DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 31 May 1989, at 5 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZINGEYA (Zaire)

- Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session
- Concluding statements
- Concluding statement by the Chairman
- Statement by the Secretary
- Other business
- Closure of the session

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

A/CN.10/PV.140
7 June 1989
ENGLISH
The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): At its 139th meeting the Disarmament Commission adopted all the reports of its subsidiary bodies but did not adopt its own report to the General Assembly. After considering paragraph 8, on the reduction of military budgets, at the 3rd and 4th meetings of the Committee of the Whole, we are now in a position to examine the draft report of the Disarmament Commission. I call on the Rapporteur of the Commission, Mr. André Querton, representative of Belgium, who will introduce the draft report, as contained in conference room paper A/CN.10/1980/CRP.2.
Mr. QUERTON (Belgium), Rapporteur (interpretation from French): It is my honour and pleasure to introduce to the Commission the draft report of the Disarmament Commission at its current session as contained in conference room paper A/CN.10/1989/CRP.2, which was distributed some time ago to the members of the Commission. According to established practice, the draft contains four chapters: Introduction, Organization and work of the 1989 session, documentation, and Conclusions and recommendations.

The document deals with the practical aspects of the Commission's work during this session. The sections of the report concerning the substantive work done by the subsidiary bodies will be inserted in the text, in accordance with what we have already decided. Certain information is left blank and the Secretariat will be completing the text in the definitive version of the report on the basis of meeting numbers and dates.

There are a few amendments that I would like to make to the document distributed to you, taking into account the fact that discussions have been held subsequent to its submission to the Commission. I shall be making those amendments in English:

(spoke in English)

As had been asked as a clarification by the Chairman of Working Group II, the last sentence of paragraph 10 on page 5 of A/CN.10/1989/CRP.2, beginning "Thereafter, the Group", should be deleted and replaced by:

"Between 15 and 25 May, the Group held nine meetings of informal consultations during which the Chairman was assisted by Ambassador B.A. Adeyemi (Nigeria), who acted as Co-ordinator."

This language had been approved in the report of the Working Group.
On page 7 of the draft report, a new paragraph, 38 bis, should be added, which reads:

"A working paper entitled "Draft declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade" was submitted by Canada (A/CN.10/135)."

On the same page, paragraph 39, as we have agreed in the Committee of the Whole earlier today, should read:

"At its ____ plenary meeting, on 30 May, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the reports of its subsidiary bodies and the recommendations contained therein regarding agenda items 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10, and considered the Chairman's report on agenda item 8. The Commission agreed to submit the texts of those reports, reproduced below, to the General Assembly."

Still on the same page, paragraph 40, which was submitted earlier this afternoon and which retained our attention at the beginning of this afternoon, has been distributed. The last sentences should read as follows:

"During the course of the deliberations, the Chairman presented his proposals on paragraphs 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 14, which in his view reflected the result of extensive consultations on the subject and could serve as a compromise text. However, there was no consensus on the Chairman's proposals, which were therefore withdrawn by the Chairman. In the absence of agreement on these proposals, at its 140th plenary meeting on 31 May, the Disarmament Commission decided to transmit the same text contained in document A/S-15/3 to the General Assembly for its consideration."

(continued in French)

I hope that in rereading these amendments and additions I have been able to reproduce the agreements in the manner in which they emerged during our most recent work.
At this stage, I should like in a more personal manner to share the following with the Commission.

The work of our Commission did not allow us to achieve the various consensus decisions for which we may have hoped. Each of us will agree that the reputation and the authority of an international forum are closely related to the progress of such work and the success which it achieves. Along those lines, the need for our Commission to concentrate more specifically on subjects on which rapid progress seems possible is most clearly and cruelly evident to me. Where such progress seems to be at hand, specific efforts should thus be made in a spirit of realistic and effective co-operation.

At this stage, I must recommend that the Commission adopt the draft report as I have presented it. I should like in particular to thank the Secretariat for its effective and valuable co-operation in producing the draft report.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the Rapporteur of our Commission, Mr. André Querton, for the clear and concise report he has just presented to us, as well as for the various amendments which he also introduced on the various paragraphs of the report, reflecting agreement on certain paragraphs.

We shall now consider the draft report paragraph by paragraph.
(The Chairman)

If there are no comments on paragraphs 1 to 9, 10 as revised, 11 to 38, 38 bis, or 39 as revised, I shall take it that the Commission agrees to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 1 to 39, as revised, were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Does any delegation have any comments on paragraph 40 as revised?

Mr. Fan Guoxiang (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation is able to go along with the revised paragraph 40, with one reservation. In the sentence beginning "During the course of the deliberations," there is a reference to "paragraphs 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 14" of the principles. I have no substantive disagreement with this, but I feel that the listing of those paragraphs is contradictory to the relevant resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

Mr. de la BAUME (France) (interpretation from French): I note with regret that the text of paragraph 40 of conference room paper A/CN.10/1989/CRP.2 was not distributed in time by the Secretariat in all the working languages of the Organization. I wish to put on record that in principle my delegation should not have to express a position on a paragraph whose text was not translated and distributed 24 hours before the Commission was to take a decision. None the less, my delegation is aware of the reasons for this situation: you, Sir, have been striving, until the very end of the session, to find a compromise on the agenda item on the reduction of military budgets. That is most commendable, and my delegation is grateful to you. In these exceptional circumstances, I shall not oppose the adoption of paragraph 40 of our report.
Mr. PERRI (Brazil): I should like briefly to express the same concerns as those just expressed by the representative of China, with respect to the fact that the text of the sentence beginning "During the course of the deliberations" is not consistent with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): I have a comment on the text of paragraph 40 as read out by the Rapporteur. I may have missed something, but I do not believe he took into account what I thought was general agreement that paragraph 7 of the text the Commission is transmitting to the General Assembly should be phrased in the same way as it was in last year's report to the General Assembly at its fifteenth special session. I assume the Secretariat will take care of this when it edits the whole text into its final shape.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I think that, as stated in paragraph 40, we had indeed cited the symbol of the document which is therefore annexed to paragraph 40. As was stated a while ago, the Rapporteur mentioned the relevant document. It will therefore be annexed to paragraph 40 and the symbol of that document will suffice to indicate it. The text will be reproduced in full as an annex to paragraph 40.

Mr. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation would also like very briefly to refer to the apparent confusion created by the mention of these paragraphs in connection with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-third session. In this connection, we should like to record our reservation in the sense that we understand that, in case of confusion between what is expressed by the Disarmament Commission in this paragraph and what was decided by the General Assembly, it is the decision taken in the resolution of the General Assembly at its forty-third session that must prevail. With that understanding, my delegation has not intervened so as to facilitate the enormous efforts that the Chairman has made to get us out of the impasse we were in.

Mr. CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call on the Secretary of the Commission, who wishes to clarify the matter relating to the distribution of documents in the working languages of the United Nations.

Mr. LIN Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Commission): In connection with the statement made by the representative of France concerning the translation of paragraph 40 into all the working languages, it should be recalled that our last meeting of the Committee of the Whole ended at 1.30 p.m. today and the fourth meeting of the Committee of the Whole took place at 3 p.m. today. Therefore, it was physically impossible to translate and distribute paragraph 40 in all working languages. That was the difficulty faced by the Secretariat.
Mr. FLOREAN (Romania) (interpretation from French): I just want to say that, for my delegation also, the list of paragraphs which appears towards the end of paragraph 40 will in no way affect the provisions of resolution 43/73. That is our interpretation.

Mr. BELLINA (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to state very briefly that my delegation associates itself with those delegations that have expressed their position on what was agreed in connection with the mandate of the relevant resolution of the General Assembly. Here we support the statements made by the delegations of Cuba, China, Brazil and Romania.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We have thus concluded our debate on paragraph 40. May I consider that paragraph 40 is adopted, of course with the reservations expressed by certain delegations?

Paragraph 40 was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): If there are no comments on paragraphs 41 to 48, I shall take it that the Commission agrees to adopt those paragraphs.

Paragraphs 41 to 48 were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We have thus adopted the draft report, paragraph by paragraph. We shall now turn to the draft report of the Commission as a whole, which contains all the reports of the subsidiary bodies.

May I therefore consider that the Commission agrees to adopt the draft report of the Commission as a whole, as contained in conference room paper A/CN.10/1989/CRP.2?

