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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION
VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 17 May 1979, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. VELLODI

(India)

- General exchange of views (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, I should like at the outset to extend to you the warm congratulations of my delegation on the assumption of your duties as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Your skill and competence have been widely appreciated, and we are sure that under your guidance this first substantive session of the Disarmament Commission will make a valuable contribution to the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Final Document adopted at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, and of the pertinent resolutions of the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

In our submission, the general exchange of views that has taken place so far could have a positive impact on the work of the Commission, by providing an opportunity not so much for revealing new concepts or for putting forward new proposals as rather for ascertaining and further elucidating the positions of Member States on disarmament matters in order to promote consensus on the implementation of the tasks of this Commission as stipulated in the Final Document and the respective resolutions of the General Assembly. Furthermore, this general exchange of views will provide a certain background and general guidelines for the working group that was set up at the beginning of this session.

The present session of the Disarmament Commission has acquired a particular significance for several reasons. It is the first substantive session, one year after the adoption of the Final Document by the General Assembly at its tenth special session which, as a result of intensive negotiations, has provided a consensus on the basic goals and principles guiding the efforts of all Member States in the field of disarmament, on the elaboration of a programme of action and the setting out of the priorities in disarmament negotiations and the establishment of an institutional framework of deliberative and negotiating bodies in that field. Our main task now is to give effect to the mandate formulated in paragraph 118 (a) of the Final Document with regard to the Disarmament Commission as

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

"a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, the function of which shall be to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament and to follow up the relevant decisions and recommendations of the special session devoted to disarmament".
(Resolution S-10/2)

The task of the Commission is also to

"consider the elements of a comprehensive programme for disarmament to be submitted as recommendations to the General Assembly and, through it, to the negotiating body, the Committee on Disarmament". (Ibid.)

In accordance with resolution 33/62, this item is being given priority consideration in our agenda.

The significance of the current session has to be assessed also in the light of the main trends in the evolving international situation and taking into account the genuine expectations of the peoples all over the world that there shall be undertaken effective measures to halt the arms race and to achieve real disarmament.

Speaking about the present international situation and the common efforts for the improvement of the international climate, we have to note with satisfaction, as pointed out in the Final Document, that

"Progress on détente and progress on disarmament mutually complement and strengthen each other". (Ibid., para. 3)

There have been certain encouraging signs in some fields of the ongoing disarmament negotiations. In this connexion, we should like to emphasize with satisfaction the announcement of the successful completion of the negotiations on the SALT II treaty between the USSR and the United States. We regard this agreement not only as a significant step forward in the limitation of the strategic arms race, but also as an important stimulating factor in promoting further disarmament negotiations and fostering the process of international détente.

The new SALT II agreement could begin a positive political momentum that could impart a favourable impetus to the successful outcome of a number of ongoing disarmament negotiations, such as those on the prohibition of chemical weapons,

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the ban on the development, manufacture and use of radiological weapons, and on other disarmament matters. The review conferences on the implementation of international conventions in force also provide appropriate opportunities for the consolidation of the existing system of practical measures and the promotion of further efforts in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

There are also other positive phenomena in the development of the international situation in general, and in the field of arms limitation and disarmament in particular. At the same time we cannot overlook the continuation of the arms race and the lack of adequate results with regard to the quantitative and qualitative reduction of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as conventional weapons, something which generates negative political, economic and social implications. Serious impediments to the genuine efforts aimed at halting the arms race and adopting effective disarmament measures are created by the opposition of certain influential circles within the political and military establishment of some Western countries seeking military superiority at any price. No less harmful to the lofty endeavours of disarmament are the obstructions of those who would like, through their demagogic approach to the ongoing disarmament negotiations, to conceal their attempts to increase the stockpiles of nuclear and other weapons as a military basis for their expansionist policy. The aggression against the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the arrogant demonstration of military strength under the untenable pretext of "punishment" gave yet further evidence of this policy of hegemonism and expansionism.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria, together with the other socialist countries, has consistently carried out a policy of a realistic and constructive approach to the consideration of disarmament matters and has offered its contribution to the disarmament negotiations. It is well known that in the Declaration of November 1978 of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, the socialist countries stated that there is no type of weapon which our countries are not ready to reduce or limit on the basis of strict adherence to the principle of not impairing the interests of the security of any party. Another genuine attempt by the socialist countries to offer their contribution to the solution of urgent disarmament issues was made at the very recent meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty held on 14 and 15 May this year in Budapest. The communiqué of that meeting contains numerous proposals updating and further elucidating the main provisions of the Declaration of November 1978 which I have already mentioned.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

