Wednesday, the Consultation Group on item 5 - reduction in military budgets - will not meet; rather, the Consultation Group on item 8 - naval armaments and disarmament - will meet, at 11.30 a.m. The Consultation Group on item 5 will meet in the afternoon, from 3 to 4.30, in Conference Room 4.

Members will have noted that we have scheduled these meetings to begin very early - at 10 a.m. I would request them to be punctual so that they may participate actively in the work of the various Groups. We have made this distribution of Conference Rooms and times of meeting to the best of our ability, attempting to maintain balance and equality among the various Groups.

Members will note that the four Working Groups have at least three meetings between Wednesday and Friday - that is, the three working days that remain this week.

When we have seen during this week how effective this system is, we shall decide whether it should be maintained or whether another method of work should be adopted.
Our concern in dividing up our work has been to respond to the needs expressed by each Group during a meeting yesterday of the Chairmen of the Working Groups and Consultation Groups with all the officers of the Commission. In fact, this timetable resulted from consultations held yesterday in regard to our programme of work.

A final, amended version of this document, taking account of the change involving the Consultation Group on item 5 and the Consultation Group on item 8, will be distributed tomorrow.

Mr. FAHMY (Egypt): I know that we have a long list of speakers for this meeting, and I apologize for asking to be allowed to speak on the present matter. I shall be very brief.

At the beginning of our session I made an appeal for a consistent pattern of meetings of Working Groups, Consultation Groups and Contact Groups so that members of delegations would be able to follow the same items throughout the four weeks of the session. I know that establishing such a pattern is a very difficult exercise. Let me, however, give one example in this work timetable that is of concern to me.

Working Group I on item 6 will meet on Wednesday at the same time as the Contact Group on item 4. On Thursday morning it will meet at the same time as Working Group II on item 7.
The next example is the group on naval armaments and disarmament. It meets on Wednesday afternoon, as does the group on conventional disarmament; later that afternoon it meets at the same time as the group on the Disarmament Decade issue.

Now, that may be simply because the very first meetings are of an organizational nature and, therefore, the time is divided up into many more segments. But for its part my delegation will have a very difficult time organizing itself if we have to keep shifting from one item to another, because the items allocated to one representative on our delegation will be discussed simultaneously one week and then shifted to be discussed with other meetings during the other week.

Mr. Chairman, you have requested us to be on time, to make our statements as scheduled and to make full use of the time made available to us. We shall attempt to do so. But in all fairness, if we feel obliged to make statements out of the prescribed time because of conflicting schedules, we shall have to do so. I would simply appeal to you and, through you, to the various Chairmen and the Secretariat to keep as far as possible - and I know the difficulties - to a fixed pattern of groups on items meeting together and not to go back and forth.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I believe that the work timetable that has been submitted has in fact taken account of all considerations put forth by various delegations. As I said a moment ago, it was first a matter of scheduling meetings for only two working groups at the same time. Members will recall that at the previous session there were three working groups meeting simultaneously; hence the third working group had to meet in a room without interpretation. That is why we have scheduled only two meetings simultaneously, taking care to provide them with interpretation.
(The Chairman)

The scheduling of the various items has been arrived at in such a way as to provide - only on Wednesday - meetings for the seven working groups in order that they could all agree on their organization of work; and that is why each working group has been allocated one and a half hours. Hence, during that one and a half hours each working group will decide on its organization of work, adopt its agenda and proceed to an assessment of proposals put forth and the documents made available by both the Secretariat and delegations.

The next day, on Thursday, one can see that six working groups are scheduled to meet; the same obtains for Friday, when six groups, and no longer seven, will be meeting.

In reply to your concern with regard to the meeting of the consultation group on naval armaments and disarmament, I indicated a moment ago the change to the effect that at 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday the consultation group on item 8 - that is, on naval armaments and disarmament - will be meeting instead of the consultation group on item 5. The consultation group on naval armaments and disarmament will meet in the afternoon from 4.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Now if one takes a look at the times allocated to each working group, one can see that a certain equitable distribution of meeting times has been achieved. Working Group I meets on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with one and a half hours allocated for each day. Working Group II also meets on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, again with one and a half hours at its disposal for each day. Working Group III - on item 9, relating to conventional disarmament - meets for one and a half hours on Wednesday, for three hours on Thursday, when it can proceed to an in-depth consideration of all substantive matters on conventional weapons, and for one and a half hours on Friday. Working Group IV meets for one and a half hours on Wednesday, for three hours on Thursday, and for one and a half hours on Friday.
(The Chairman)

So we have tried to allocate the same working time to all these working groups; however, it is obvious that, if we must also see to it that a certain working group not meet simultaneously with another, it would present some difficulties. I believe that we must show co-operation and flexibility in order for this work timetable - which in any case was discussed thoroughly by all the Chairmen of the working groups and consultation groups - to be accepted by everyone.

Does our colleague from Egypt wish to make further comments?

Mr. FAHMY (Egypt): I thank you for your explanation, Mr. Chairman.

I was not raising the issue of equitable distribution; but I know how important that is to other delegations, and I appreciate your concern.

I also appreciate the amount of effort it takes to put all this together and I of course would not like to get into a discussion on it. I simply wish to reiterate our request to have a consistent pattern of allocation of time between items that are being discussed simultaneously. We would appreciate that, and it would enable us to follow the work of the Commission without speaking out of the order of time allocated.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Egypt. I believe that we have understood each other and that we are fully taking account of his considerations and observations. He will observe that, starting on Thursday, for example, the work timetable shows that Working Group I meets at 10 a.m., as does Working Group II, with Working Group III meeting at 3 p.m., the same scheduling obtaining for Friday. There are Working Groups I, II, III and IV and the consultation group. Hence his concerns have duly been taken into account.
GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. STRESOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, please allow me at the outset to congratulate you, on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation, on your election to this important and responsible post. I should also like to greet the other members of the Bureau and wish them every success in their worthy endeavours.

We are meeting at a time of positive change in the international situation. The realities of our nuclear and space age are making mankind increasingly aware of itself as one integral whole. This has affirmed the primacy of universal values over any other interests and has brought to the fore the most important issue of our time - mankind's survival. Resolving this problem requires new political thinking and a new approach to security matters. Progress in disarmament favours expanding co-operation among States in the various spheres of peaceful activity.
(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

The process of real disarmament, which began with the entry into force of the INF Treaty, should be continued. We eagerly anticipate that the Soviet Union and the United States will make an agreement on a 50 per cent reduction of their strategic forces, while abiding by the anti-ballistic missile treaty (ABM) as it was signed in 1972. We hope that the talks in Moscow between Soviet leaders and the United States Secretary of State will provide proper momentum in that direction.

Naturally, the process of nuclear disarmament should first of all involve the countries with significant nuclear potential. The example they set should then be followed by other nuclear States. The recent proposals on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe by the Warsaw Treaty member States are an important step towards the ultimate goal of the general and complete elimination of all nuclear weapons.

A comprehensive nuclear-test ban is of paramount importance for the achievement of this goal. The People's Republic of Bulgaria supports all significant steps in this direction.

Another priority area is that of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. It would be further enhanced by the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the conclusion of effective international instruments guaranteeing the security of non-nuclear States from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. This could be achieved through the adoption of interim measures provided that they would constitute stages within a general strategy.

The international community has a vital interest in the prompt conclusion of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons. The Conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons has given a powerful impetus in this direction, which should be utilized by the Conference on Disarmament.
(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

It is particularly important at this time to prevent an arms race in outer space. The ban on anti-satellite weapons should also be given due priority. A solution is feasible on the basis of both bilateral and multilateral negotiations.

In the United Nations there is growing support for the reduction of conventional armaments. This is reflected in the negotiations on conventional forces and armaments and on confidence- and security-building measures in Europe in progress in Vienna. My country is participating in them in good faith, actively and constructively, in the awareness of the shared responsibility for strengthening stability and security in Europe and in the Balkans. Our proposals are based on a realistic assessment, anticipating the complexity of the challenges of the future. At the same time, they reflect the need for progress in this field. This approach is also embodied in the statement by the Committee of the Ministers of Defence of the Warsaw Treaty member States on the relative strength of the armed forces and armaments of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as in the information released on the correlation of the armed forces and armaments of both organizations, which were adopted in Sofia, Bulgaria, in January 1989, document A/44/114.

The substantial reductions in the armed forces and conventional armaments along with relevant cuts in military outlays are given due priority by my Government. Recently, the State Council and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria announced their decision to cut the country's military budget by 12 per cent, and by late in 1990 to reduce the armed forces by 10,000 men, 200 tanks, 200 artillery systems, 20 aircraft and 5 naval units, document A/44/113. Such unilateral measures, adopted by other Warsaw Treaty member States as well, establish favourable conditions for negotiations and for the conclusion of international agreements on reducing military arsenals. As stated
recently by the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov:

"These initiatives are aimed at decisively shifting the weight in guaranteeing national security from military to political factors, and thus at resolving in a consistent and positive manner the most important issue in world affairs, the issue of war and peace."

At present the United Nations Disarmament Commission is for the first time very close to a significant breakthrough in its efforts with a view to reducing military budgets. We support the idea of openness in military activities, doctrines and budgets, particularly with regard to comparison of the budgets. We are ready to work further on the elaboration of criteria for comparing military budgets using the standardized reporting system of the United Nations.