The report was adopted.
CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We come now turn to the final stage of our work, namely, the hearing of the closing statements of delegations in assessing the work of the Commission during the course of its substantive session of 1989.

Mr. NOREEN (Sweden): I should like to say first that I shall be making this statement on behalf of Ambassador Carl Hyltenius, who has just left New York in order to catch a flight home to Geneva.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to express the appreciation of my delegation for the skilful manner in which you have conducted our deliberations. It is not least thanks to your personal efforts that it has been possible to make progress on some of the issues before us.

It has, however, been a difficult session, and it has produced meagre overall results. This is all the more regrettable as the First Committee, after the failure of the third special session on disarmament last year, worked in a very constructive and positive atmosphere during the forty-third session of the General Assembly.

The concrete progress made has been very limited.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, my delegation takes particular interest in the question of naval armaments and disarmament. This year's discussion of agenda item 8 on naval armaments and disarmament led to a Chairman's working paper that was richer in substantive content than the corresponding document of last year. For the first time, reference was made to the practice of neither confirming nor denying the presence or absence of nuclear weapons on board warships, and my delegation noted with great satisfaction the interest in this important matter shown also by other delegations. Several new substantive working papers were
submitted during the course of the consultations, which were conducted in a very constructive manner by Ambassador Nana Sutresna, of Indonesia.

As this item is likely to remain on the Commission's agenda for its next session, I wish to express the hope that all States concerned will take an active part in developing a common approach to this issue.

After these brief comments on the results of this year's session, I should like to make a few observations of a more general nature on the role of the Disarmament Commission.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission has been in existence for 10 years after it was re-established as a result of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It is, therefore, natural to ask oneself whether the Commission has lived up to the expectations of 10 years ago, and whether we have made the best use of this forum.

One of the aims of the Disarmament Commission was and still is to provide a body for deliberations in the field of disarmament on matters which are important to bring up for international discussion without necessarily being mature for formal negotiations. The deliberations in the Commission could thereby serve as a preparatory stage before the commencement of negotiations.
I think it is fair to say that the Disarmament Commission has proved useful in this respect. It has thus been possible to explore important areas - such as basic principles for the international verification of disarmament agreements and the fundamental features of confidence-building measures - and to reach consensus on these issues. New topics, such as conventional disarmament or naval armaments and disarmament, have been thoroughly discussed. The discussions have helped to clarify the issues and to form a picture of the views of various States and groups of States.

All this is no doubt useful. But there is also reason to be concerned. The multilateral, and especially the global, efforts towards disarmament have been crowned with little success in the last 10 years, in spite of a generally more favourable international atmosphere.

After a period of deterioration we have witnessed a dramatic improvement in the bilateral relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during the last few years. We have also been able to register several successes on the part of the United Nations in other areas of its activities.

It is a matter of concern that so little of these improvements has been reflected in the work of the United Nations in the field of arms limitation and disarmament, and more particularly in the work of the Disarmament Commission.

According to its mandate the Disarmament Commission should make every effort to adopt decisions on substantive issues by consensus, and it is therefore not surprising that it is difficult to make progress on some of the items. Instead they remain on the agenda year after year without leading to any tangible results. A more fruitful approach will have to be used.
Just as the voting in the First Committee must not be abused by passing resolutions without listening to the views of others, it is equally important not to abuse the consensus rule by blocking possible progress on the issues of a more general nature which are being dealt with in the Disarmament Commission.

What we discuss in this Commission are issues which concern us all, but unless there is a greater willingness to seek and contribute to consensus, there is a grave risk that many countries may lose interest in the Commission.

The Disarmament Commission has the potential of being an important forum for a truly international exchange of views in its field. We would all stand to lose if the interest and participation of States in its deliberations were to diminish. In today's world, it is short-sighted to believe that the views of the international community at large can be ignored. It is absolutely necessary to find broad multilateral solutions to the security problems facing us all.

As always, the prospects for the future, depend primarily on the political will of States. When there is a will, and perhaps also a certain pressure, to agree, the Commission has proved that it can produce results. For instance, last year, before the third special session, there was agreement both on the principles for verification and on confidence-building measures. These important contributions were, however, regrettably not recorded in a final document at the special session.

Ways must be found to ensure more effective work by the Commission. For many years there has been far too much repetition of previous discussions and too slow a turnover of items on the agenda. A concerted effort should be made at next year's session to conclude some of the items which have been on the agenda for a long time; an effort which, of course, requires the cooperation of all.
It is not to be taken for granted that a "vacancy" on the agenda should immediately be filled by another topic. Perhaps it would be better to have fewer items and to deal with them during a limited number of years instead of going on with a long list of subjects year after year. It would ease the staffing problems of many delegations to have fewer items to cover simultaneously. It would also make it possible to allocate more time to each individual item, which could then be more thoroughly discussed.

My delegation does not think that drastic changes should be made hastily. But we do believe that there is scope for improvement in the functioning of the Commission. I have therefore offered these general comments, which pertain to the work of the Disarmament Commission over the last 10 years, in the hope that it will provoke a discussion, leading, it is hoped, to improvements in the future.

Next year's session would be an appropriate time to try to wind up some of the items on the Commission's agenda and to create a new basis for its future work. In the meantime, the Secretary-General and member States may wish to consider possible measures aimed at improving the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation has at this stage no concrete proposals to make, but we feel that it is important to initiate a discussion on the Commission and its work.

Mr. Fan Guoxiang (China) (interpretation from Chinese): As this session of the Disarmament Commission draws to a close, the Chinese delegation would like to express its sincere gratitude and appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for the outstanding manner in which you have guided our work. Your rich diplomatic experience and talent, your firmness and calmness, and your efforts to make progress in our work have indeed impressed us greatly.
Many delegations have played an active part in this session and have put forth untiring efforts in the consideration of, and in the consultations on the various items, and they have done so in a business-like and constructive spirit. It is their hope that the favourable international relations that exist at the present time will enable us to obtain some useful and concrete results.

The Chinese delegation shares the hope that, even though there has been no breakthrough as far as the substance of the question is concerned, we can still conduct our deliberations in a serious manner, and express our opinions in depth in order to be able to better understand the complicated aspects of the questions concerned and further identify the common ground and divergencies between delegations. These are the conditions needed to enable us to make progress in our work. In this sense, this session of the Commission has played a positive role and our efforts here have not been in vain.

The Chinese delegation is of the view that in order to maintain international peace and security it is necessary to discuss and negotiate actively on the question of disarmament in a multilateral framework. This is an arduous and complicated task, one which requires intensive and concerted efforts on the part of all. There is no short cut to multilateral disarmament. We can only face the questions squarely and try to solve them through discussions, consultations and negotiations. This also requires hard work and patience.

In this regard, the international community particularly hopes that the two major nuclear States, which shoulder the main responsibility for disarmament, setting out from the quest for international peace and security and responding to the wishes and demands of the peoples of the world, would attach as much importance to, and show the same needed concern for, the various multilateral disarmament questions as they do for bilateral disarmament deliberations.
The Chinese delegation has always attached great importance to the work of the Disarmament Commission. We took part in the consideration of various agenda items in a constructive spirit, and we have also submitted working papers to this session of the Commission as it formally discussed and considered for the first time the questions of the Third Disarmament Decade and international arms transfers. The Chinese delegation will, as in the past and in co-operation with other delegations, make its contribution to promoting the progress of our work.

The representative of Sweden has just made a very important statement in which he mentioned many points that deserve the Commission's attention. The Chinese delegation would like to study those points further, and we would hope to engage in multilateral or bilateral consultations on them following this meeting so that we might improve and strengthen the functioning of the Disarmament Commission.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to all the officers of the Commission, to Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Akashi and to the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Lin Kuo-chung, and to the Chairmen and Secretaries of the Working Groups, Contact Groups and Consultation Groups. I would also like to thank the staff members of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the interpreters and translators, who have provided us with effective services.

Mr. KRASULIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, Mr. Chairman, I should like to express to you our profound gratitude for your skilled leadership of the work of the Commission as a whole and of the Group on the reduction of military budgets. I would mention in particular your determined attempts to find compromises on difficult and controversial issues, and your efforts to involve various delegations in constructive dialogue, even though, unfortunately, those efforts did not always yield immediate, tangible
results. However, I am convinced that they created a good basis for our future work - perhaps as early as the next session of the General Assembly - and for that we thank you once again.