In pursuing this policy, my country, together with other members of the socialist community of nations, submitted last February to the meeting of the Committee on Disarmament a draft document on the initiation of urgent negotiations on the halting of the nuclear arms race and on a progressive reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons leading to their ultimate and complete elimination. The initiatives of the socialist countries, without being prejudicial to the other bilateral or multilateral negotiations on restricting the nuclear arms race, will undoubtedly contribute to the search for a viable solution of the problem of nuclear disarmament. Concurrently with effective measures which can lead to gradual progress in disarmament, it is also necessary to accelerate the elaboration of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations. Such a treaty will give additional, firmer political and legal guarantees to the security of all States.

In the field of disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, at the present stage is attached to the proposal put forward by the USSR at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly on the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of the guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States as embodied in General Assembly resolution 33/72, has acquired special significance at the present stage. In this connexion I should like to mention also the proposal on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present.

Furthermore, of particular importance also is the imposition of a ban on the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

The plans to include the neutron bomb in the arsenal of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) constitutes further broadening of the range of modern weapons of mass destruction. In our view the deployment of neutron weapons will be a dangerous step forward in the nuclear arms race and, therefore, it should be banned. The socialist countries have already come out with a draft on this matter which should be considered by the Committee on Disarmament.

The Bulgarian Government attaches particular importance to measures for military détente and disarmament in Europe. In our view, top priority in this connexion should be given to the completion of the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

Within the framework of regional measures of military détente and disarmament on the European continent, it is of paramount importance to reduce the level of military confrontation in Europe, to reach agreement on the basis of strict mutuality on the limitation of rocket-borne nuclear weapons and other weapons on the continent.

It is the considered opinion of my Government that full use should be made of all appropriate international forums for consideration and negotiation in the field of disarmament. In this respect we believe that a world disarmament conference could provide the most representative world-wide forum for the discussion and negotiation of practical, legally binding international agreements, aimed at halting the arms race and promoting real disarmament.

With regard to the consideration of the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, we wish to offer at this stage some general comments, since the views of my Government on this very matter were expressed on several occasions. I could refer to documents A/AC.187/81, of 7 September 1977, CCD/552 of 21 February 1978, and most recently our reply under resolution 33/91 A. We also have in mind the fact that this item should be further discussed in more detail in the Working Group which was set up.

But by way of offering some brief general comments I should like to state first of all, that we agree that the comprehensive programme of disarmament should be elaborated by the Committee on Disarmament in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the tenth special session, devoted to disarmament. With regard to its basic goals and principles, as well as its scope and content, the comprehensive programme should be realistic and feasible, combining long-term and short-term measures aimed at halting and reversing the arms race and leading towards general and complete disarmament as the ultimate goal of disarmament measures. As stipulated in the Final Document:

"Priorities in disarmament negotiations shall be: nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; conventional weapons ... and reduction of armed forces." (General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 45)

The Bulgarian Government is in agreement with that approach and it considers that the ending of the nuclear arms race and the achieving of nuclear disarmament, together with other disarmament and political measures, should provide a viable safeguard to averting the danger of nuclear war and military conflicts with conventional weapons.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

The comprehensive programme should encourage all kinds of practical measures of disarmament - multilateral and bilateral, regional and global, quantitative and qualitative, political and military - in conformity with the basic concept of the close intrinsic relationship between détente and disarmament.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate that the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria will continue to support and take an active part in the genuine efforts to halt the arms race and achieve real disarmament. In this connexion, I wish to refer to a statement of Todor Zhivkov, President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, dealing with major domestic and foreign policy issues, which he delivered on 27 April 1979 at the tenth session of the Bulgarian National Assembly - the Bulgarian Parliament. In it, he stated, inter alia:

"... We have hundreds of reasons to wish for peace and to fight for peace in the world, while we have not a single reason to want international tension, distrust, hostilities, 'cold' or 'hot' wars between peoples.