The efforts of States to curb the naval arms race are gaining prominence. This is a field in which a gradual approach would be most suitable inasmuch as it permits the reaching of initial agreements on acceptable measures for strengthening confidence and security at sea, particularly with regard to international seaways and straits. It is our intention to elaborate further on this issue and to introduce a working paper on the subject.

The Bulgarian delegation believes that, in the light of the emerging prospects for real disarmament, this Commission should devote appropriate efforts to the declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

Given the time constraints, I am limiting my statement to these preliminary remarks on some of the items on our agenda. It is our intention to elaborate further on all issues in the respective subsidiary bodies.
Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): Sir, I should like to congratulate you cordially on your election as Chairman of this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I am confident that under your able guidance, which we have witnessed on many occasions, this session will be successful.

I also wish to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur on their election. I am particularly pleased to welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Akashi, and of course the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Miljan Komatina.

This year's session has begun in an atmosphere characterized by the increasing orientation of the international community towards dialogue, agreement-making, strengthening of confidence among countries irrespective of ideological, political, economic or other differences. The initial results of the bilateral and regional disarmament dialogue have been achieved. After decades of the escalation of the arms race, we have witnessed a long-awaited agreement which, we hope, will open real prospects for a genuine process of disarmament. To see this process take firm root has been the expectation as well as the reason for the determined effort made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries ever since its inception.
(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

It would be rewarding to go through some of the document on disarmaments adopted at the first conference of the non-aligned countries, held in Belgrade in 1961.

The international community welcomed the historic Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - between the super-Powers. In doing so, however, it aired its expectation that negotiations would continue, this time on a substantial reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons, on which, among other things, the big Powers still have to reach an agreement. Having other nuclear-weapon States join the process would, in our opinion, be of exceptional importance.

Yugoslavia welcomes the recent successful completion of this phase of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process in Vienna and the launching within its framework of the negotiations on conventional weapons. Since Europe is the most heavily armed continent, this by itself has a global significance and opens up prospects for the creation of a security system that implies the participation of all countries, with the CSCE as its central structure.

The Paris Conference on chemical weapons also proved that a number of critical disarmament and security issues cannot be resolved without common efforts. The Conference has given a new impetus to the work of the Conference on Disarmament in this field.

Some positive movements are also evident in the approach to certain long-lasting regional crises. It gives us cause to believe that it will spread to include other major problems of international relations, without which the world could revert to yet another cycle of instability and new, perhaps even more dangerous, forms of confrontation. After all, a new international stability is inconceivable without economic progress and development, particularly of developing
countries. The problem of their development must be addressed as a priority by the international community in the years to come.

Let me say a few words about the work of the Commission and the questions that have figured on its agenda for a number of years now.

In the 10 years of work as a unique body of the United Nations entrusted with considering disarmament matters the Commission has dealt with many questions which prove the complexity of the issues involved. It has made a significant contribution to the clarification of many such questions, yet its overall contribution falls short of what was expected. Last year, for instance, we completed our consideration of confidence-building measures and of verification in all its aspects. This proved the Commission's potential — which, owing to lack of political readiness, has remained unused — for reaching agreements on other, more important questions, which have long been on our agenda — first and foremost those relating to nuclear disarmament.

There is a particular point that I would like to highlight: that a multilateral approach and negotiations on questions concerning the destiny of us all cannot be ignored, and hardly any progress can be made if the complementarity of bilateral, regional and multilateral efforts is not recognized.

The draft recommendations on questions of nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war and general approaches to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament have been with us for a very long time. We cannot but voice our concern over the lack of progress on this item of the Commission's agenda. The halting of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament are among its most important tasks, but the Commission has not been able to agree on almost any substantial paragraph, particularly on such an important issue as the comprehensive nuclear-test ban. The generally accepted truth that a nuclear war cannot be won
and should never be fought should, in our opinion, be followed by concrete actions, based on the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

No special mention is needed of the urgency of resolving the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, especially in the context of recent events in that region. Yet, despite general agreement that the apartheid régime, which is not a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, should be denied a nuclear capability, let alone the possession of nuclear weapons, we have so far failed to harmonize our positions on this matter. What we need is resolute action by the international community, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the Charter of the United Nations.

As a European and Mediterranean country, Yugoslavia attaches special importance to the cessation of the naval arms race. Multilateral co-operation is also needed in this field. The strengthening of security in the Mediterranean and on other seas and oceans is, as is pointed out in many documents of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, achievable only through the disengagement of foreign military forces from those regions.

The cessation of the nuclear-arms race is of priority importance. Conventional weapons, however, deserve urgent attention, since they have been used on a massive scale, especially in local conflicts. In point of fact, a new aspect of the arms race is discernible in the new systems of conventional arms, with all the negative consequences for the international community. Conventional disarmament is therefore an essential element of general and complete disarmament, and it is necessary to accord it due attention on the global, regional and subregional levels.
(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

The Yugoslav delegation continues to attach great importance to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We have always believed that its role is irreplaceable in the solution of the most important international questions, and disarmament is certainly one of them. I wish to repeat that the reasons for the lack of concrete results in the field of disarmament at the multilateral level are to be found not in the ineffectiveness of the multilateral mechanism, but rather in the political aspects, and therefore these problems should be given equal attention in our deliberations. This was also proved at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. There is no doubt that we could have achieved more if there had been more political will. The importance that the international community attaches to the role of the United Nations in this field was clearly expressed in last year's resolution of the General Assembly on the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Yugoslav delegation expects that the Commission will this year adopt the recommendations on the reduction of military budgets, since only one question has remained unresolved.

At a time when international relations have taken a turn for the better, a greater role for international public opinion in these processes is most welcome, and the initiative of Nigeria on the proclamation of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade is timely and will enable us to continue to focus international attention on the cause of disarmament.

In concluding my statement, I should like to point out that this session provides us with yet another opportunity to make the work of the Commission more productive than before. It gives us a chance to ensure that prestige is achieved by the force of arguments, rather than arms; that communality is given precedence
over exclusiveness; and that our future is not made hostage to any one particular interest. For its part, the Yugoslav delegation will do its utmost to ensure that this session will take another step forward towards adopting the recommendations on the most important issues on its agenda.

Mr. MAKSIMOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): First, Sir, allow me to associate myself with those representatives who have congratulated you on your election to the high office of Chairman of the Commission during its present session, and to express my confidence that under your skilled and experienced guidance the Commission's work will be successful and fruitful.
The end of the 1980s has been marked by the formation and development of trends towards an improved international situation. Progress towards disarmament received a strong impetus, in particular through the conclusion of the Treaty between the USSR and the United States on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty. The disarmament process is acquiring its own momentum, fostered by measures by a number of socialist States including unilateral reductions in weaponry and armed forces, and by the start of the Vienna negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Europe. The direct threat of a war with the involvement of major Powers has decreased. The world community is now at a major transition point, from hope to action.

To a significant degree, the years ahead will be decisive. The process of establishing an inter-linked and unified world is centred on further world progress solely through the search for universal consensus and the move towards a new world order through a comprehensive approach to strengthening international security. Multilateralism and the internationalization of the efforts of States are critically important in that connection.

The Byelorussian SSR is convinced that in ensuring the security of States we must shift from a race of military potentials to political interaction and strict compliance with international commitments.

In that connection, there is a need in coming years to surmount the unfavourable distortions that have existed in international relations as a result of the arms race and the militarization of thinking. We should ensure a shift in practice from the principle of over-arming to the principle of reasonable sufficiency for the purpose of defence. Persistent joint efforts should lead to a new model for ensuring security, not through an arms build-up but through arms
reductions on the basis of a balance of interests. International relations must be demilitarized and humanized.

At its present session the Disarmament Commission can make a positive contribution to developing a multilateral approach to disarmament issues.

It remains important to extend the current impetus of nuclear disarmament from the bilateral sphere to the multilateral sphere. We feel that, in its many years of work, the Disarmament Commission has remained too long at the stage of airing differences of opinion. From our point of view it would be in keeping with joint interests to try to concentrate attention not on what divides but on what unites the approaches of States in this area.

There is serious work under way on conventional disarmament; it has the potential for agreement on recommendations that could be useful in reducing and limiting armed forces and armaments of States and in implementing in practice multilateral, regional and bilateral measures in that sphere.

For the Commission and the international community at large, the question of international arms supply is somewhat new. The question of limiting the international arms trade is very important for strengthening international security. The growth of the international arms trade; the involvement of an ever widening circle of suppliers and purchasers; the unquestionable destabilizing impact of arms supplies on regional and thus global security; the exacerbation of problems of security and of the peaceful settlement of disputes through weapons supplies, including illegal supplies to terrorist groups; the growing availability of ever newer and more dangerous weapons; and the growing difficulty of monitoring the spread of such weapons; all those factors are tangling the links that bind nations in our interdependent world. They can be untangled only through multilateral efforts.
The Byelorussian SSR is in favour of establishing an international register of weapons supplies. That could be a substantive step towards greater openness in military affairs, a way of strengthening trust as an important factor for security, a starting-point and the basis for subsequent progress towards multilateral strength and the limitation of weapons supplies.

Positive trends in the international situation as whole and in the disarmament field in particular make it possible, and indispensable, to transform openness in military affairs into a universally recognized norm. Its universality implies its application to all components of the military potential without exception.