Although its results are somewhat conflicting, this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has reaffirmed the increasing importance of dialogue on ways and means of strengthening comprehensive international security.

We are witnessing a historic transition to a new, peaceful period of relations among States. A global warming of the political climate has occurred. International relations are increasingly based on new political principles. However, notwithstanding some recent major achievements, there are still no grounds for complacency: unfortunately, the new thinking is meeting with considerable resistance in international affairs. The confrontational and ideologically motivated approach to relations among States has become fertile ground in which enmity, intolerance, suspicion and mistrust continue to flourish.

The imperative of a greater interrelationship among States based on a balance of interests is particularly evident here in the United Nations. Its achievement will be no easy thing. However, only a consensus of sovereign States can lead to the truly stable system of interdependence today's world needs so badly.

All those factors are reflected in the results of this session of the Commission. However, given the scope and pace of positive changes in the world and in the work of the United Nations as a whole, the results could have been much more substantial.

This year the work of the Contact Group on nuclear disarmament was marked by a number of new proposals submitted with a view to finding mutually acceptable solutions. We have in mind, in particular, the language on nuclear-free zones, zones of peace and defensive military doctrines. A significant positive step was
taken with the agreement on two important recommendations on nuclear disarmament as such and on conventional disarmament. At the same time the discussion of that cluster of issues demonstrated that there are still many difficulties involved in the search for a common denominator in positions based on a genuine balance of interests rather than on the imposition of unilateral approaches.

It was also possible to achieve certain progress in broadening the understanding on general principles of reducing armed forces and on conventional armaments. However, the session has shown that agreement on this problem is still far off and that it is therefore important for the Commission to work actively and purposefully so as not to protract the discussion over many years. The disarmament process in Europe clearly demonstrates the importance and effectiveness of a comprehensive approach aimed at a negotiated agreement on specific measures to reduce armed forces and armaments and to enhance confidence and security, as well as openness, in the military field.

The Disarmament Commission continued its consideration of the problem of limiting and reducing naval forces. It is regrettable that a group of States, very small in number but significant in terms of naval armaments, persisted in boycotting consideration of the subject - both in practice and, in one case, officially. The Soviet delegation supports the proposal of Sweden to conclude a multilateral agreement for the prevention of incidents at sea. Obviously, negotiating such a document at the Conference on Disarmament will not be a very difficult task, provided that all States seek similar agreements. The attainment of that objective may be facilitated by the preparation of an updated United Nations study on naval problems, as proposed by the Soviet delegation.
It is also regrettable that at this session agreement could not be reached on recommendations relating to the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. At the same time, the understanding reached in that area gives reason to hope that, given goodwill on the part of all States, it will become possible successfully to conclude consideration of the problem in both its political aspects and its mechanisms. Naturally, the least that is required to achieve this objective is that the role of multilateralism not be denied and that the ability of the United Nations and its main organs to deal with problems in the field of disarmament not be minimized.

The best results could have been produced by the Working Group entrusted with preparation of the draft Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. However, here too it was demonstrated that only a few States opposing the will of the overwhelming majority can bring consideration of a problem to a deadlock.

The deliberations on the agenda item concerning the nuclear capability of South Africa furnished yet further proof of this. We hope that the delegations that have once again thwarted efforts to draft recommendations on that subject will finally adopt a position in favour of putting an end to South Africa's nuclear ambitions, of achieving its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and of placing its nuclear activities under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
It took more time and effort than was expected on the eve of our session to finalize the document on the principles relating to the freezing and reduction of military budgets of States. Unfortunately, we were not able to complete that work. In our view, one of the main reasons was a clearly negative attitude of some Western delegations to negotiations on freezing and reducing military budgets. Such a political assessment is quite appropriate for the ostensibly procedural manoeuvres those delegations used to block progress towards negotiations on reducing military budgets. That is a confrontational and destructive approach.

The results of the Commission's session make it clear that to achieve truly significant progress on all the items on its agenda - and the necessity for such a breakthrough is being felt increasingly by many delegations - there is a need to analyse in a creative manner both the positive and negative experiences of the 11 years of the Commission's work and to develop fresh approaches on that basis.

Evidently, we must think about such approaches as would correspond, on the one hand, to greater multilateralism and a new stage in the development of international relations and, on the other, to the objectives and specific characteristics of the Commission as a deliberative body within the overall system of disarmament machinery. In our view, increased effectiveness of the Commission's work is becoming our foremost objective and is acquiring a qualitatively new dimension.

The formation of a new model of international security is intricately linked with the revolutionary processes taking place in our country. The Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR now taking place represents the completion of the first phase of political reform. Intensive work lies ahead of us on other important tasks of perestroika, including those in the field of foreign policy. Those goals were set forth in detail at the Congress in the programme statement of our President, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Mikhail Gorbachev, who
(Mr. Krasulin, USSR)

inter alia, reaffirmed the Soviet Union's readiness to continue to act vigorously and to put forward initiatives to strengthen international security in all its aspects - in particular, arms limitation and disarmament.

I should like to conclude my statement with a quotation from the programme statement of President Gorbachev:

"New thinking is a dynamic concept that is continuing to develop and intensify. Its main point of departure remains the conclusions adopted by the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union concerning the lethal danger of nuclear weapons and the arms race to the existence of mankind; the integrity and inter-dependence of today's world; changes in the nature of its contradictions and the content of its universal progress. At the basis of the new thinking lies recognition of the priority of universal interests and values; universally accepted norms of morality - a binding criterion of any policy; freedom of social and political choice; exclusion of interference in the affairs of any State and the need for a de-ideologization of inter-State relations. Despite the profound differences in social systems, in each there have appeared opportunities for entering upon a fundamentally new, peaceful period in the history of mankind."

Mr. IBANEZ (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, speaking on behalf of the 12 Member States of the European Community, allow me to express to you our gratitude for the leadership and guidance you have provided us during the course of our discussions. Your experience and unstinting efforts have helped us in our tasks.

The Twelve wish to recall the importance they continue to attach to the Disarmament Commission. We are convinced that the Disarmament Commission should play its role as a deliberative forum for in-depth study in the field of arms control and disarmament.
I shall now briefly review the various items of our agenda.

The Contact Group on item 4, entitled "Nuclear and Conventional Disarmament", has achieved some progress. In the initial statement made on behalf of the Twelve on 8 May, we expressed the hope that the substantial improvement of the international climate should allow us to overcome some of the obstacles still existing. However, in spite of the efforts undertaken, there has been very little progress on this item. Our hope remains that it will be possible in the near future to secure greater convergence of views on this subject which continues to be of particular importance to the Twelve.

Concerning agenda item 5, "Reduction of Military Budgets", we regret that, although consensus seemed to be at hand, agreement could not be reached. We believe that continued efforts from all participants will be needed in order to conclude our work at next year's session of the Disarmament Commission.

In this context, the Twelve welcome the promise, confirmed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to submit to the General Assembly, at its forty-fifth session in 1990, data on its military budget in accordance with the United Nations standardized reporting system; we look forward to Soviet participation in it. The Twelve remain convinced that this system is an important first step towards greater openness and transparency in the military field. We call on all States from all regions, irrespective of their budgeting and accounting systems, to provide their annual reports on military expenditures in conformity with the standardized system.

On item 6, "South Africa's Nuclear Capability", we have continued our discussions in a constructive spirit. The Twelve are encouraged by the flexibility shown by all parties involved. We hope that this will translate into substantive progress next year.
As for item 7, "Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament", Working Group 2 reviewed both the political and machinery aspects of that role. We believe that it is necessary to pursue our efforts with a view to organizing the work of the United Nations in a more efficient way with the aim of streamlining and rationalizing the United Nations machinery. In the course of our deliberations, we have had an extensive exchange of views on a broad range of issues. We regret that it was not possible to conclude our work, but we consider that the progress achieved provides a good basis for finalizing our task in the future.

On item 8 "Naval Armaments and Disarmament", the Twelve remain keenly aware of the difficulties and special sensitivities surrounding this question. We appreciate the efforts made by the Contact Group Co-ordinator in promoting an updated and useful exchange of views on the matter. We hope that this important exchange can be pursued next year.
As far as item 9, on conventional disarmament, is concerned, as I said in my statement on 8 May during our general debate, the Twelve consider this issue as being of major importance. Furthermore, speaking in Working Group III on 11 May, I stated that in the opinion of the Twelve conventional disarmament should be kept at the forefront of the multilateral debate on arms control and disarmament and that we are convinced of the importance of our deliberations in the Disarmament Commission.