"Precisely for these reasons and according to our power and potential, we are working to further the goals of détente, for converting détente into an irreversible process.

"Precisely for these reasons we work for tangible progress in the sphere of disarmament, for the promotion of mutually advantageous international co-operation."

Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia): Sir, may I begin by extending our greetings to you as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission and by assuring you of the complete support of my delegation.

The Czechoslovak delegation approaches the start of the substantive deliberations in the Disarmament Commission with the hope that the recommendations elaborated by the Commission will have a positive impact on disarmament negotiations in the United Nations and in the other multilateral and international bodies concerned, as well as in talks conducted on a bilateral basis.

In keeping with paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly special session devoted to disarmament, my delegation regards the Disarmament Commission as an important deliberative body whose mandate stipulates precisely its place in the system - or, rather, in the machinery of disarmament negotiations.

As a matter of tradition, Czechoslovakia has been responsibly participating in all multilateral disarmament negotiations, striving to contribute to the cause of peace and international security and to avert the threat of war.

The preservation and consolidation of international peace, the strengthening of international security and the continued expansion and deepening of détente represent vital interests of the people of Czechoslovakia. In keeping with the desires of its people, the leading representatives of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic are making these issues a matter of major concern, attaching to them the highest priority. As the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Gustáv Husák, said in his recent traditional May Day address:

"We are of the opinion that it would be useful to adopt, on the broadest possible international basis, preferably in the United Nations, a document that would commit States to concerted efforts for the solution of the pressing issues of disarmament and which would set forth specific political principles of mutual co-operation aimed at achieving that objective. States should accept the commitment to approaching disarmament negotiations constructively and to contributing to the creation of an international climate favourable to the speediest possible achievement of desirable progress."

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

In a similar way also the Czechoslovak Government reiterated its position on the questions of peace, disarmament, international security and détente in a recent report on the implementation of its policy declaration submitted by the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia to the Czechoslovak Parliament.

What is really needed in order to achieve concrete results in the field of disarmament is a constructive approach by all States and political will on the part of their Governments to conclude disarmament agreements.

My Government explained in detail its position concerning the general programme of disarmament in a note by the Czechoslovak Permanent Mission to the Secretary-General, dated 30 April 1979.

We believe that in the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament it is necessary to keep in mind especially those objectives the achievement of which would provide solid foundations and guarantees for an irreversible advancement in the direction of general and complete disarmament.

A priority task, in our opinion, is to halt the arms race in the field of nuclear weapons and to proceed then with nuclear disarmament. Of clearly positive significance in that respect would be the conclusion of a treaty on the general prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation régime, and a treaty on halting the production of all types of nuclear arms and on the gradual reduction of their stockpiles until their complete elimination. In this context my delegation reiterates its full support for the disarmament initiatives of the Soviet Union, specifically its proposal to conclude an international convention on the strengthening of safeguards of the security of non-nuclear States, and the conclusion of an international agreement prohibiting the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of States which do not currently possess these weapons.

Apart from nuclear arms, there are other weapons of mass destruction for the liquidation of which favourable conditions exist. In the first place, it is necessary to speed up negotiations on the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their liquidation.

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(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

Furthermore, it is necessary to take concrete disarmament steps in the field of conventional weapons that are used continually in armed conflicts. Of special importance, therefore, would be agreements among the permanent members of the Security Council and other militarily significant States on the non-expansion of the manpower of their armed forces and their conventional armaments and on the reduction of the military budgets, by percentages or in absolute terms.

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

My delegation attaches importance to the effectiveness of the machinery for disarmament negotiations. From that point of view we consider it most desirable to make a world disarmament conference a part of that machinery. We see the conference as a universal international forum capable of deliberating on a number of concrete disarmament measures as well as further expanding and elaborating political and other principles of disarmament. The conference can follow up on and in certain respects finalize the work of other multilateral disarmament talks. At the same time we regard a world disarmament conference as an active component of the process of détente.

An independent, important and undoubtedly determining place among disarmament negotiations is held by the talks between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic arms. Successful progress in those talks is a prerequisite for the advancement of other disarmament negotiations as well as for the improvement of the over-all international climate. We welcome news on the forthcoming conclusion of SALT II and trust that the agreement will successfully be brought to its entry into force and thus become an effective impulse towards further relaxation in both the political and the military spheres and towards progress in the issues of disarmament.