Important events are taking place with respect to the reduction of military budgets. The Soviet Union and a number of other countries have begun to reduce their military expenditures. Various ways of converting military production to peaceful purposes are being used. At the April 1989 meeting in Berlin of their Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, in the interest of enhancing military transparency, favoured continuing efforts to formulate criteria for comparing military budgets using the standardized international reporting instrument for military expenditures accepted in the United Nations.

We consider that the total of positive shifts in the area of the reduction of military expenditures will make it possible for the Commission to conclude its work on principles for the reduction of military expenditures. Moreover, successful work over the years on principles that have already been agreed upon should not be wasted.

There is a persistent gap in the picture of progress under way or completed in the field of arms limitation and disarmament: the limitation of military activities and armaments on the oceans and seas. The experience acquired here in
the Disarmament Commission thanks to efforts by delegations of countries of all
groups should be developed, so that progress in the area of naval forces will not
remain hostage to stereotyped thinking.

The question of the nuclear potential of the racist régime of South Africa
also requires a breakdown of stereotypes. Many years of stagnation in our
consideration of this item can be overcome by joint effort.

In implementing the fundamental priority objectives of the international
community, the multilateral approach has a central role to play. In fact, in the
coming decade of the 1990s the United Nations must be a centre for agreed action by
States, in such vital fields for comprehensive security as disarmament. Our times
demand the revitalization and strengthening of the role of such important
multilateral bodies as the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament
Commission, and the application of the multilateral approach to new areas,
including the establishment of centres for avoiding war and monitoring compliance
with agreements.

Consistent and irreversible progress by the international community along
guidelines placed on our agenda by the very facts of present-day life will enable
us to make the 1990s - the last decade before the next millennium - a historic
period in the building of a non-nuclear, non-violent world.

In conclusion, Sir, I assure you that the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR,
in co-operation with other delegations, will do everything necessary to promote
active progress on the items on the Commission's agenda.
Mr. BASSANTE (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a pleasure for me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over this session of the Disarmament Commission. Your appointment is very wise in view of your demonstrated capabilities, your wide experience and the other merits that have been evinced in your discharge of other responsibilities in our work on disarmament.

I should also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election to co-operate with you in your stewardship. Like you, they have the best qualities for the discharge of the task entrusted to them.

The presence of you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau augurs well for the success we hope to have achieved at the conclusion of our work.

As in previous years, we have before us an agenda containing important items that deserve our full attention in order to ensure that we make positive progress towards finding real answers in keeping with the current needs of the international community. That is why this delegation considers it necessary for us to take up our responsibilities with a renewed spirit and to appeal for co-operation and constructive dialogue to predominate in our deliberations, on the understanding that to ensure the success of this session we must adopt more flexible positions based on the good will of all Member States.

I should like briefly to touch on some substantive topics on our agenda. Item 4 of our agenda concerns the arms race and conventional and nuclear disarmament, which are of particular importance in our work, and we must devote our greatest efforts to them. The group responsible for deliberations on this topic, which is of such importance, must prepare the best machinery to ensure greater progress on the compendium of proposals and recommendations now being analysed. It is a document that has so far not garnered consensus though it has been dealt with for several years.
We consider the excessive delay in negotiations to be inconsistent with the meteoric growth of the arms race. That is why in this regard we consider it one of our greatest responsibilities to try in some way to contribute to the reduction of the wide gap - even by a little - by adopting a small number of recommendations.

Agenda item 5, on the reduction of military budgets, concerns a subject on which we hope we shall find the best formula in keeping with the collective interest, one that will make it possible to flag the principles that will lead to concrete ways and means of freezing and reducing military budgets, especially now, when there are times of serious crisis, uncontainable inflation and the painful impact of overwhelming external debt. It is thus a matter of urgency for us to try to conclude an agreement on the situation that now obtains in this regard. The same is true of the need for the exchange of data and a format that includes acceptable ways of measuring military budgets on the basis of transparency. That would make it possible for us to achieve progress on this very important subject.

We welcome the announcements of unilateral reductions of arms and military forces made by various Member States, and we urge that those intentions be transformed into fact, in accordance with the time frames and quantities proposed. We consider that large and small must work together to find agreement on disarmament at the multilateral, the bilateral and, already mentioned, the unilateral level.

Here I should like briefly to refer to what the President of my country, Mr. Rodrigo Borja, said in one of his statements: that in recent years the world's military expenditure had risen dramatically, reaching $800,000 million in 1985; in 1986 it reached approximately $900 million, and in 1987, approximately a $1 billion. Figures such as those cannot but bewilder, particularly when it is borne in mind that in 1987 military expenditures constituted approximately
6 per cent of world output, and was 20 times as great as the total official
development assistance given to the underdeveloped countries. It is not unknown
that every minute the world spends $1,700 million on weapons, and 30 children die
for lack of food or vaccination.

We believe that at this session of the Disarmament Commission there must be a
thorough consideration of agenda item 9, on conventional disarmament. Conventional
weapons have caused the loss of millions of lives and grave suffering in various
parts of the planet. That is why we consider that urgent and effective
consideration of conventional disarmament is essential to all. We think that,
concurrently with the consideration of conventional disarmament, nuclear
disarmament must be analysed as constituting a clear and sensible response to the
tremendous dangers posed by the very existence of these weapons to world security.
In this connection it must not be forgotten that special attention should be given
to the prohibition of nuclear tests, the halting of the nuclear-arms race, and
prohibition of the extension of the arms race to outer space. We are confident
that this forum will in some way contribute to the process of nuclear and
conventional disarmament, which finally should lead to the establishment of a world
that is totally disarmed and under effective international control.

As on similar occasions, my delegation considers it essential that we point to
the direct connection between conventional disarmament, the reduction of military
budgets, disarmament and development. That is why it has been recommended to the
Disarmament Commission that this subject, which is so meaningful, be dealt with
here. It is very important to the international community and to the developing
and non-aligned countries in particular. The Final Document prepared at the United
Nations in 1987 laid down that it was necessary to adopt ways and means to regulate
the use of the resources released by disarmament. That would not be merely moral
or humanitarian but rather a real duty in international co-operation in keeping
with the legitimate aspirations of the vast majority of the world's population.

South Africa's nuclear capability is another important question on which more
significant progress should be made. My delegation firmly supports all
recommendations directed towards halting the nuclear escalation of the racist
régime of South Africa.

Similarly, we consider that item 7, on review of the role of the
United Nations in the field of disarmament, must also be carefully considered. We
support the agreement that we streamline the work of the world Organization in this
regard. In doing so, we must of course avoid affecting the good work being done by
the United Nations and multilateralism in general to promote agreement on
disarmament.

Agenda item 10, on the consideration of the Declaration of the 1990s as the
Third Disarmament Decade, was welcomed most enthusiastically by my country, as we
consider that that decision will make a positive contribution to all multilateral
disarmament efforts. It was endorsed by the Secretary-General when he commented on
the subject. At this time it is a pleasure for me to reiterate that my country
will firmly support all constructive initiatives in our deliberations in this
regard.

My delegation would avail itself of the opportunity provided by this session
of the Disarmament Commission to emphasize my country's unreserved support for all
multilateral and regional efforts being made to promote disarmament, be it directly
or indirectly. In that spirit it was a pleasure for us to participate in the
meeting of the Presidents of the eight countries members of Amazon Co-operation
Treaty, held in Manaus, Brazil, on 6 May 1989.
That forum adopted the Amazon Declaration, in which the States signatories of the aforementioned Treaty agreed, *inter alia*, to reaffirm their countries' commitment to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes and to urge the nuclear-weapon States immediately to halt testing such weapons and promote the progressive elimination of their arsenals. Similarly, they denounced the disposal of radioactive and other toxic waste in a manner that could harm the ecosystem of the Amazon region. They stated the need to adopt appropriate measures to reduce the risks of environmental pollution through the peaceful use of nuclear energy and, lastly, they expressed their support for the aims and purposes of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

In conclusion, I should like to say that we are aware of all the difficulties that exist in fully achieving our goals. However, we continue to hope that today we shall make significant progress on the path we have been traversing, as we did last year with regard to the measures on verification and confidence-building on which the Commission was able successfully to conclude its work.

**Mr. ESZTERGALYOS** (Hungary): First of all, I would like to congratulate the Chairman on his election to preside over the United Nations Disarmament Commission. My delegation is ready to render all support to him and the other officers of the Commission in the discharge of their responsibilities.

The chances of success at the current session of the Disarmament Commission lie in the substantive work carried on in the subsidiary bodies established by it. My delegation wishes to contribute to the work of those bodies during their consideration of specific agenda items. With that in mind I will touch upon agenda items 4, 5 and 7, which are of special interest to my delegation.

When addressing the questions of nuclear disarmament and the effective elimination of the danger of nuclear war one cannot ignore the dramatic conclusions
of the recent United Nations study on the climatic and other global effects of nuclear war. According to that study, the prospects for survival and possible recovery appear to be rather grim. It cannot be disputed that a nuclear conflict would produce unprecedented climatic and severe long-term socio-economic effects, and it is also evident that none would escape the horrible consequences of such a conflict, even if its theatre were geographically restricted to a small part of the northern hemisphere. Those conclusions established by the study once again call for the continued reaffirmation of the fundamental principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Our task appears to be pretty clear, namely, to create conditions that make the outbreak and waging of nuclear war impossible. We believe that nuclear disarmament is the means by which to achieve that goal.