Consequently the Twelve welcome the fact that Working Group III has this year been able to register progress in its endeavours to try to reach agreement on a full and comprehensive report. The Twelve have participated actively in these endeavours. Furthermore they note that consideration was given, for the first time, to the important issue of international arms transfers.

The 17 member States of the European Community consider it essential that we now press forward on the basis of what has been achieved. That means that when the Disarmament Commission next year takes up the question of conventional disarmament it should do so on the basis of the Chairman's draft report as it now appears.

Finally, concerning item 10, on the declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, we have undertaken the task of elaborating elements for the declaration by the General Assembly of the Third Disarmament Decade. We are convinced that such a declaration should be substantial, balanced and concise, aiming at maintaining the present momentum in the field of multilateral disarmament.

Each session of the Disarmament Commission represents an important opportunity to review selected disarmament issues in depth. This session faced a challenge: the encouraging results achieved last year when two agenda items were reported out. We, the Twelve, regret that in spite of the improvement in the international political atmosphere it was not possible to reach consensus on any substantive items, and that, although a measure of progress was achieved on some of them, the
outcome is disappointing. This lack of substantive results clearly demonstrates that renewed efforts by all participants will be necessary to overcome existing differences at next year's session of the Disarmament Commission in order to increase its effectiveness and extend consensus in the areas included in its agenda.

Mr. Tanasie (Romania) (interpretation from French): In our view the work of the Disarmament Commission at this session has been characterized by the concern of States at the present arms situation and their clear interest in the adoption of urgent and effective measures of disarmament both nuclear and conventional.

At the same time the discussions have shown the will of the great majority of States to see to it that, in accordance with the Charter, the United Nations plays a more active role in beginning specific disarmament negotiations, an objective that requires that we strengthen the efficiency of the machinery for multilateral negotiations.

In our view those conclusions directly reflect the present international situation, which, despite certain positive indications, has not yet undergone radical improvement. All this demonstrates the clear need for new political thinking based on the exclusion of force and war from international life as a guarantee of the real and lasting transformation of the international political climate.

The discussions that have taken place at this session of the Commission have clearly shown that nuclear disarmament remains the major priority in the field of disarmament. Though the Commission has not been able to formulate specific recommendations for the General Assembly on problems of nuclear disarmament, the Romanian delegation is convinced that the opinions expressed by delegations on this matter represent an important contribution that will serve to guide discussions and negotiations both at the next session of the General Assembly and at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.
Like other delegations, we are concerned by the lack of substantive results at this session of the Commission. On the other hand, our deliberations have highlighted the need to pursue efforts to begin negotiations to reach agreements on conventional disarmament at the bilateral and multilateral levels and thus to reach the lowest possible balance of forces in conditions of undiminished security for all States.

Romania, like other countries, has also welcomed negotiations on conventional weapons in Europe, which began in Vienna, and it has expressed the hope that they will lead to the substantive reduction of troops, armaments and military expenditures in Europe and thus positively influence the situation on other continents.

Several delegations have spoken in favour of the reduction of military expenditures and the use of the material and financial resources thus released for the economic and social development of States, in particular to benefit the developing countries.

In actively participating in the Commission's work Romania has devoted particular attention to the agenda item concerning the reduction of military budgets so that the document on principles under discussion could be finalized and recommended to the General Assembly. In our view that document will represent an important contribution by the United Nations to the cause of disarmament, improvement of the international political atmosphere and efforts for the economic and social development of all countries.

We regret the lack of progress on the finalization of agenda item 5, on the reduction of military budgets, despite the encouraging statements made by several delegations at the beginning of the Commission's session.

I should like to take advantage of this opportunity to express to you, Mr. President, the profound gratitude of the Romanian delegation for the
considerable efforts you have made, with perseverance and competence, to find a solution to these controversial problems so that agreement could be reached on the last elements of the document on principles for the reduction of military budgets.

It is clear that in considering armaments problems and ways to reach, through negotiations, effective measures of disarmament, any proposal designed to lead to the attainment of that goal will be very important and useful.

In this regard the countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty recently launched an appeal to States members of the NATO alliance, before their Summit in Brussels, for joint action to overcome the division of Europe and for the redoubling of efforts to achieve disarmament, and first and foremost nuclear disarmament. The appeal stressed the need to end the arms race and considered anachronistic the accelerated build-up of ever more destructive and sophisticated weapons that undermine security in Europe and increase the risk of nuclear conflict. That document shows the importance of the general European process, and the need to eliminate military confrontation and to ensure security through joint efforts and co-operation on the basis of full equality and respect for the independence and national sovereignty of States, non-interference in internal affairs and other principles of the Final Act of Helsinki and the unanimously recognized norms of international law.
The appeal notes that the international situation continues to be complex and contradictory, even if some progress has been made through the conclusion of the Soviet-American Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles and through the solution of certain regional conflicts.

In the appeal the need is reaffirmed to end the division of Europe into opposing military blocs, simultaneously dismantling the two military-political alliances, a first step being to eliminate their military organizations.

We also consider that the disarmament process should encompass the whole range of military forces in Europe - land, air, naval, nuclear, chemical and conventional.

At the same time, we stress the need for a new concept of security, based on a continued reduction of military confrontation and of weapons, until the danger of war is totally eliminated.

The appeal highlights the imperative need for a substantial reduction of conventional weapons and military budgets. In that context, it stresses the importance of the negotiations begun in Vienna and of proposals to hold separate negotiations about tactical nuclear weapons and about the extension of the negotiating process to naval forces.

We believe that any constructive proposal and any action carried out jointly by all States towards disarmament will be likely to ensure dynamic development and general prosperity in conditions of independence, stability and peace in Europe and throughout the world.

Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway): As we are about to conclude this year's session of the Disarmament Commission, my delegation wishes to offer some general observations about the Commission's work. We do so noting with regret that the Commission has not been able to reach agreement on any of the items on its agenda.
(Mr. Vraalsen, Norway)

Here I hasten to add, Mr. Chairman, that that is through no fault of yours or of any of the officers presiding over the numerous working groups, contact groups and other groups. I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to you and your colleagues. You have displayed the highest degree of professionalism; you have been very patient; you have guided our deliberations in the way that we expected; and we know that you regret just as much as we do that the Commission's deliberations have been inconclusive on all counts.

The Commission held its first substantive session in May 1979 - 10 years ago. Some of the items on this year's agenda have been discussed at each session for 10 consecutive years, without the Commission's being able to bring the work on them to a successful conclusion. It seems to us that the Commission has gradually ground to a halt on virtually all the main issues on its agenda. This is not the time or place to try to analyse why that is so, but it should certainly give all of us food for serious thought.

The idea behind reviving the Disarmament Commission, which came up at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, was - as I recall it - was to establish a global forum where all Member States would be given an opportunity to take an active part in deliberations on disarmament matters, a forum where all Member States could conduct an in-depth discussion on current disarmament affairs, a forum where they could articulate and argue their case and deliberate. We should ask ourselves whether the Commission, as it now works, really does serve such a purpose.

Disarmament and arms control are matters of global concern. The United Nations has an important role to play in encouraging, supporting and supplementing disarmament negotiations conducted in other multilateral, regional and bilateral forums. In this context, my delegation believes we should take a fresh look at the Commission in an effort to maximize its potential as a deliberative body.
My delegation submits the following ideas for consideration at an appropriate time.

First, there are at present far too many items on the agenda. It would, in our view, be more fruitful to concentrate our debates on one or two topical items at each session. Such an approach would allow for an in-depth discussion.

Secondly, for us in the Commission the goal should not necessarily be to reach specific decisions at each and every session. We think our work would be well served if we showed some flexibility on this point. There might be situations in which we could limit ourselves to just having a good and thorough debate and to producing a Chairman's summary of the proceedings in that debate. That summary could be submitted to the General Assembly and to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Through such a procedure we would be able to transmit important political messages from the Disarmament Commission, this global forum, to the negotiating forum in Geneva and the General Assembly.

Thirdly, if we decided on such an approach we would effectively "bi-annualize" or "tri-annualize" items currently on the Commission's agenda.

Fourthly, the Commission's session could in our view be shortened to two weeks. That would facilitate the work of delegations and make it easier to attract high-level participation.