In concluding I should like once more to emphasize that the scope of activities of the Disarmament Commission as stipulated by its mandate is sufficiently broad and sensitively incorporated into the disarmament machinery, so that favourable prerequisites exist for positive results of the Commission's work to find appropriate application in the complex of disarmament negotiations.

Mr. ABUL AHSAN (Bangladesh): Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you as the Chairman of this Commission. My delegation has taken note of the important points you made in your opening address on Monday afternoon. We consider them to be valuable guidelines for fruitful deliberation. My delegation is confident that under your able chairmanship the Disarmament Commission will successfully complete its work and lay the foundation of a concrete and comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The recent awareness of the need for a comprehensive programme is in part the result of an increasing disenchantment with the piecemeal approach to arms control pursued so far. We believe that a combination of disarmament measures will provide greater balance and consequently greater security, making them more acceptable to States.

(Mr. Abul Ahsan, Bangladesh)

It is not the intention of my delegation to dwell at length on problems involving all areas of disarmament. Bangladesh's position on these problems is well known and has been set forth in detail at the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Since that special session there has been no substantive change except the recent completion of the SALT II negotiations between the two super-Powers. Although this agreement is primarily concerned with the regulation and limitation of the nuclear arms race, it nevertheless should have a salutary impact on the promotion of the objectives of our current deliberations.

So far as the framework of the comprehensive disarmament programme is concerned, my delegation feels that it should consist of an introduction giving a short historical background and the reasons for its elaboration and the urgency of its adoption and an operative part divided into several chapters dealing with the nature and character of commitments, immediate aims and final objectives, principles and priorities, methods of verification, international security measures, disarmament and development measures, and procedures for implementation, as well as the role of the United Nations.

Bangladesh feels that the comprehensive disarmament programme should not be identified with an agreement on general and complete disarmament but should be viewed as an instrument leading the international community towards that goal. The comprehensive disarmament programme should contain an agreed framework for international action, including negotiations at different levels on specific measures whose progressive implementation should lead to the realization of the final goal of general and complete disarmament. The comprehensive disarmament programme, as we see it, is an essential supplement to the Programme of Action.

Furthermore, the comprehensive disarmament programme should comprise all disarmament measures that are thought necessary to achieve the goal of general and complete disarmament. These measures should be listed in accordance with the priorities agreed upon at the tenth special session of the General Assembly. For the purpose of initiating negotiations, the comprehensive disarmament programme should also contain a phased presentation at least of the first stage of disarmament measures, implementation of which should effectively halt the arms race and open up the process of genuine disarmament.

In listing the disarmament measures, the state and course of the arms race should be taken into account. Similarly, all the elements necessary to achieve

(Mr. Abul Ahsan, Bangladesh)

the goal of general and complete disarmament and realization of just and lasting international peace and security as well as the New International Economic Order may also be included. The list of disarmament measures may be presented separately for each category of weapons and weapons systems, and in accordance with agreed priorities. For example, the following categories and types of weapons may be elaborated: first, nuclear weapons; secondly, other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; thirdly, conventional weapons, including those which may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects; and, fourthly, reduction of armed forces and military expenditure.

In paragraph 31 of the Final Document of the tenth special session a measure of verification was established. It was agreed that, to be effective, any disarmament measures must be verifiable. What is needed, however, is the establishment of international machinery for disarmament verification within the United Nations system itself.

At the tenth special session of the General Assembly a close relationship was also recognized between disarmament and international security. The special session also recognized the close and indivisible relationship between disarmament, economic and social developments and the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

Bangladesh believes that peace and prosperity are indivisible. Acceleration of military expenditures not only absorbs considerable resources; it constitutes a basic destabilizing element in the entire world economy. Recurring economic crises in recent years have served to highlight this fact. It is our belief that a viable international system must be based on the establishment of a link between disarmament and development.

These are some of the preliminary thoughts my delegation wished to share with the Committee. Finally, I wish to pledge the whole-hearted co-operation of my delegation towards the success of the deliberations of this Commission.

Mr. KOCHUBEY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, we are delighted to see you in the post of Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and we hope that, under your guidance, the Commission will be able to discharge the task before it and make a contribution to resolving the most urgent and vital task for mankind -- the cessation of the arms race and the prevention of the threat of a world nuclear war.