The implementation of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles demonstrates that nuclear disarmament is workable and should be pursued at bilateral as well as multilateral levels. It is our sincere hope that the current meeting between Foreign Minister Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union and Secretary of State Baker of the United States will result in the prompt resumption of bilateral talks on the reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals. At the same time, the multilateral disarmament bodies should also make every effort to contribute to the cause of nuclear disarmament by seeking solutions acceptable to all.

The question of conventional disarmament has become a special concern for the countries of Europe. The realization of the dangers inherent in the present situation led to the commencement of new negotiations between the countries members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the signatories of the Warsaw Treaty on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe. We attach great significance to the fact that both military systems consider the strengthening of
security and stability in Europe to be their main objective, with emphasis on the reduction of armaments and armed forces, which are the greatest threat to European security and stability.

The prospects for those talks appear to be good and negotiations resulting in tangible reductions will increase the security not only of the negotiating parties but of other countries taking part in the process initiated by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as well. A similar contribution is expected from the new talks aimed at working out a new generation of confidence-building and security-building measures in Europe. I cannot fail to mention here that the unilateral force reductions announced a few months ago by States members of the Warsaw Treaty did a lot to create the necessary political atmosphere favourable to those talks. As part of those measures the Soviet Union will withdraw a complete armoured division, an armoured training regiment, an anti-gas defence battalion, a fighter-aircraft regiment and a military school from Hungary in 1989-1990. The process of troop withdrawal has, in fact, already started in the past few days.

Hungary continues to entertain the hope that the first agreement to be achieved between the two military alliance systems will cover Hungarian as well as Soviet armed forces and armaments presently stationed on Hungarian soil.

Last year the Disarmament Commission succeeded in concluding work on two items on its agenda, formulating concrete sets of recommendations regarding confidence-building measures and verification. My delegation believes that there are two other items on the agenda with regard to which similar results could be obtained at the current session of the Commission.

Over the past five years the Disarmament Commission has done significant work in establishing a set of principles concerning the reduction of military budgets. The 15 paragraphs elaborated on that subject are the result of a remarkable
contribution by States represented in the Commission. My delegation is convinced that the only outstanding paragraph on which agreement has yet to be reached represents no insurmountable obstacle and that further consideration of the issue will bring a solution to the problem. Our hope is also based on the debate on the subject and on the results of the voting on relevant resolutions adopted at the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

It is widely recognized that the United Nations has an indispensable role to play in the field of disarmament. Efforts have been made in various forums to improve the effectiveness of the multilateral disarmament machinery. The question of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament has been on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission for the past four years, but no agreement has been reached on several relevant issues. Last year, at its third special session devoted to disarmament, the General Assembly made considerable progress in attempting to outline the improvements to be made on the different elements of the disarmament machinery. My delegation firmly believes that building on the results of the deliberations at the third special session and making good use of the formulations elaborated there as a result of compromise will facilitate the Commission's work, enabling us to reach consensus and to conclude consideration of the agenda item. Guided by that belief, the delegation of Hungary is prepared to take an active part in reaching the aforementioned goals, assuming that other delegations also share that objective.

In concluding my statement I would like to express my hope that the Commission will make every effort to achieve tangible results in its consideration of the items on its agenda.
Mr. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): First, I should like to congratulate Ambassador Bagbeni Adeito Nzenteye on his election as Chairman of this important Commission. We are sure that his well-known experience and talents will make a decisive contribution to the success that we all hope to achieve.

We think that this 1989 session of the Disarmament Commission is taking place in a favourable international atmosphere, in which we are witnessing important steps towards international peace and security, towards the settlement of some conflicts that have been a source of frustration to the international community for many years, and towards the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of disputes, in keeping with the objectives laid down in the Charter. All this has been made possible by the noteworthy activities carried out by the forces that cherish peace and progress in the world.

In those circumstances, it is the Disarmament Commission's duty to exert its best efforts to make a contribution in this international atmosphere which is pushing us ahead and to ensure that it will spread to all countries and regions, without distinction as to size, geographical location, socio-economic system or level of development.

The most recent events have highlighted the role of multilateralism and, in particular, the importance of the United Nations in the achievement of the objective of preserving peace and establishing a climate of international security in keeping with the aspirations of all peoples. That should be the objective also of the Conference on Disarmament, which, by its very nature, is the real negotiating body of the United Nations in this field.

Despite the progress registered by the agreements entered into between the Soviet Union and the United States on the elimination of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles in Europe, the destructive power of nuclear arsenals
continues to pose the greatest danger to world peace. Therefore, nuclear disarmament continues to have the highest priority, as is noted in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Thus, it should be a matter of deep concern to the Commission that the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva are still in a state of stagnation - in flagrant contradiction with the hopes raised in the international community by the signing of the Soviet-United States agreements, and with the prevailing spirit in favour of the solution of the pending major international problems through multilateral means.

Cuba's position on the reduction of military budgets is well known. There can be no doubt that we are in favour of the total elimination of the arms race and of armament in all its manifestations, or that we are in favour of the use of the resources released by that process to solve the most acute economic problems of the third world and assist the economic and social development of all nations. Nevertheless, it is our opinion that any body promoting the reduction of military expenditures must take full account of each nation's security needs and the prevailing characteristics of the geographical region in which it is located.

With regard to the goal of enhancing international security, we welcome the efforts made in Vienna to promote stability in Europe - the continent that was the main theatre of the two greatest conflagrations of this century. We believe that the talks being carried out in that region on conventional disarmament will contribute to the achievement of that objective. However, any automatic extrapolation of such ideas to other regions could be dangerous, because each of the regions has its own features and characteristics, which determine the kinds of actions the countries belonging in it will take. In that respect, the Disarmament Commission must be aware that its highest priority in the attainment of general and complete disarmament is nothing other than nuclear disarmament.
Similarly, we attach the utmost importance to consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capabilities. We must not forget that the apartheid system poses a fundamental threat to the African continent and that the Disarmament Commission has received a specific mandate from the General Assembly to study that item in depth. We thus take this opportunity to urge those who oppose the detailed consideration of the item to change their attitude.

The question of naval armaments has greater importance now than in the past so far as disarmament is concerned. It provides us with a means to measure the intensification of the arms race. We must not lose sight of the fact that the development of such armaments is basically the responsibility of the great Powers and that it is precisely those Powers that must take the first steps towards the elimination of these weapons, which, of course, have been the ones most used historically in the many violations by imperialism of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of third-world countries. As a result, to refuse to discuss that aspect flies in the face, also, of the spirit that appears to be forging ahead in international relations, in favour of peace and a relaxation of tensions.

It was that spirit which led the General Assembly at its forty-third session to approve a declaration of the 1990s as the third disarmament decade. That was a praiseworthy initiative, and we place our highest hopes in it. We are convinced that it will provide us with an opportunity to consider important questions, first and foremost disarmament and development, which is a significant source of hope for the third world.
Mr. OLDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic is gratified to see you, an experienced diplomat, in the important and responsible post of Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We recall how brilliantly you coped with the task of Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-second session of the General Assembly. We are convinced that under your wise leadership the Commission will take a major step towards achieving practical results on the questions before us.

Naturally, our congratulations also go to all the other members of the Bureau. We wish also warmly to greet Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi. Our delegation holds in the highest opinion his significant contributions to the activities of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament.

In the year that has elapsed since the previous session of the Disarmament Commission there have been a number of important events that have had a direct bearing on its activities. The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament took place and, although it was not possible at that session to agree upon a final document, it nevertheless demonstrated the will of the international community to achieve the objectives of disarmament and showed broad agreement among States and identified a range of problems requiring increased efforts in the interest of narrowing the gap between positions. There can be no doubt that it gave significant impetus to internationalization of the negotiating process in the sphere of disarmament.

A process of genuine disarmament has begun. There has been practical implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on intermediate- and shorter-range missiles, and reports of the destruction of these lethal weapons from testing grounds have become evermore common.
The 7 December 1988 statement by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev at the United Nations was a major event of the past year, and it will have a profound and long-lasting impact on the development of world events.

A general analysis of today's international situation led to the conclusion that further world progress is possible only through the search for universal consensus in advancing the cause of a new world order and that now interaction is required of States and social-political movements regardless of ideological and other such distinctions.

In this connection, I should like to emphasize in particular that those forces in the West that, in assessing perestroika, see in our new approach to world affairs a symptom of economic weakness and an attempt to obtain a respite so as then, with new vigour, allegedly to threaten the West are sadly in error. That is a profound delusion and crude over-simplification. The essence of perestroika is diametrically opposed to such "logical constructs", for perestroika has nothing to do with considerations of expediency and is aimed at a stable world, at firm co-operation.

Soviet foreign policy initiatives, inter alia in the disarmament field, are an organic part of the realistic programme of ideas and actions of the international community aimed at reaffirming a new thinking in the international context as mankind prepares to enter the twenty-first century.

The beginning of negotiations on conventional armed forces and confidence-building measures and security in Europe is on the calendar of important events.

The first practical steps have been taken to shift from an arms economy to a disarmament economy. The problem of conversion is becoming evermore pressing. We are now heavily involved in the conversion of a number of military enterprises to
civilian production. A substantive proportion of military transport aviation is now being converted to service economic freight cargo, among which are well-known cargo aircraft produced at enterprises in the Ukraine.