I should like to emphasize that my delegation in no way intends to take away from or to undercut the right of every Member State to present proposals and suggest agenda items. However, we would urge constraint. We must not continue to overload the Commission with agenda items.
We must try to strike a balance between what I would call blowing the fuse, on the one hand, and giving the Commission a maximum work-load in practical and political terms, on the other.

Today there is a stark contrast between the progress being made in the field of disarmament at the bilateral and regional levels, on the one hand, and the progress being made at the multilateral level, on the other. The Disarmament Commission is not the only forum where little progress can be seen. But the Disarmament Commission is the only multilateral forum where all the States Members of the United Nations can present their views on specific disarmament issues. To my delegation, therefore, it is important to enable the Disarmament Commission to function effectively.

It is our responsibility to ensure the viability and credibility of the Disarmament Commission as a successful multilateral forum for deliberations on disarmament issues. That is a task confronting all of us. We have to face this task together, and we have to accomplish it together. We believe that, in today's rapidly changing world, the time is appropriate and propitious for serious reconsideration of the overall situation of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Mr. HÖHENPELİN (Austria): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to thank you for the dedication, guidance and patience you have demonstrated during this year's session of the Disarmament Commission. I take this opportunity to express also my appreciation to the other officers of the Commission, as well as to the chairmen of the working, contact and consultation groups.

Today, as the 1989 session of the Disarmament Commission concludes its work, I should like to share some thoughts with other members and to reflect on the work done during the past three and a half weeks.
(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

The first thing which comes to my mind is a comparison with the 1988 session of the Disarmament Commission.

Last year's session took place on the eve of the third special session devoted to disarmament, at a time when intensive preparations were under way for that special session. The aspirations were high and a positive spirit prevailed during the deliberations on a number of topics. Accordingly, the work on two agenda items was concluded and a set of principles relating to verification and guidelines for confidence-building measures were adopted. Thus, the overall outcome of the 1988 session was generally regarded as successful.

When we compare the results of this year's deliberations with those of last year's session, we have to admit that very limited progress has been achieved in our work.

On item 4, concerning nuclear and conventional disarmament, the contact group made few changes in the text. Furthermore, the placement of brackets remained virtually unchanged. However, two important paragraphs on nuclear and conventional disarmament were agreed upon. Furthermore, the updating of a third one, concerning chemical weapons, was approved unanimously.

Item 5 is of particular interest to my country, as it was the Austrian delegation that introduced in 1982 the draft resolution regarding objective information on military capabilities. Accordingly, we are utilizing the standardized reporting system on military budgets as adopted by the General Assembly in 1980. Despite the present difficulties we are confident that we shall be able successfully to conclude the item "Reduction of military budgets" in the foreseeable future.

Consultations on items 6 and 8, on, respectively, South Africa's nuclear capability and naval armaments and disarmament, were conducted in a positive and
open-minded atmosphere. Nevertheless, the progress made was rather limited. It is
to be hoped, therefore, that the proposals submitted during this session will serve
as a constructive basis for a better outcome in 1990.

As to item 7, concerning the role of the United Nations in the field of
disarmament, the Austrian delegation notes with much regret that once again the
Disarmament Commission was not able to arrive at commonly acceptable conclusions
and recommendations. In the view of the Austrian delegation, the central role of
the United Nations in the field of disarmament in general and the role of its
Department for Disarmament Affairs in particular should be further enhanced and
strengthened. Member States need the United Nations disarmament machinery as much
as the United Nations needs the support of the international community. The lack
of progress on item 7 is therefore particularly regrettable.

Similarly, the Austrian delegation regrets that the Commission was unable to
complete its work on agenda item 10, consideration of the declaration of the 1990s
as the third disarmament decade. Maybe some delegations thought that parts of the
draft text were too ambitious; maybe others were discouraged by the limited results
of the last two decades. In our view, however, declarations should be ambitious
and should, at the time when they are drafted, have visionary goals. As an
example, I should like to recall the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, which gained
broader acceptance only at a later stage.

However, since many proposals have been submitted by a number of countries,
the prospects are good that during the next General Assembly session or at the
session of the Disarmament Commission in 1990 a balanced, forward-looking
declaration can be agreed upon. We should settle for nothing less; otherwise, we
would run the risk of such a declaration being overtaken by events during the next
decade.
Item 9, the substantive consideration of issues related to conventional disarmament, is an issue of particular concern to the Austrian Government. We consider that the enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons must not blind us to the great concentration of conventional weapons in Europe and the risks arising from them.

Conventional disarmament should therefore be an integral part of the disarmament process. We have always taken the position that disarmament is a step-by-step process through which a global balance of armaments should be established on as low a level as possible. Accordingly, we have, at a regional level, actively undertaken efforts in the framework of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), thus contributing not only to regional disarmament but also to the global process of disarmament. We are confident that the Vienna negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe and the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, which are progressing at a very encouraging pace, will have a positive influence on the disarmament process in general and regional multilateral efforts in particular.

Having reviewed all the agenda items of the Disarmament Commission, I cannot but conclude that the outcome of this year's deliberations has been disappointing. We are confronted with the question whether we should continue our deliberations in the present unsatisfactory way or should do away with the Disarmament Commission altogether.
Our answer to these questions is a clear NO. We should not do away with the Disarmament Commission but rather enhance its efficiency, an efficiency which should, however, not necessarily always be measured by the number of recommendations adopted. In this context, the United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues held in Kyoto last month at the invitation of the Government of Japan comes to mind. It showed once again how international conferences can be organized successfully. Allow me to suggest that consideration be given to the establishment of a small working group, composed of the officers of the Commission and interested delegations, to explore organizational and substantive possibilities for enhancing the role of the Commission. Clearly, the Commission should not continue to work the way it has done during the present session. The Austrian delegation would certainly be pleased to play an active part in such a working group.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs, and to the staff of his Department, for their untiring efforts and valuable work.

Mr. OWOGENI (Nigeria): On behalf of the Group of African States and my own delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on the efficient manner in which you handled the affairs of the Disarmament Commission at this year's session. It is our hope that the limited achievement recorded in regard to some agenda items during this session under your able leadership will spur us on to greater heights next year and beyond.

I have the honour and privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of African States members of this Commission, principally to convey to this closing plenary meeting our initiatives and efforts during the session, as well as our views and apprehensions regarding certain questions on agenda item 6, concerning South Africa's nuclear capability. This is to ensure that this agenda
item and its implications are put in their proper perspective, as this issue is bound to continue to be considered by the Disarmament Commission at future sessions, until agreement can be reached.

The African Group wishes to recall that it is now 10 years since 1979, when the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability was first included on this Commission's agenda at the instance of my country, Nigeria being Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid - document A/CN.10/4, following the conclusion of the United Nations Seminar on Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa, held in London in February 1979 (S/13157). In its resolution 34/76 B of 11 December 1979 the General Assembly subsequently approved further consideration of the subject at the 1980 session of the Disarmament Commission, and this approval has been renewed at every session of the General Assembly since then. Thus, this session is the tenth year in succession that the question has been considered. It has so far recorded eight paragraphs, virtually on peripheral issues, while the remaining 10 paragraphs on more substantive recommendations have defied agreement.

During this session, as on previous occasions, the African Group brought into focus pertinent issues and facts on the basis of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, adopted at the Cairo summit of the Organization of African Unity, 17-21 July 1964, General Assembly resolution 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1965 and other relevant resolutions of the United Nations on the question.

Among other vital considerations, attention was focused on the following facts. First, South Africa's nuclear weapons capability and its relentless pursuit of a nuclear military programme genuinely affects regional security in Africa and constitutes a grave threat to the peace and security of independent African States, which, as an integral part of the global community, might have serious international consequences. Secondly, the African Group firmly believes that the
(Mr. Owoseni, Nigeria)

racist régime in South Africa has acquired nuclear weapons capability and its determined acquisition of nuclear weapons is only a question of time, if not already a fact. It is time that the international community pronounced strongly on this serious development. Thirdly, the reality of South Africa's nuclear weapons capability attests to years of active nuclear collaboration, direct or indirect, by some Western countries and their transnational companies, as well as by Israel, in serious violation of various General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, particularly on the arms embargo, thus enabling the Pretoria régime to attain the present level of technical sophistication, which enabled its Foreign Minister, R. F. Botha, to proclaim boastfully to the whole world in Vienna, Austria, on 13 August 1988, that his minority régime had acquired nuclear weapons capability. Fourthly, the vision of a denuclearized and nuclear-free African continent as well as the cause of the global non-proliferation régime, international peace and security, would suffer irreversible consequences should South Africa be allowed, enabled and assisted to develop its nuclear weapons capability further. Fifthly, South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and its equally illegal exploitation of Namibian uranium in violation of United Nations resolutions have contributed to the Pretoria régime's nuclear base and to the sustenance of its apartheid system. These are all irrefutable facts, which are there for any objective mind to see.