In the performance of that task, the efforts of all States -- big, medium and small -- are required, for the arms race is having a pernicious effect on the lives of all peoples of the world, inhibiting their economic and social development and imperilling their very existence. Only détente, which has become a leading trend in international developments, together with real disarmament measures, can place the peoples of the world on that path which leads to real security and not merely illusory security based on the arms race.

The Soviet State in its Constitution has enshrined its commitment to striving for disarmament, until general and complete disarmament is achieved. Such provisions are also present in the Constitutions of other socialist countries as well. The foreign policy of the socialist countries shows that they are sparing no effort to have the principles proclaimed in their Constitutions translated into practice. With that purpose they are conducting talks on a number of questions and have several times stated that they are ready to examine any concrete proposal aimed at halting the arms race and achieving disarmament. In this connexion we welcome the completion of the second round of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. They should inspire us with optimism, because they show that, given goodwill, even the most difficult disarmament issues can be resolved.

An important contribution to détente and the further development of all-round relations between States of different social systems was made by the recent talks held in Moscow between the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Leonid I. Brezhnev, and the President of the Republic of France, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, in which disarmament issues had an extremely important place.

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

A broad range of initiatives and proposals are contained in such documents as the one submitted by the Soviet Union at the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, entitled "Practical ways for halting the arms race", as well as the declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty adopted at the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee held in Moscow on 23 November 1978, the statement made by Leonid I. Brezhnev on 2 March 1979 and the communiqué of the meeting of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty held on 14 and 15 May 1979. A whole series of proposals are also contained in working documents submitted by the socialist countries in Geneva.

Many of the ideas contained in these documents are along the same lines as the provisions of the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, and it is our conviction that they can be highly useful for the work of our Commission in examining elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

We consider that a comprehensive programme of disarmament should derive from certain principles, and practice shows that these must be fully borne in mind if the success of the talks is to be ensured.

First and foremost, we should enshrine the principle that a comprehensive programme of disarmament should be aimed at general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Those concrete measures for halting the arms race and for disarmament that are sometimes called partial should ultimately be subordinated to that goal. As was rightly noted by Leonid I. Brezhnev,

"They are sometimes modestly called 'partial', but the achievement of each of them would to a certain extent avert the danger of war and alleviate the burden of the arms race borne by the working masses."

Of course, all measures taken in this field should be based on the principle of undiminished security for all parties to the agreement. That is a very important principle, which should be constantly emphasized, and it is naturally bound up with the question of the number of participants to disarmament talks. As many States as possible should take part in the talks and in elaborating agreements, especially the nuclear Powers and the States having the most powerful armed forces.

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

All agreements on disarmament naturally should be monitored. That is one of the most important conditions for the effectiveness of such agreements. The scope and character of verification measures should be defined by the volume, character and specific nature of the agreements on specific measures.

Top priority in our modern-day world should be given to nuclear disarmament. Therefore the task of starting talks on this question is now of paramount importance, and the socialist countries have made relevant proposals in the Disarmament Committee on this question.

The on-going talks on a general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests should be completed. The Soviet Union has done much for the success of these talks, as a result of which agreement has been achieved on a significant number of questions. A complete and comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests is, as has been emphasized by many delegations, one of the most important conditions for progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Part of a comprehensive programme of disarmament should include the universal strengthening of the non-proliferation régime of nuclear weapons. We feel that that should be promoted by the conclusion of an international convention to strengthen guarantees of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. The commitment not to station nuclear weapons on the territory of States where there are no such weapons at the present time should be adopted and enshrined in a treaty. We think that all this should be reflected in a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The Ukrainian SSR has for many years now co-sponsored resolutions which have been adopted at General Assembly sessions on the question of banning the manufacture, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of their stockpiles. It is high time for this type of weapon of mass destruction to be eliminated. Naturally, that task should be included in a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The prohibition of the manufacture and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction would be an important measure. We do not exclude agreements that would ban certain types of systems of such weapons. Work should be expedited on the elaboration of an agreement on banning radiological weapons. And the neutron weapon should be resolutely and unreservedly banned.