The aggregate impact of all these events is demonstrated in the fact that the trend towards affirmation of the principle of security through disarmament is gradually gaining momentum. A new historical reality is emerging, a shift from over-arming to reasonable sufficiency, to making the military doctrines of States defensive in nature and to limiting their armed forces to a strict framework of defence needs. Progress towards disarmament, however, is not being achieved as smoothly and as rapidly as we would like. Evidence of this can be seen in the protracted process of the drawing up of the convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. Despite the clearly expressed will of the international community at the General Assembly's third special session devoted to disarmament and at its forty-third session, as well as at the Conference in Paris, for a speedy conclusion and agreement on a final text of the convention, the objective has unfortunately not yet been achieved.

There have also been long pauses on certain other vitally important areas of curbing the arms race. So far, there have been no appropriate answers to the well-known proposals and practical steps in the area of disarmament put forth by the socialist countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty.

Therefore, it is now very important to take decisive steps to make the disarmament process continuous and progressive and achieve progress towards a non-nuclear and non-violent world. In so doing, we must seize every opportunity on the unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.
The United Nations, which is a unique international centre at the service of peace and security, must play an important role in intensifying and channelling the efforts of States, peoples and public opinion at establishing a new model of security.

The effectiveness of our Organization as a united entity depends on the effectiveness of its component parts. The Disarmament Commission occupies an important place in the system of bodies dealing with disarmament questions. In light of the positive changes taking place in the world and the new opportunities opening up for the Organization, the Commission bears a great responsibility. It must now not only reaffirm its own ability to achieve concrete results, as happened in 1988, but also expand the range of issues on which such results can be achieved.
In the view of our delegation, this is first and foremost the group of questions involving problems of nuclear disarmament and, singling it out from others, we are convinced that it is of priority significance in the cause of disarmament, in reducing the danger of war, and in forming a new model of security. The guarantee of peace does not lie in nuclear deterrence, since today, in the desire for a safe future, it is not States which need to be deterred but rather nuclear weapons which block that path. This means that there is a need to work unswervingly and constantly for the reduction, destruction and complete elimination of the production of nuclear weapons. It is well known to everyone that the nuclear arsenals stockpiled today are 26,000 times more powerful than all the weapons used during the Second World War.

In that connection, I should like to draw the attention of members of the Commission to the fact that today throughout our country we are celebrating an event, which is a sacred one for us, the day of victory over Hitlerite fascism. It is precisely today that we mark the forty-fourth anniversary of that victory. In the Second World War, the Ukrainian people lost 6 million of its citizens — I repeat, 6 million citizens. As was the case for other peoples, for us the struggle to prevent war, the struggle for disarmament and for international security, is no abstraction. We know very well the price of peace.

The speedy conclusion of an agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States on a 50 per cent reduction of their offensive weapons in compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) in the form in which it was signed in 1972 remains an aim of the highest priority in this context.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR also believes that the mere proclamation of slogans in support of disarmament can no longer satisfy anyone. What are needed are practical and positive actions. It is necessary to work for the start of
negotiations on tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. What is needed is a modernization of policy and not of nuclear weapons. We hope that at the present session work on agreement on summary provisions with regard to recommendations on agenda item 4 will lead to definite practical results. For our part, we shall make every effort necessary to that end.

Such are our objectives with regard to all the other agenda items, in particular those concerning disarmament in the field of conventional weapons. The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR welcomes the start of negotiations in Vienna and calls on all the parties to engage in a constructive policy with a view to achieving concrete results within a short period of time.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Commission to the fact that there is compelling evidence of the will of the socialist countries to achieve an effective outcome of the negotiations by undertaking unilateral steps to reduce arms and military budgets. Let us not forget, however, that disarmament is a two-way street. We hope that the work of the Commission at the present session will make substantive progress on this issue as well.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR has traditionally devoted great attention to the question of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. During the previous session of the Commission a great deal of useful work was done. I should like in that connection to express our gratitude to Ambassadors Engo and Butler for the work that they have done. Unfortunately, at that session it was not possible to draw up a consensus text of recommendations. At the same time, the discussion demonstrated that there was understanding among the members of the Commission of the need to make fuller use of the potential of the United Nations and its machinery to promote the disarmament process. That is a
good basis for productive dialogue aimed at reaching agreement on the remaining provisions this year.

In developing earlier ideas and proposals on this issue and also taking into account the discussions at the previous session, the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR, together with the delegations of other countries, has prepared the appropriate document and intends to submit it for the Commission's consideration. We believe that the role of the United Nations in the cause of disarmament can be substantively enhanced if full use is made of the potential of the General Assembly and its bodies, of the Security Council and the Secretary-General as well as other international forums and organizations, in particular the Conference on Disarmament, the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). In our view, the cause of disarmament can only stand to gain if we can transform our Organization into a genuine centre for the internationalization of the efforts of States in the disarmament field.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR hopes that at the present session it will be possible to conclude consideration of the question of the reduction of military budgets. All the prerequisites exist for so doing.

Unfortunately, until now the Commission has not been able to draw up recommendations on the question of the nuclear potential of South Africa. The international community, with good reason, sees the danger in the spread of nuclear weapons. That is why the further strengthening of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons régime is so important.

It is extremely important to unite the efforts of all States in their practical actions in the disarmament field, as was mentioned earlier, at all levels: unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral. This objective will doubtless be served also by the proclamation of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament
Decade. We have stated our approach to this question in our answer to the United Nations Secretary-General, which has been published in a Secretariat document distributed at this session.

We hope that together, taking into account all these proposals, we shall be able to draw up a universally acceptable declaration aimed at giving new impetus to the disarmament process. We believe that the future declaration must reflect the continuity and the progressive nature of the disarmament process. It must take note of what was done during the Second Disarmament Decade and guide the international community towards the achievement of concrete results.

**Mr. TANASIE** (Romania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, first I should like to state how gratified my delegation is to see you presiding over the work of the Disarmament Commission. You are the representative of a friendly country with which Romania has been developing outstanding relations of fruitful co-operation. In extending to you our warmest congratulations, we are convinced that your competence and personal qualities as well as the outstanding preparations for this session conducted through consultations held in Geneva and New York are both guarantees and favourable bases for the successful conclusion of Commission's work of the present session.

It goes without saying that the Disarmament Commission, which is considering disarmament questions with the participation of all the States Members of the United Nations, has an important place in the general structure created by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In its search for a solution to the major problems of disarmament, the Commission could, at the present session, make a significant contribution by conducting an analysis, even a brief one, of the ways and means of enhancing the efficiency of its work.
The Commission's current session is taking place in an international situation which remains complex and contradictory. Recent international developments - in particular, the conclusion of the Soviet-American Treaty on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, the beginning in Vienna of negotiations on conventional weapons in Europe and the ending of certain regional conflicts, or the conclusion of agreements to settle them through negotiations - give mankind hope that there is a possibility of a peaceful, more secure world, free from weapons and the spectre of war.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the reality that we are still far from a radical improvement in the international situation. The colossal arsenals of nuclear weapons continue to be developed, thus perpetuating the danger of war and the annihilation of civilization and life on the planet. Indeed, only recently, there has been discussion of modernizing short-range missiles in Europe. Nuclear-weapons tests and research aimed at the militarization of outer space are also continuing.

As the President of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, said recently:
"At a time when the world is saturated with enormous quantities of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction capable of destroying all mankind several times over, there is only one path, only one possible policy: once and for all to renounce force and war and impose a new way of thinking and a new, democratic policy that excludes force and war from international life."

That is why, in Romania's view, the fundamental challenge of our present era is, first, to halt the nuclear-arms race and, then, to proceed to the phased but total elimination of such weapons, halting their testing, development and modernization, and renouncing the programme to militarize outer space.
With those necessary measures in mind, my country continues to pronounce itself in favour of the drawing up and implementation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, which, while having nuclear disarmament as its central element, would include appropriate measures for the elimination of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the reduction of conventional weapons and of manpower and military expenditures.

In this context, the Romanian delegation attaches particular importance to agenda item 5, dealing with the reduction of military budgets, an important question directly linked to a reversal of the arms race. The Disarmament Commission has considered the problem in depth over several sessions and is now about to agree on a set of principles designed to govern the future actions of States on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. We believe that recent developments augur well for the finalization of the last paragraph still under discussion, which concerns the principle of transparency and the comparability of military expenditures.

At the Commission's last session important progress was made along those lines. We are also encouraged by the declarations made at the forty-third session of the General Assembly during discussion in the First Committee of the item concerning the reduction of military budgets. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, speaking on behalf of the Twelve, stressed that progress had been made towards agreement on the wording of the paragraph and that a promising basis had been established for the final adoption of the principles. In turn, the Soviet representative said that through the flexibility shown by many delegations the necessary foundation had been laid for finalization of a document of principles. The representative of Australia commented that in general terms the drafting of the principles had been concluded.
In the communiqué issued by the Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty at its session held in Berlin in April, the participants came out in favour of enhancing openness in the military field and advocated the continuation of efforts to elaborate criteria for a comparison of military budgets of States, making use of the international system for publication adopted by the General Assembly in 1980. At the present session of the Commission the representatives of several countries have said that they believe there are now favourable conditions for the Commission to conclude, with positive, concrete results, the agenda item on the reduction of military budgets.

We are convinced that all those developments show that the conditions exist for agreement, at the Commission's present session, on the outstanding paragraph of the document of principles, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to us by resolution 43/73 and that the whole document can be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. The Commission will thus be making an important contribution to United Nations efforts to resolve disarmament problems.