These hard realities and the unpalatable security implications and choices they entail for our continent are what have informed the African Group's demonstrable desire for flexibility and compromise at this session, as in the past, so that the Disarmament Commission can once and for all reach an agreement on this agenda item with a view to passing on the relevant recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly. These desires and efforts, manifested in the African Group's concrete proposals and revisions of some previously held positions, including virtual acceptance of all suggestions or proposals for
breakthrough from other well-meaning delegations, some of which were mentioned by Ambassador Jayasinghe of Sri Lanka, as Chairman of Working Group I on agenda item 6, in his statement introducing the Working Group's report in conference room paper A/CN.10/1989/CRP.5 yesterday. In spite of all these conscious efforts, and Ambassador Jayasinghe's personal initiatives during informal consultations, the hurdles on the path to agreement could not be overcome.
The aforementioned leads the African Group to the inescapable conclusion that a deliberate attempt is being made from some quarters to block possible agreement on South Africa's nuclear capability in order to marginalize the question and invariably justify its removal from the Commission's agenda on account of lack of progress. That would have been achieved because, rather than discuss the issue objectively, some delegations concerned have seen it as an opportunity to protect their political, economic and other interests in apartheid South Africa.

More than at any time in recent years, the Disarmament Commission's consideration of that question at this session has revealed certain worrisome trends, which the African Group wishes to bring to your attention, Sir, and through you to the Commission.

First, attempts are being made to see the question of South Africa's nuclear capability as an African problem alone, to be negotiated with the concerned Western delegations - this time the three Western members of the Security Council, namely the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France, which, so to say, have consistently prevented agreement on that agenda item. In that connection, some erroneously think they are doing Africa a favour by reaching some compromise on the relevant text. It is needless to remind the Commission that the nuclear-weapons capability of a lawless and irrational régime such as South Africa not only constitutes a threat to regional peace in Africa but also a danger to international peace and security as a whole.

Secondly, the idea is being created that South Africa can or should be allowed to acquire nuclear-weapons capability and continue doing so. On top of concrete evidence over the years, starting with the 1977 Kalahari nuclear-test beds, which incontrovertibly point to South Africa's nuclear-weapons ambitions, the régime's Foreign Minister's infamous statement in Vienna on 13 August 1988, which I mentioned earlier, that South Africa had acquired nuclear-weapons capability, has
never been controverted since by his racist leadership nor castigated by any responsible Western political leadership. Yet, during this session, some Western delegations still denied that, despite the Vienna statement, South Africa has actually acquired nuclear-weapons capability. We in Africa can only naturally interpret such an indifferent attitude to be attributable to the fact that South Africa is ruled by a white minority supremacist régime, while those who have the voice to stop or at least condemn it deliberately choose to look the other way for the same reason.

Thirdly, the question of South Africa's nuclear-weapons capability and its possible consequences for nuclear-weapons proliferation is being treated as if South Africa were just like any other country in the world. While the African Group, by virtue of the 1964 OAU Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, considers nuclear-weapons acquisition and proliferation in all their dimensions as inimical to lasting global peace and the security of mankind, the issue of South Africa's nuclear-weapons capability is unique in its own right because of the unique characteristics of the apartheid régime's institutionalized racism, its abominable policies, its aggression and destabilization of its neighbours, its illegal occupation of Namibia in defiance of the United Nations, which still continues in spite of the Namibian transitional programme and the global indignation against the régime, among other. Clearly, these are negative attributes which informed the Disarmament Commission's consideration of that question and which cannot be wished away until apartheid is abolished and fundamental human rights are established in that racist enclave.

Lastly, it should not escape the Commission that some countries have held back agreement because they did not want any references to be made to their active collaboration with South Africa in the nuclear field over the years. Although the African group has always been prepared to compromise, it should not be forgotten
too easily that South Africa did not receive from the moon its Safari nuclear-research reactor, which runs on weapons-grade uranium, its nuclear-power reactor at Koeberg, which produces plutonium as a by-product, nor the pilot uranium-enrichment plant at Valindaba, which can enrich uranium to weapons-grade levels. Most of these facilities are neither safeguarded nor open to International Atomic Energy Agency inspections. If that is so, as we all know it is, that active collaboration over the years is true and even still exists. Thus, the African Group considers South Africa and its nuclear-weapons capability as a fostered baby of some of the Western countries, even though that baby has now unfortunately turned into a monster in the process. Hence, it is inappropriate to expect the African Group to help those same Western countries concerned to remove this albatross from their necks, which they themselves are not ready to remove by their own actions.

Having placed the various issues preventing agreement in their proper perspectives, the African Group hopes that the Commission will better appreciate the dimensions of this question against the future. Above all, it is our hope that the conscience of the international community will be elicited on the need to stop without further delay South Africa's nuclear-weapons ambitions, to which its nuclear-weapons capability, domestic repressive policies and external machinations vividly point.

Without any recriminations whatsoever, the African Group would like to convey sincere appreciation to the individual members of the Western delegation concerned who tried their best to get some agreement on some paragraphs but who, as it appears, were under superior instructions not to yield on key African concerns. We thank the Australian delegation particularly for its constructive role, and enjoin other delegations from outside the African and Western Groups to show sufficient
interest in the agenda item through active participation in 1990 with a view to finalizing agreement. We hope that by then -- next May -- one of the key differences on the Namibian question will have been resolved under the transnational independence programme of the United Nations.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to begin this brief statement by congratulating you, Sir, for the great skill with which you have been conducting our work on disarmament.

I felt that I should take the floor, if only briefly, in order to avoid any possible misinterpretation of the recommendation contained in the last paragraph of the report which we adopted yesterday morning. For that purpose, it is necessary to recall that the original text of the draft report of Working Group IV ended with a paragraph drafted as follows:

"The Disarmament Commission recommends to the General Assembly that the Commission continue its work on the preparation of elements of a draft resolution entitled 'Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade' at its next substantive session of 1990, with a view to submitting it to the General Assembly for consideration and adoption at its forty-fifth session."
A number of delegations, including that of Mexico, felt and continue to feel that a General Assembly resolution on the Third Disarmament Decade should be adopted before that Decade begins; because of their objections, the last paragraph of the report of Working Group IV, adopted unanimously yesterday, was revised to read as follows:

"The Disarmament Commission informs the General Assembly that the work to be accomplished under General Assembly resolution 43/78 L of 7 December 1988 was not completed and invites the General Assembly to give consideration to further action that might be taken on this matter." (A/CN.10/1989/CRP.9, para. 11)

It will be recalled that in its resolution 43/78 L of 7 December 1988, the General Assembly directed the Disarmament Commission "at its substantive session in 1989, to prepare elements of a draft resolution to be entitled, 'Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade' and to submit them to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session for consideration and adoption." (General Assembly resolution 43/78 L, para. 2)

That is what the paragraph we adopted yesterday wants us to bear very much in mind. We must not forget that it is in 1989 - this year - that the "further action" of which the Commission's report we have adopted speaks should be considered and decided upon.

Mr. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish first of all, Sir, to join other speakers who have hailed your qualities as Chairman: your wisdom and your fairness have been a prop to the Commission in its work this year.
I should like to speak of some specific aspects of the work of the Disarmament Commission at its current session, and to express briefly but clearly and frankly my delegation's views on certain aspects of the Commission's work as a whole.

We believe that while measures to reduce and limit conventional weapons may benefit international détente and build confidence, these must be adopted under well-defined conditions. Because they are partial measures, they cannot be an end in themselves. They must therefore be linked with the objective of general and complete disarmament. We agree that this year's work enabled us to identify important elements and therefore represented an important step in the study of conventional disarmament, yet the Commission has not dealt extensively enough with the question of implementing these measures. We consider it essential that principles be defined and unanimously accepted in a totally clear-cut way.