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

It is no secret that even today certain persons are demanding the deployment of that weapon. Work has not ceased on its production, notwithstanding the far-reaching wave of protest and indignation that spread around the world.

Proposals for creating nuclear-free zones and zones of peace should be supported.

Urgent measures include the limitation and reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons. The Soviet Union, in particular, put forward a proposal that the permanent members of the Security Council and also countries having military agreements with them should renounce any expansion and increase of their conventional weapons. The proposal was made long ago that military bases on foreign territory be eliminated and that foreign troops be withdrawn from them.

Reducing military budgets would be one of the most concrete and effective ways of curbing the arms race and promoting the economic and social progress of peoples. Reducing the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council and States having large economic and military potential - whether expressed as a percentage or in absolute terms - is an important area for the efforts of States.

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

One should strive to reach agreement on the complete demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor.

A comprehensive programme of disarmament would be incomplete if it did not include regional measures for military détente and disarmament. An important role would be played by agreement between States which participated in the Conference on European Security not to be the first to use nuclear and conventional weapons against each other, as well as new confidence-building measures that would develop those measures agreed on at the Helsinki Conference.

A series of measures which are the most pressing at the present time as well as for the foreseeable future should give prominence to the elaboration of a universal treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, which would promote the strengthening of political and international legal guarantees for State security. We note that a United Nations Special Committee is dealing with this. We think that work should be expedited. Among the important elements of the programme we consider to be the idea, adopted on the initiative of the Polish People's Republic. Here I am referring to the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace. The thoughts expressed in it should be reflected in the document to be drawn up by this Commission.

We should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our conviction that the entire set of disarmament problems should, sooner or later, be examined in an authoritative forum, which is the world disarmament conference. It is from that forum that we expect cardinal progress in the field of disarmament.

Those are the thoughts of the delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic regarding the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

In order to achieve successful results in stopping the arms race - and that is only possible given goodwill and a sincere desire to do so - one can ask the question: What exactly is that path which was advocated in one statement and which would at first sight seem to be devoted to disarmament issues? That path reflects a definite policy, the outer shell of which is

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

lip service to disarmament, but which in actual fact undermines chances of elaborating and implementing an agreed programme of disarmament. It is in fact a way of camouflaging an intensive build-up of nuclear missiles and conventional weapons in order to pursue an out-and-out expansionist, hegemonistic policy which is a threat to international peace.

The peoples of the world condemn such a policy. They have opted for the path of peace and disarmament, and they are determined to travel that path.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR is ready actively to co-operate with all other delegations in order to achieve mutually acceptable agreed decisions, both in this Commission and in all other forums where disarmament issues are being discussed. That is the will of our people. They are interested in stable peace, in creative labour and in friendship among all peace-loving peoples of the world.

Mr. PEREZ HERNANDEZ (Cuba)(interpretation from Spanish): I shall take up the time of this meeting very briefly since we shall have almost 10 days for a detailed debate of all the elements that we can include in the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

First of all I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on once again presiding over the work of this Commission. My expressions are addressed also to your valued assistants, the other officers, All of you make our work proceed as though on smooth wheels, despite the pressure of time and the complexities of the problems to be dealt with. I am certain that the speed and clarity in taking decisions which have always been characteristic of you will assist us in discharging the mandate entrusted to us, and I reaffirm our delegation's complete co-operation with you.

I have noticed with great pleasure that the great majority of the speakers who have preceded me have taken very much into account the decisions reflected in the Final Document of the tenth special session devoted to disarmament, which means that in the time available to us our work may produce

(Mr. Perez Hernandez, Cuba)

a series of those elements which will in due course constitute the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

This is not the first time that the international community, as represented by the United Nations, has had the task of preparing a disarmament programme acceptable to all. Already in 1962 the 18-Nation Committee on Disarmament considered the joint proposals of the United States and the Soviet Union on principles that should be taken into account in disarmament negotiations. In its successive forms the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament considered numerous proposals, and all that represents a valuable fund of information. However, as regards the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, all attempts have proved fruitless. There is no doubt that in recent years the question of disarmament has increasingly interested a larger sector of world public opinion, the culmination of which, after the five preparatory sessions, was the holding of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament.