During the forty-third session of the General Assembly many States requested the United States of America and the Soviet Union to increase their efforts to reach agreement on a significant reduction of their nuclear arsenals.

Since the priority of our times is the halting of the nuclear-arms race and the phased elimination of nuclear weapons, a question of direct concern to all States, be they nuclear or not, it is very important that the Commission give a new impetus to bilateral negotiations and at the same time contribute to the start of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, in accordance with the recommendations adopted by consensus during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We think in particular of the possibilities provided by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, where
specific negotiations are to begin on the agenda items concerning nuclear disarmament; the banning of nuclear-weapons tests; the prevention of the militarization of outer space; and the banning and elimination of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In Romania's view, in the context of the general effort to eliminate nuclear weapons, it is necessary to put an end to the modernization of short-range missiles in Europe and to begin negotiations between the member States of the two military alliances to reduce and eliminate those missiles, under effective international control.

At the same time, Romania attaches great importance to the adoption of conventional disarmament measures. We therefore believe that the Commission should continue, and conclude, the debate on the agenda item dealing with that matter.

As is well known, Romania has proposed that States adopt unilateral measures to reduce their armed forces, armaments and military expenditures. Moreover, Romania was the first country to adopt such a measure, which it did in November 1986, following a national referendum, through a unilateral 5-10-per-cent-reduction in its conventional weapons, military manpower and military expenditures, transferring to peaceful economic use part of the equipment subject to the reduction. Since then other States have adopted similar measures, thus taking new steps on the path of disarmament.

My country welcomed the start in Vienna of negotiations on conventional weapons in Europe, given the situation on the continent, which has an over-abundance of nuclear and conventional weapons and where the two most powerful military blocs confront each other. We hope that negotiations will be able to play an important role in substantially reducing troops, weapons and military expenditures in Europe and will also have a beneficial influence on the situation in other continents.
In our view, measures to reduce conventional weapons and military manpower should be accompanied by corresponding measures to reduce military expenditures, and the resources thus released should be used for the economic and social development of all States - above all, the developing countries.

The review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament will, in our view, allow the Commission to formulate specific recommendations and proposals on this important subject. Our conviction in this regard is based on the spirit of the debate, both at our previous session and at the forty-third session of the General Assembly, which demonstrated the increased confidence of States in the United Nations and the will to strengthen the Organization's role in the field of disarmament.
In our view, the Commission's recommendations should establish the central role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament along with enhancing the contribution and effectiveness of the Organization so it can have more direct powers with respect to the discussion, negotiation and monitoring of disarmament measures. That should involve strengthening the role of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Geneva Conference on Disarmament in disarmament matters.

Naval armaments and disarmament also deserve the Commission's full attention. That item cannot be ignored, given its dimensions, including the great number of nuclear weapons and military personnel deployed in naval units. At the same time, naval disarmament cannot be treated separately and in isolation from other disarmament problems and the overall balance of forces, for there is close interdependence among those issues.

We believe the approach to problems of naval disarmament could be made easier if we were to begin by adopting certain measures to build confidence on the seas and oceans. Such measures could open the way to negotiations on naval disarmament. We consider, for example, that it would be important to limit naval activities, prohibit manoeuvres and movements by military vessels bearing nuclear weapons near the territory and coastline of other States, or to adopt measures guaranteeing free and secure navigation on the high seas. Recent accidents, along with others in the past, involving submarines or warships carrying nuclear weapons justify the need to end the presence in international waters of ships with nuclear weapons on board.

Romania is among the countries which worked hard for the declaration by the United Nations of the first two Disarmament Decades. There can be no doubt that those important initiatives contributed to making the world public and the United Nations more aware of disarmament issues. Yet we must note that at the end of the
Second Disarmament Decade the goals set by the General Assembly are far from having been reached. On the contrary, the arms race has intensified and nuclear and conventional arsenals have grown.

In our view, the Third Disarmament Decade must achieve more positive results and make a real contribution to the disarmament process. To that end we believe the recommendations of the Disarmament Commission should lay down a consistent set of objectives and guidelines for action during the Third Disarmament Decade. We believe they should include, for example: a 50-per-cent reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the two great Powers; the beginning of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament; measures for a gradual end to nuclear-weapons tests; work towards the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, parallel with measures of nuclear disarmament; the adoption of measures for substantial reductions in conventional weapons and the establishment of a balance of forces at lower levels; the strengthening of the role and effectiveness of the United Nations negotiating machinery in the field of disarmament; the allocation of financial resources freed by disarmament to economic and social purposes, including for developing countries; and an appeal to States to adopt unilateral measures to limit or reduce their armaments.

Those are a few ideas my delegation felt it useful to present as a contribution to the work of the Commission on the item relating to the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

I cannot conclude my statement, Mr. Chairman, without assuring you of my delegation's full co-operation in the successful completion of the important responsibilities entrusted to you.
Mr. SHARMA (India): I extend the felicitations of my delegation to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission for its 1989 session, as well as to the other officers. We are confident that under your able guidance the deliberations of the Commission will see a successful conclusion. My delegation assures you of its full co-operation in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Since we last met in this forum a number of important developments have taken place in the field of disarmament at the bilateral, regional and global levels. Most important, there is a growing perception that we are breaking out of the mind-set that conditioned thinking during the cold war period, hopefully into one based on multilateralism, universal participation and co-operation. There should be growing recognition on the part of the major military Powers that the path of confrontation leads us to a dead end. The Treaty on intermediate-range and shorter-range nuclear missiles - the INF Treaty - between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which came into force almost a year ago, was the first nuclear disarmament agreement since the advent of nuclear weapons, and in many ways it marks a turning-point. For the first time, the two leading nuclear Powers set their seal to an agreement that eliminates an entire class of nuclear weapons and marks a reversal, even if a modest one, in the inexorable nuclear-arms race. It is a historic step, not because of the few thousand missiles it will dismantle but because it demonstrates the fundamental truth that in the nuclear age the road to enhanced security lies through disarmament and not through the accumulation of weaponry.

Almost 40 years ago Einstein said, "Nuclear weapons have changed everything but our way of thinking". Though the INF Treaty has improved the possibilities for nuclear disarmament, it can be regarded only as the first step in a very long
journey. The belief persists in some quarters in the necessity of nuclear weapons as guarantors of peace. Proponents of nuclear weapons are also trying to circumvent the momentum created by the INF Treaty by advocating the development of new nuclear weapons to compensate for those eliminated. To prevent gains from being dissipated, the time has come for us to consider alternative security doctrines and the application of principles of non-violence and co-operation for building a new structure of international relations.

At the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi presented an action plan for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world. Addressing an international disarmament conference held in New Delhi last November, he stated:

"At this crossroads in human history, where the international community has to decide which road to take, we have presented to the United Nations an action plan designed to usher in a world free of nuclear weapons and committed to non-violence. Our action plan is not only a practical programme for nuclear disarmament in suitable phases, or even only a programme for general and complete disarmament. It is in essence an action plan for a quantum leap out of a world order which believes in confrontation and trusts in violence into a new world order rooted in non-violence and anchored in peaceful coexistence."
(Mr. Sharma, India)

"The mechanics of disarmament are, of course, of operative significance. But disarmament by itself is not enough. It must be accompanied by profound changes in attitudes and approaches, in objectives and methodologies, in doctrines and strategies, which would displace armed rivalry and the search for domination. We need to see human civilization itself advance to a new world order which assures durable peace and prosperity for all through peaceful coexistence."

Our action plan is a pragmatic and gradualistic programme for nuclear disarmament. But more so it is a plan for general disarmament linked to the quality of human society we wish for ourselves. It addresses the root causes of division and confrontational attitudes which cause tension and conflicts and in turn fuel the arms race. Genuine and lasting disarmament can survive only in a new world order anchored in non-violence and peaceful coexistence to which all parties contribute. For this, the process of disarmament must be accompanied by a radical reorientation in established attitudes and mind-sets. The very existence of nuclear weapons runs contrary to the spirit of such a world order, for the existence of nuclear weapons is a validation of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence as any doctrine of deterrence must rest on the assumption of a world order divided into hostile camps. The world of the future cannot be built on a foundation of pessimism. Whether such deterrence is refined into concepts of minimal deterrence, counter-force, counter-value, "prevailance" or discriminate deterrence, it makes no difference, for these refinements demonstrate a belief not in deterrence but in the essential failure of nuclear deterrence in offering genuine security, thereby revealing its fatal flaw.

We would urge that the momentum generated by the INF Treaty be carried forward by the early resumption and speedy conclusion of negotiations on a 50 per cent
reduction of the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two leading nuclear-weapon States. Such a demonstration of political will would prepare the ground for the multilateralization of the nuclear disarmament process, bringing us much closer to our objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

While it is a matter of concern that the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was not able to adopt a consensus document, its positive value lies in the high-level participation and the new initiatives proposed. Its positive impact was also perceived at the forty-third session of the General Assembly, at which the trend towards resolutions being adopted without a vote was consolidated, reflecting increasing consensus on a number of issues. It is our hope that this trend will grow.