As my delegation has stated on numerous occasions in the Working Group on this subject, my country is deeply concerned at the spiralling qualitative development of conventional weapons. In practice, the differences between these new generations of weapons on the one hand and weapons of mass destruction on the other are becoming blurred. This qualitative factor means it is now a euphemism to refer to these new weapons as "conventional". We have failed to note in the conduct of certain delegations any open recognition of this qualitative factor; on the contrary, we have been told we must not hamper technological development. That is tantamount to thinking that the two thirds of mankind that lives in the third world has an interest in seeing the advances of the technological revolution used to modernize conventional weapons and accelerate the arms race; that would be absurd.

To ask third-world countries to agree to technological development for the purposes of an arms build-up is to ask them to renounce the concept of disarmament for development.
(Mr. Ortiz Rodriguez, Cuba)

As a country that cherishes peace and progress, my country views disarmament as a single, general and complete process that must bring the same benefits to all. That is why we support the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament; we believe it remains fully valid and should be the principal guide for action by the United Nations and other multilateral forums in the field of disarmament.

My delegation cannot fail to be concerned by the situation at this year’s session of the Disarmament Commission, where reaching agreement on subjects that require urgent consideration by the international community was sometimes blocked. There is an undoubted lack of progress in multilateral action in the sphere of disarmament, owing to factors that have nothing to do with the interests of the majority of Member States of the United Nations.
We believe that this Commission must take a very serious look at the present situation because, to a great extent, its proper functioning will affect multilateral disarmament measures. From some of the positions that we have seen, it seems to be under attack from certain delegations that are responsible for the present stagnation in multilateral efforts in this field.

While some delegations are conducting manoeuvres of all types to make it impossible for the Commission adequately to deal with the points to which I have just referred and while they are only interested in imposing their own views that arise from an interest in the arms race, of which we are all aware, and while a lack of political will, as evidenced in our meetings today on the subject of the reduction of military budgets has prevented progress, on other items on the Commission's agenda the leader of that position, the United States, has ventured to continue its acts of intimidation against our country. On 20 May, in the framework of a military exercise called Global Shield, a large number of B-52 planes and F-4, F-15 and F-16 multipurpose planes took off from Florida and other parts of the United States and came dangerously close to the coasts of Cuba north of Santa Maria del Mar and north of Playa Salado, both east and west of Havana. It had the appearance of a massive strike being prepared against Cuba.

How are we to interpret that act when here in this Commission, there is talk about confidence-building measures and conventional disarmament, which are moreover the only means at our disposal - apart from the firm resolve of the Cuban people to free all the people from war - to set a high price on our sovereignty? A question recently put to the Cuban press was this: What right has the United States to prepare a massive strike against Cuba? In the view of the United States Government, does not détente apply to small countries just as much as it does to others?
Mr. REES (Australia): As I am the final speaker at this meeting, I wish to add the appreciation of my delegation, Sir, to that of others for your skilful and tireless efforts as Chairman of this session of the Commission. The Australian delegation reluctantly adds its voice to those of other delegations which have expressed their disappointment at the little that has been achieved at the Disarmament Commission this year.

Last year we were able to welcome the fact the Commission was able to report our items on verification and on confidence-building measures. In contrast, we are particularly disappointed that this year the Commission was unable to report out at least two of its agenda items which were almost complete, that is, the reduction of military budgets and the nuclear capability of South Africa.

It may be that the Disarmament Commission should not reasonably be expected to report out items each year, given the complexity of the issues we have under discussion and the range of national views which exist on most items.

We acknowledge that it is clearly very difficult to reach consensus on some of the items. I have in mind, in particular, item 8, on naval armaments and disarmament, and items 4 (a) and (b), on a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament has similar difficulties with the latter item, which it addresses under the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

But it seems to me that something is lacking in terms of our collective effort when we are unable to reach agreement on what should be a relatively straightforward item entrusted to us by the General Assembly, that is, the Third Disarmament Decade.

Our inability to reach agreement on this item is in some ways related to our inability to reach agreement on the item of the role of the United Nations in the
field of disarmament. The fact is that if all of us could have looked at the item
in a greater spirit of compromise rather than determinedly pursuing particular
national positions, we could have achieved what the General Assembly mandated us to
do.

There is a fundamental divide on the issue of the role of the United Nations
which is affecting our debate on these items, as well as others. This divide has
in the past often been identified as having an East/West character. It also
represents a divide between those States strongly committed to multilateralism and
those which apparently are less so committed. This latter division now seems to
have become even more acute.

I appreciate that rhetoric also has a role in the divisions which open up
among us, but the commitment by all parties to find common ground clearly is
lacking among some of us.

The lack of outcome at this session compels us to examine the value of the
Disarmament Commission. Is the debate which takes place in this forum, the
exchange of ideas, sufficient to justify its existence and the cost in terms of our
time and resources? Do we need tangible outcomes each year? It would certainly
seem that the Commission is not meeting its objectives if it is failing to make
recommendations to the General Assembly.

I would observe with reluctance that there are several items which we have now
been discussing for years without agreement. These include nuclear disarmament,
the reduction of military budgets, and the nuclear capability of South Africa. As
representatives will be aware, my delegation and others have made every attempt to
try to find consensus language on these items, but still without success.

The Commission has heard a number of constructive suggestions from
representatives this afternoon. I would like to support some of the suggestions
and to add to them.
Perhaps we should first examine afresh the items on the Commission's agenda. We could, for example, identify some items which might be usefully set aside for a period and picked up again if there were any development which might make agreement more likely. If necessary, we could also identify new items which would enable the Commission to meet its objectives as a deliberative body.

We should also keep in mind the fact that the Commission's work should at the very least be keeping pace with the dynamic of progress in arms control and disarmament outside this forum. It is indeed a poor reflection on our progress here that the talks on conventional armed forces in Europe have commenced without our being able to agree on guiding principles for the conventional disarmament item or the item on the reduction of military budgets.
A further suggestion I should like to make is that delegations refrain from the temptation to reopen discussion on agreed language, unless of course there are clear developments since that agreement which necessitate the text being up-dated.

In examining our modus operandi I think we should look at the principles we apply in determining the chairmanship of the working groups each year. While there may be benefit from a degree of continuity from year to year, I would suggest that the Commission look into applying the principle of rotation in the future.

Finally, I suggest that a starting point for such an examination would be a further meeting of the officers of the Commission to assess this year's session and to make such recommendations as can be agreed upon to the Commission as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank Ambassador Reese for his constructive proposals concerning the functioning of the Disarmament Commission.

I now call on the representative of the United States, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. AKALOVSKY (United States of America): I apologize for asking to speak at this late hour, and I am particularly sorry that the representative of Cuba chose to end our discussions in the Disarmament Commission on a totally inappropriate note. We have just heard the representative of Cuba — not, unfortunately, for the first time — make allegations that are totally unfounded and clearly contrary to the improved international climate, including in the general area concerned. My delegation will not dignify those allegations by dealing with them in detail. We must categorically state, however, that any suggestion that legitimate activities of United States forces in international waters and airspace in the Caribbean are somehow designed to give the impression of a strike against Cuba is a pure and preposterous fabrication.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I call on the representative of Cuba, who also wishes to exercise the right of reply.

Mr. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I apologize sincerely to you, Mr. Chairman, since I certainly do not want to prolong this meeting. I really do not know what the representative of the United States is talking about when he speaks of slander. Is it not a fact that on 20 May there were B-52's and groups of F-15's that came close to the shores of Cuba in combat formation within the framework of a military exercise? Is that not accurate? Reports to that effect have been circulated and can be examined. I think that the representative of the United States must lack information in this respect.

It is precisely here in the Disarmament Commission that we have heard disarmament being advocated, and it is therefore a suitable body to which my country can bring its complaint. How can we accept the use of rhetoric in this conference room to conceal the truth? How can we accept the use of distortion in an attempt to deceive the international community? How can we accept statements that a person is in favour of disarmament, transparency and confidence-building measures while such acts of intimidation are being carried out?

CONCLUDING STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): During the last three-and-a-half week session the Disarmament Commission and the subsidiary bodies it established have considered in depth all of the items on the agenda. During our meetings yesterday and today, the Disarmament Commission approved the report drawn up by those subsidiary bodies showing the extent of the progress made in the various areas of their respective competence.
Now that the report of the Disarmament Commission has been adopted by the Commission, it is clear that during the present substantive session the Disarmament Commission made limited progress, which can be summed up as follows.