Once again the international community represented by the United Nations, because of the unbridled arms race which consumes astronomical sums diverted from the general development of peoples, has the very urgent mandate of considering and formulating the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The General Assembly, at its thirty-third session, adopted resolution 33/91 A in which it requested Member States to communicate their views and suggestions by 31 March 1979. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has received scores of replies, among them one from our country.

Since time is short, I shall refer only to those elements which I think should not be missing from a comprehensive programme of disarmament. The preparation of a programme that would win universal acceptance is at present our most urgent task, since it calls for the direction of the efforts of the international community towards the attainment of agreements on general and complete disarmament under effective international control, as outlined in 1959 by General Assembly resolution 1379 (XIV).

(Mr. Perez Hernandez, Cuba)

The programme to be prepared must contain concrete measures to be adopted within given time frames so as to accelerate our work. Such a programme must, of course, take into account the present political situation and, above all, the efforts made to put an end to the period of cold-war and open up possibilities for the relaxation of the international situation. In listening to the many statements made by speakers at this session, we have noted that they have taken into account the priorities determined by the General Assembly at its special session devoted to disarmament which reflect the most important elements that the majority of States consider to be most urgent.

(Mr. Perez Hernandez, Cuba)

In this way we can see that, in general, at the heart of the most effective measures of nuclear disarmament has been placed the cessation of the arms race as the first condition of a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

However, we have to emphasize the need in disarmament negotiations for all nuclear States, without exception, to participate. Otherwise, one cannot guarantee the universality of agreements. It is not superfluous to indicate that among the aspects to be considered is the need to halt the nuclear arms race; to prohibit the threat or use of nuclear weapons; to stop qualitative development of these weapons; to ban the production of all types of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials and so forth. It is also urgent to adopt a treaty that will totally prohibit any nuclear weapons tests.

Many speakers have welcomed the completion of SALT II, which it is hoped will be signed next June. It is our hope that this will pave the way for new agreements that will give confidence and security to peoples that they will not perish in a nuclear holocaust.

Following the order of priorities, we must refer now to the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction. This should be the subject of a treaty banning any production, development or stockpiling of this kind of weapon.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament cannot fail to include provisions on chemical and radiological weapons. On these items, studies have been prepared and negotiations are in progress which the sooner they are completed the better.

Another element of a comprehensive programme of disarmament is that of conventional weapons.

As regards the use of conventional weapons, and in particular those called inhumane, much has been said. The fundamental elements have been singled out, and it is to be hoped that the next conference, to be held in September, will provide us with concrete results.

There is one element that we consider to be among the objectives of disarmament, namely, regional disarmament and the relaxation of tensions, which should not be absent from a comprehensive programme. In discussing the regional aspects of disarmament, we shall have to take into account both national and international elements that have a direct bearing on negotiations. For example, a regional arrangement is not possible if some countries differ on fundamental questions, particularly those that concern their national security.

(Mr. Perez Hernandez, Cuba)

Among the elements for regional arrangements we have to take into account military pacts between States of a region and nuclear-weapon States. We must also proclaim the incompatibility of acts of hostility and aggression, whether they are military, economic or political, because otherwise we shall not make a real contribution to international peace and security.

A comprehensive programme of disarmament will not be complete unless it includes the reduction of military budgets. This reduction may be carried out, as was stated in this Commission, in absolute terms or in percentages. What matters is that there be no delay in applying that measure, which is so important for the developing countries, which hope that at some time the funds wasted on armaments may be diverted to their development.

As regards verification measures, to which some speakers have referred, it will be necessary to take into account that there will not be a single type of verification that can serve all cases, but, rather, each verification measure must correspond to a concrete, specific disarmament agreement.

At the last session of the General Assembly, we adopted a resolution on measures to strengthen confidence among States. Clearly, in an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, no positive results can be expected. We therefore consider that the atmosphere of détente must be strengthened and made irreversible and there must be guarantees that its benefits will extend to all peoples. This means that all States must renounce the use or threat of the use of force in the solution of disputes.

Lastly, we consider that a comprehensive programme of disarmament must include the idea that nobody can seize the opportunity to obtain military advantages at any of the stages of peace negotiations. Only with such political will translated into practice will it be possible to look forward to general and complete disarmament, that final goal that we are pursuing when considering the elements that are to constitute a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Mr. DUMÉVI (Ghana): Mr. Chairman, the Ghana delegation would like to associate itself with previous speakers in congratulating you on the able manner in which you have been guiding the deliberations of this Commission.