The realization of the growing role of the United Nations in dealing with issues in a multipolar world is a source of encouragement to my delegation. We believe that all efforts should be made to mobilize support to enable the United Nations to play an effective role in bringing about and maintaining a comprehensive system of global security. General Assembly resolution 43/81 B, co-sponsored by India, underlines the important role of the United Nations in the field of verification of and compliance with disarmament agreements. Another initiative by India addresses the qualitative aspects of the arms race, which has often been neglected in the "bean-counting" approach. This does not imply arresting the growth of science and technology but makes us realize that scientific and technological developments need to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind and should not worsen or complicate the disarmament process. Here too the role of the United Nations in developing a system of assessment and monitoring of scientific and technological developments with a view
to evaluating their impact on the international security environment is a significant step forward.

In January of this year, at the Paris Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 149 States collectively expressed their determination to prevent any recourse to chemical weapons by completely eliminating them. They have urged the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to

"redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and conclude the Convention at the earliest date".

Such a commitment augurs well for global adherence to the Convention, especially if it can be concluded in the near-term. Time lost on protracted discussions on peripheral issues which can be dealt with in subsequent stages will lead to a loss of the momentum that was generated by the collective political will in evidence at the Paris Conference.

At the regional level, we welcome the beginning of the talks on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe, the continent with the highest concentration of arms, both conventional and nuclear. The unilateral force reductions already announced by a number of participating States is a positive step in the right direction. All these are encouraging signs, a reflection of a new-found optimism, an indication that a new way of thinking is taking hold, though tentatively. Concrete and real disarmament agreements, especially in the multilateral field, have yet to materialize. The arms race has yet to be halted, let alone reversed. The Disarmament Commission, in responding to these changes, must reflect the new thinking. It must reaffirm the high priority attached to the questions of nuclear disarmament and prevention of nuclear war. It needs to re-emphasize that nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction and annihilation,
and not weapons of war. Nuclear weapons offer us nothing but a balance of terror, and a balance of terror is still terror.

My delegation would like to express its concern at the tendency which regards horizontal non-proliferation as an answer to any of the grave issues facing us in the field of disarmament. Global security cannot be postulated on the premise that certain kinds of weapons are necessary, indeed desirable, for the security of certain countries but anathema if possessed by others. The commitment to abolish for ever weapons of mass destruction has to be a universal one and not partial and selective. Perpetuation of monopolies in such weapons systems erodes the credibility of and respect for the disarmament debate. The track of horizontal non-proliferation runs contrary to the track of elimination, which we should all follow. The lead in the right direction has to be given by those possessing such weapons. The same weapon system cannot have two faces - seductive to some and repellent to others. Abhorrence towards such systems should be shared by all.

Item 4 of our agenda relates to the consideration of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament in order to expedite negotiations aimed at the effective elimination of the dangers of nuclear war. For a decade this item has remained on our agenda. We hope that, given the encouraging signs, it will be possible this year to develop a consensus set of recommendations. This will enable the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, to commence with a negotiating mandate on its related agenda items - cessation of the nuclear arms race and prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters.
The universal multilateralism of the Disarmament Commission provides a political and moral authority that it must bring to bear as an input to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. On the question of the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty in the Conference on Disarmament there is some hope that an ad hoc committee may be established later this year. Our work on agenda item 4 can also play a useful role in helping to develop consensus around that issue.

The question of the reduction of military budgets has also been on our agenda for a long time. Our deliberations have been successful in leading us to consensus on a number of pertinent aspects with regard to the principles that should govern our actions to freeze and gradually to reduce military budgets. The outstanding issue relates to the need for an initial exchange of relevant data and agreement on a mutual, satisfactory format for the measurement and comparison of military budgets. For the past two years our efforts have focused on reaching agreement on this outstanding issue. My delegation believes that, given shared commitment, it should be possible to resolve it. Once again, delay would be counterproductive, for it increases the risk of unravelling the carefully balanced compromise text.

Some positive results were achieved last year in the consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capability. There can be no doubt that the execrable policy of apartheid practised by the South African régime is the root cause of conflict in the region and that it constitutes a threat to international peace and security. There is a widespread conviction that the racist régime of South Africa possesses nuclear-weapon capability, which renders the situation in the region more dangerous. That conviction is based upon facts reflected in the reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is also reflected in
the exposures of clandestine attempts to acquire the components used in nuclear weapons, such as flash X-ray machines. The development of a nuclear arsenal by South Africa is a blow to the commitment of the people of Africa to keep that continent free of nuclear weapons. It is hoped that, building on last year's progress, the Disarmament Commission will this year be able to formulate recommendations and to pronounce itself clearly and unambiguously on one of the most critical items on our agenda.

In 1987 we began work on the issue of conventional disarmament. We share the concern that the continuing arms race is absorbing far too great a proportion of the world's human, financial, natural and technological resources. While the highest priority should continue to be given to nuclear disarmament - and in particular to removing the threat of nuclear war - attention also needs to be given to conventional disarmament, especially in the global context. It is no coincidence that the nuclear-weapon States account for more than 70 per cent of the world's total military expenditure, and there also exists a significant correlation with the high expenditures for military research and development. This is especially relevant today, when we are poised on the threshold of a new arms race that seeks to introduce new technologies, such as laser-guided weapons and particle-beam weapons, into conventional-weapon arsenals. Countries with the largest and most sophisticated military arsenals, particularly members of the two military alliances, bear a special responsibility in this regard. During the past two years effective groundwork has been laid. Since the scope of the subject is large, we should be able this year to prioritize the issues and to advance our deliberations on this item.

This year we have also inscribed a new item on our agenda: Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. This is an important item, and we would
do well to reflect on it in depth. My delegation believes that the forthcoming
decade carries within it the seeds of change that will enable us to make the
transition to a new world order and, if we ourselves so wish, it could become a
historic watershed. In the earlier part of my statement I dwelt on the elements of
such a world order. Before we begin to plan for the future, we must ensure that we
have a future. In dealing with this agenda item, I cannot visualize any priority
greater than that.

Owing to the shorter duration of the general exchange of views I have limited
my statement to some of the issues facing us at our current session. We do attach
importance to other items as well, and during the course of substantive discussions
in the subsidiary bodies, we will express our views on those items.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): I should like at the outset to offer you, Sir,
my delegation's sincere congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of
the Disarmament Commission. We are confident that, with you at its helm, the
Commission will be able to achieve important results in the course of its work over
the next few weeks. I also avail myself of this opportunity to express our
gratitude and appreciation to Ambassador Davidson L. Hepburn of Bahamas for the
skilful manner in which he guided the deliberations of the Commission at its
session last year.

It is appropriate to recall that in its resolution 43/78 A the General
Assembly requested the Commission to continue its work in accordance with its
mandate, and with paragraph 3 of resolution 37/78 H and to make every effort to
achieve specific recommendations on the outstanding items on its agenda. We
welcome the unambiguous thrust of that resolution, which we hope will serve as an
impetus for our work. Indeed, my delegation is convinced that there is ample room
for enhancing the Commission's contribution to the process of multilateral
disarmament efforts. We are therefore fully cognizant of the need for the Commission to discharge its deliberative function in an effective manner through an action-oriented approach that would have as its priority the drawing up of recommendations on each issue. In that context Indonesia is gratified that the adoption by consensus of a set of principles of verification on disarmament issues and a set of guidelines for confidence-building measures augurs well for our future efforts. We are convinced that, given the political will, the possibilities available to the Commission as a forum for formulating constructive proposals will continue to be utilized effectively.

In recent years the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union have jointly proclaimed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. While such public pronouncements are indeed to be welcomed, it is none the less a truism that as long as meaningful and genuine agreements continue to elude them, the nuclear-arms race will inexorably continue to escalate and, as a result, human survival will be made all the more precarious. In fact, our hopes that arms-limitation accords already reached would lead to major agreements on arms reductions, or at least slow the introduction of new and more potent weapons, have been disappointed. In those circumstances it is essential that the Commission forcefully reaffirm the centrality of the question of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament and make its contributions towards facilitating the ongoing bilateral, regional and multilateral negotiations.
Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

It bears reiteration that the question of the elimination of the danger of nuclear war must be viewed not only as a priority but also with a heightened sense of urgency because of its unimaginable consequences for belligerents and non-belligerents alike. It is therefore natural that this critical issue should be the legitimate concern of all States. The Commission itself has in the past recognized that among the greatest perils today is the threat of destruction as a result of the unleashing of nuclear war owing to a technical malfunction, human error or political misjudgement. We are therefore duty bound to identify ways and means by which to confront an issue of such transcendental importance to mankind as a whole. In this regard, I believe that there are now sufficiently concrete proposals and suggestions to start serious work on the prevention of nuclear war, including a freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems and the prohibition of the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. These should be followed by substantial arms-reduction negotiations in the context of the Conference on Disarmament.

The question of the reduction of military expenditures has been on the Commission's agenda for a number of years. Our deliberations have clarified a number of pertinent issues, including the concept of military expenditures and their reduction, and what kinds of expenditures should be subject to negotiations. Thus, our discussions have concentrated in part on technical, statistical and methodological issues. There has been progress on the standardized reporting instrument, which has been tested by the participation of a number of States on a voluntary basis and which should spur interest in the question of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. Indonesia has in the past participated in the work of a group of United Nations experts who have been engaged in the task of improving the comparability of statistics. Valuable additional experience could be
(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)
gained if a large number of countries with different budgeting and accounting systems and at different levels of economic development agreed to participate in further refining the reporting instrument. My delegation believes that it should be possible to conclude our deliberations on this issue during this session.