The Contact Group established by the Chairman for consideration of agenda item 4 (a) - "Consideration of various aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, in order to expedite negotiations aimed at effective elimination of the danger of nuclear war" - updated certain of the texts under consideration and reached agreement on recommendation 4, parts I and II. Although unable to reach consensus on a complete series of recommendations, the Contact Group did make the aforementioned progress.

As to the Consultation Group on the reduction of military budgets, despite the efforts made by certain members, in particular the Chairman of the Commission, to conciliate the views of delegations and to reduce points of disagreement, the principles designed to cover the reduction of military budgets could not be adopted as a whole, even at a time when the international community was following with interest the development of proposals for the reduction of military budgets formulated by members of certain alliances and by others. It is to be hoped that this trend will continue to promote a political climate of confidence among States.

Concerning the nuclear capability of South Africa, the Working Group which considered this question, took note of the proposals made by certain delegations on the outstanding 10 paragraphs on which agreement was not reached because of the persistence of differences in points of view on the major substantive questions. The racist régime of the white minority in South Africa is resorting to military action as an instrument of repression within the country and of aggression outside it. Only that régime's will to increase alarmingly its military capability explains its development and acquisition of nuclear weapons. That, of course, has
been made possible by South Africa's active nuclear collaboration with certain countries, which poses a serious threat to the stability and security of the region.

With reference to the report of the Working Group on the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field, the section of annex III entitled "Political aspects", as well as the section entitled "Machinery", has been the subject of a working paper submitted by that Group's Chairman. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to study the paper, but it was agreed that it would be annexed to the 1989 report of the Disarmament Commission for future consideration.

The consultations on agenda item 3, "Naval armaments and disarmament" turned out to be most productive, thanks to the interest displayed by those delegations which introduced a series of constructive proposals that were the subject of an in-depth exchange. Although the Commission handled this question in the same way as it did last year, by holding substantive consultations open to all delegations, a number of conclusions and substantive recommendations on the matter allowed the Chairman to present working paper A/CN.10/134, which was approved by all delegations that participated in the substantive consultations. The document contained very constructive recommendations which will serve as a basis for more thorough debates on the matter in the future.

As to conventional disarmament, constructive proposals were made by both sides in the course of bilateral negotiations. Unfortunately, multilateral negotiations in Working Group III failed to yield agreement on the numerous and relevant proposals made by delegations on conventional disarmament.

Finally, concerning the elements of the draft resolution on Consideration of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 43/78 L, Working Group IV was unable to reach a
(The Chairman)

Consensus on the document presented to the Working Group by Ambassador Douglas Roche, and therefore requested the Assembly to study other measures to be taken on this matter.

Ambassador García Robles of Mexico has recalled to us the relevance of that resolution. Unfortunately, it could not be implemented, and our Commission is now obliged to submit the elements of that Declaration to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

That sums up the work of our 1989 substantive session. Beyond those results, however, are the hopes harboured by certain delegations of seeing the Disarmament Commission increase its effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with disarmament questions designed to achieve a real settlement satisfactory to all delegations and on all questions under discussion.

Having listened carefully to the representatives of Norway, Austria and Australia, who dealt with the future role of the Commission, I cannot fail to share their concerns and to stress the relevance of their proposals that an informal group, made up of all the officers of the Commission, and open to all other delegations, be formed in order to study together those measures which should be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission.

Before closing our 1989 substantive session, I should like to express my gratitude to all delegations that have taken an active part in the work of the session, as well as to those that have supported and assisted me in discharging my mandate.

As Chairman of the Commission for the 1989 session I am indeed strengthened in the knowledge that with the assistance of my other colleagues, I have spared no effort to promote the completion of our consideration of item 5 by holding in-depth consultations which, for practical purposes, were on the verge of a positive
conclusion. I therefore venture to hope that those efforts will not have been in vain - that they will eventually contribute to reconciling the divergent views of delegations on the matter under discussion.

I remain convinced that all States must make an effort to achieve disarmament, on the basis of respect for Charter principles relating to the individual and collective security of every State.
(The Chairman)

Now that the Commission is coming to the end of its work for this session, I should also like to express my deep gratitude to the Vice-Chairmen and to the Chairman and Co-ordinators of subsidiary bodies: Ambassador Sergey Martynov of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic; Ambassador Valeriu Floarea of Romania; Ambassador Edmond Jayasinghe of Sri Lanka; Ambassador Paul Engo of Cameroon; Ambassador Adeyemi of Nigeria; Ambassador Nana Sutresna of Indonesia; Ambassador Skjold Mellehin of Denmark; Ambassador Roger Ravix of Haiti; Ambassador Douglas Roche of Canada, and the Rapporteur of the Commission, Mr. André Quertin of Belgium, for their constructive co-operation in carrying out the task which the General Assembly entrusted to the Disarmament Commission at its 1989 session. I am also sure that members of the Commission join me in sincerely thanking the staff of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and particularly Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his dedication and competence. I should like to extend special thanks to the Secretary of the Commission, our friend Dr. Lin Kuo-chung, and to his co-workers who have facilitated the work of all 7 subsidiary bodies established and who also gave invaluable assistance to the Chairman that enabled him to carry out his task. I should also like to thank them all for the valuable help they have tirelessly given me and the Chairmen of the various subsidiary bodies in drawing up the various Commission reports. I should like in particular to thank the interpreters for the patience they have demonstrated throughout the various lengthy debates we have held, sometimes well beyond the normal time limits, as well as the conference officers and those who have contributed to the good functioning of the Commission's meetings.
STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I now call upon the Secretary of the Commission, who wishes to report on the organization of work at the 1989 session.

Mr. LIN Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Commission): I should like to make the following observations with regard to the organization of work of the 1989 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

First, at its current session the Commission was able to adopt its programme of work in advance so that the Secretariat could make appropriate plans for use of the resources of meetings services. In accordance with the preliminary statistics provided by the Department of Conference Services, I am happy to report the status of utilization of the meetings services available to the Commission at the current session, as follows: during the first week 16 meetings were planned and 16 meetings were used; during the second week 20 meetings were planned and 20 meetings were used; during the third week 20 meetings were planned and 20 meetings were used and, during the fourth week, four meetings were planned and three meetings were used. In other words, almost all planned meetings were used. From those statistics it appears that at its current session, as compared with previous years, the Commission greatly improved its utilization of the meetings services available to it. However, owing to late starts and early endings of meetings, there was still some unutilized time, particularly during the first two weeks when various subsidiary bodies were engaged in a general exchange of views on their subjects and in preparing draft texts for consideration. The improved utilization of meetings services was also due to the adoption of the method of allocating to each group an hour-and-a-half per meeting. Of course, when certain groups requested a three-hour
meeting, that was usually granted. That flexible response to the needs of various groups proved useful and could serve as a basis for the organization of the Commission's work in the future.

Secondly, during the course of the Commission's work certain delegations expressed the view that the scheduling of meetings for various groups should be organized in patterns. The Secretariat took note of that view and did its best to accommodate that request. However, organizing the meetings of various groups in patterns depends on the actual needs of the groups, on special requests by Chairmen of groups and even on the number of groups established by the Commission. Certainly the Secretariat will do its best to meet such requests in the future, in consultation with the chairmen of subsidiary bodies.

In conclusion, the Disarmament Commission made a great improvement in its utilization of the meetings services available to it at its current session, and the method of organization of work used could set a good precedent for the future.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the Secretary of the Commission for the information he has given us on the organization of our work and on the Commission's use of the facilities made available to it during its 1989 substantive session.
OTHER BUSINESS:

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Some constructive proposals have been made by the representatives of Norway, Austria and Australia and I should therefore like to hold consultations in an informal working group, including all the officers of the Commission and all the chairmen of the subsidiary bodies, to propose to the members of the Commission, perhaps in the First Committee at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, discussion of the various proposals made by those three delegations. We should also include proposals by other delegations with regard to the effectiveness and rationalization of the work of the Commission.

It will therefore be an informal working group, open to all delegations, which would consider the possibility of proposing measures to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the Disarmament Commission. It will be held during the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, when we will be able to provide the conclusions or results of our consultations on the various matters raised by the delegations that have spoken on this matter.

Since it will be an informal group, all other delegations will be informed each time it is to meet. We will ensure that the meetings are announced in the Journal of the United Nations so that those delegations interested in its work may be able to participate.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I now declare the 1989 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.