The Disarmament Commission is considering for the seventh consecutive year the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability. In our view, there are compelling reasons for our continued concern with this potentially dangerous development. First, reports persist that South Africa is on the threshold of a nuclear breakthrough. The implications of this achievement for both regional security and international peace are self-evident. Secondly, despite pretensions to the contrary, the Pretoria régime has steadfastly refused to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all of its nuclear installations under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Thirdly, the danger that South Africa poses as a renegade State and an international outlaw which has continuously defied the international community has ominous implications with regard to the use of its nuclear capability to promote its nefarious objectives of apartheid and colonialism. Finally, it stands as the only insurmountable stumbling block to the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. For all those reasons we can no longer procrastinate; on the basis of the progress already achieved, it should be possible to reach a long-overdue consensus on the item during this session.

Yet another shadow that continues to cast a pall over the horizon is the ongoing naval arms race. As an archipelagic State, situated at the cross-roads of important international waterways, Indonesia cannot but be gravely disturbed at the increasing build-up of naval forces and the development of new naval arms systems, including maritime nuclear-weapon systems. In fact, these developments are of
concern to many coastal States. It is undeniable that the continuous expansion and modernization of the navies of, especially, the two super-Powers and the increasing sophistication and deployment of naval-based weapons systems are giving a new and potentially destabilizing dimension to the global arms race. My delegation therefore believes that a further in-depth discussion of pertinent issues could facilitate the identification of additional areas for disarmament and confidence-building measures, leading ultimately towards curbing the naval arms race through a process of multilateral negotiations, which is the object of item 8 of our agenda.

Indonesia shares the concerns of other members over the competitive accumulation of conventional armaments in many regions, which has had a severe impact on the global economy. New technologies have also greatly changed our understanding of conventional weapons. The costs have become astronomical and the pressures to acquire such weapons are all too evident. In these endeavours, however, the focus should be on the major producers and users as well as on the primary causes of the conventional arms race, rather than on secondary ones.

My delegation welcomes the addition of one item to the agenda of the Disarmament Commission, concerning the declaration of the 1990s as the third disarmament decade. Nearly two decades after the declaration of the first disarmament decade, it should be recognized that the Organization has not made appreciable progress in reversing the arms race and bringing down the annual expenditures on armaments. Neither the United Nations nor the technical difficulties can be blamed for the lack of progress, which can be attributed rather to the lack of political will on the part of the major Powers to initiate substantive disarmament measures. Hence, the third disarmament decade should, among other things, reaffirm the priorities enumerated in the Programme of Action
Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia) contained in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, as well as establish clearly defined objectives and time-frames for the attainment of specific measures.

We have arrived at a crucial turning point in our discussions on disarmament. Indonesia continues to consider the United Nations as the principal forum to focus world attention on disarmament questions and to exchange views on them. The Organization is also ideally suited to play a catalytic role in encouraging the examination of those problems. As far as my delegation is concerned, we shall have an open mind about all proposals and evaluate them on the basis of whether they are likely to overcome the stalemate. It is in that context that my delegation pledges its support to efforts to find ways to make the United Nations more effective in carrying out its role in the disarmament field.

Mr. CHACÓN (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, it is a pleasure for us to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this deliberative body of the General Assembly. We think that this has been a wise choice. We witnessed your effective work as Chairman of the First Committee at the forty-second General Assembly session, when our delegation had the privilege of sharing with you the work of the Bureau. We believe that your experience in the field of disarmament fully guarantees the success of our deliberations. That is why we are pleased to share with you once again the tasks of a Bureau.

The guidance of the debates and the tasks of these disarmament bodies cannot be successful without the efficient support of a Secretariat team such as the one headed by Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. With that support, we feel confident about our multilateral diplomatic activities, and we again wish to thank the Secretariat team for its assistance, attention and advice.
(Mr. Chacon, Costa Rica)

More than a decade has passed since the General Assembly decided to adopt the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. Since then the world has changed a great deal; the international context has been modified in a somewhat contradictory way. Certainly, the tension in the world was the result of irrational competition between the two super-Powers has given way to a climate of better understanding between them.
Although the nuclear threat continues to loom over mankind and remains a priority in the field of disarmament, it has lost its pre-eminence since the world is now bearing the brunt of war by conventional means and other not so conventional means in underdeveloped regions. The rise of the so-called middle Powers has presented the world with difficulties even more serious than those caused by bipolar power. The balance of terror that once existed between the Soviet Union and the United States is now shared by a larger group of nations which are feeding upon the over-armament that was created in past decades of cold war and that has continued as a result of blind competition based on considerations of national security that are not always clear or legitimate. What has not changed in this extremely complex world is recourse to war which, since the last world conflagration, has found its chosen location in the third world.

Eleven years have elapsed since the adoption of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly. Although it is the only document enjoying consensus among Member States, we feel that it is insufficient and does not fully correspond to the new realities of the arms race. The emphasis, at times suspiciously excessive, certain nations place on the nuclear-arms race would seem to obscure some undeniable facts. So-called conventional war has already killed more people than those who were killed during the world conflict of the 1940s and, as on that occasion, rockets, bullets and mortars have indiscriminately killed innocent people. And, unlike in that tragedy, in our wars we have resorted to and we wish to continue to resort to more sophisticated technologies and more abhorrent weapons, frequently on the pretext that also in the sphere of warfare we must overdevelop and put an end to monopolies. Owing to the indiscriminate use of increasingly sophisticated weapons of mass destruction, these wars of the third world have become as dangerous as the possible nuclear conflagration, with one
sharp difference: while these confrontations are a daily reality for millions of people, the nuclear conflict can only be imagined, since it has not yet occurred.

The adoption of the Final Document occurred at almost the same time as the end of the United Nations First Disarmament Decade and led to the Second Disarmament Decade - which will soon be over. The meager results achieved in these 20 years of spiritual dedication to disarmament have led to the consideration of the declaration of the 1990s as a decade also devoted to disarmament. Of course, we are not against these symbolic gestures; no effort towards disarmament can ever be considered excessive. However, my Government believes that there is a need to underline an essential aspect: the next 10 years of struggle for world disarmament must emphasize the need to attack the arms build-up precisely where it has taken the deepest root - the consciousness. World disarmament campaigns based on messages in the mass media are not enough. What is required is an effort at education, such as that advocated by the World Congress on Education for Disarmament, convened in 1980 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the decision of the Executive Council, although it has not yielded substantial results. What is also required is effective multilateral action aimed at co-ordinating efforts in this field being carried out by various bodies of the United Nations, Member States and non-governmental organizations, on the basis of agreements entered into in the General Assembly.

As Albert Schweitzer once said: "Man has lost the ability to foresee and prevent the consequences of his own actions". We believe that the only way to recover this sense of foresight - particularly in view of the consequences of the erroneous actions mankind has taken and continues to take in the field of armaments - is to forge a clear and definitive consciousness of the destructive meaning of weapons and the acts of aggression claiming to justify their use. Hence
we think that if there are parts of the Final Document that remain valid - although without results - they are found in its paragraphs 106, 107 and 108. That is why our delegation is preparing to wage an intense struggle with the aim of ensuring that the item on education for disarmament be part not only of our ongoing deliberation and negotiations but also of a programme to attack the problem of the arms mentality at the root.

In tandem with the effort for education and information we must implement in the field of disarmament are the studies on various aspects of the arms race. More than five years has elapsed since the publication of the "Study on conventional disarmament", in keeping with General Assembly resolution 36/97. Since then, many things have changed with regard to what we have so far considered as conventional weapons. Hence we think that the time has come to revise the conceptual framework on which this work is based, for it has not kept up with reality, and that the study should be updated in accordance with the most recent findings.

The trend to use chemical and bacteriological weapons by means of intermediate and long-range missiles, and the introduction of the latest sophisticated technologies in the war apparatus of the third world, have substantially changed the destructive level of so-called conventional weapons and called concepts into question. There can be no doubt that the differences between conventional and non-conventional weapons have been blurred. Therefore, we need new constructs and new efforts in order clearly to grasp the phenomena now entering our consciousness. But we also need to direct our attention to aspects of the arms race we wish to eliminate, such as international arms transfers.

Our delegation was behind resolution 43/75 I on international arms transfers. Everything that can be considered arms trafficking - whether commercial or non-commercial, legal or illegal - comes under this rubric and is irrefutably part
of the dynamics of the arms race. Although that resolution requests the
Disarmament Commission to take into account matters considered in its initial
paragraphs, when discussing everything related to conventional disarmament it would
seem that this mandate must also encompass any consideration of general and
complete disarmament - and we shall insist on that. That the question was
discussed within the context of agenda item 64 must not be overlooked.

My delegation considers that it is necessary for us to make use of all
available resources in order to open up broad avenues to achieve general and
complete disarmament. We all have a responsibility to discharge in this field, for
our very lives depend on it. That is the only explanation we can give for our
country's interest in the field of disarmament - even though we are a nation that
has unilaterally disarmed.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We have just heard the last
speaker for this meeting. We have thus concluded the general debate on all agenda
items of our 1989 substantive session.

At this stage of our work, I should like to express my deep appreciation to
all delegations for their active participation in the general debate, which
demonstrated their active interest in all matters related to disarmament.
(The Chairman)

At least 31 representatives have taken part in the debate and expressed their views on all of the questions dealing with this 1989 session. They have taken a position on the seven principal items of our agenda and will now be examining them in depth in working groups and in their consultations, where, I trust, the views expressed in plenary meetings will be translated into specific terms.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.