Ghana has forwarded its views and suggestions on the comprehensive programme of disarmament to the Secretary-General in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/91 A. These views are yet to be circulated. However, I have asked to be allowed to speak this afternoon to outline briefly the thinking of my Government on the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Ghana has always advocated a pragmatic step-by-step approach to disarmament negotiations because in our view the deep suspicion and mistrust between East and West clearly show that the goal of disarmament cannot be attained overnight. This policy stems from our belief that for a disarmament programme to be effective it is essential that the necessary trust be created between Member States. It is also our view that a successfully negotiated agreement cannot alone advance the course of disarmament, unless those involved have the necessary trust in each other. Ghana therefore believes that a comprehensive programme of disarmament should be directed towards creating that trust. Specifically, it should be aimed at reducing the level of arsenals in stages without disturbing the present security levels of States. In this way, we would have allowed time for the necessary confidence and trust to be created.

It is our view, therefore, that the first phase of a comprehensive programme of disarmament should concentrate on devising effective mechanisms for dealing with crisis situations by the establishment of adequate machinery for settling international disputes and enhancing the role of the United Nations and its peace-keeping operations. Specifically, we feel that the following measures need to be given very serious attention by this Commission: first, broadening the adherence to present international disarmament agreements; secondly, encouraging confidence-building measures; thirdly, encouraging a regional/bilateral approach to disarmament, including the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones; and, of course, sincere collective efforts aimed at halting any attempts at frustrating this objective, particularly in areas of tension such as Africa; fourthly, halting the development of new weapons of mass destruction that may be based on new scientific principles, before they can be deployed; fifthly, considering concrete

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

steps to be taken with a view to evolving multilateral and balanced reduction of military budgets; sixthly, considering effective ways of exercising a restraining influence on suppliers and recipients in international transfers of conventional weapons; and, seventhly, evolving an international consensus on verification, so as to ensure that no particular country has an advantage over the others.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

It is our view that, depending on the success of this first phase, much more ambitious measures could then be taken. These might include: first, conclusion of an agreement among the nuclear-weapon Powers committing each of them not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against any State; secondly, conclusion of further strategic arms limitation agreements between the two major nuclear Powers followed by agreement by all nuclear Powers to limit and reduce their nuclear weapons and delivery systems; thirdly, an international agreement on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, particularly in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia; fourthly, conclusion of an international agreement on the reduction of conventional weapons and the reduction of military budgets; fifthly, conclusion of an international convention prohibiting the development and deployment of new weapons of mass destruction; and, sixthly, a convention on the total prohibition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space, on the sea-bed and in its environment.

It is Ghana's view that the second stage as we have outlined it here should represent a further step on disarmament negotiations reflecting the creation of mutual trust among member States.

Subsequent stages, in our view, should also centre on more radical measures. These could include, for instance, abolishing certain types of weapons, serious negotiation aimed at reducing armed forces to levels necessary for maintaining the internal security of States and, finally, a conference for drawing up a world peace agreement.

We believe that a comprehensive programme as we have briefly outlined it, indicating the various phases will ensure a co-ordinated approach to the various issues involved. It will also ensure that a solid base for a particular disarmament negotiation is laid before we proceed to more ambitious measures.

Mr. CARRASCO (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, may I first express the satisfaction of my delegation at beginning this first substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission under your chairmanship. Your experience in disarmament matters is a guarantee for the success of our work.

(Mr. Carrasco, Chile)

At the tenth special session of the General Assembly it was decided to reactivate the Disarmament Commission and give it a concrete mandate. It was also given an important role as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. It was precisely that decision to re-establish the Disarmament Commission which reflected the wish of the world community to contribute to halting the arms race. My delegation is certain that the Commission will constitute an important forum.

Furthermore, the Committee on Disarmament, which has now been enlarged, will continue to be the main multilateral negotiating body, as was established in the Final Document of the tenth special session. Furthermore, at that special session the work of the First Committee of the General Assembly was defined, and it was determined that

"The First Committee of the General Assembly should deal in the future only with questions of disarmament and related international security questions." (General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 117)

In summary I have mentioned the various parts of the disarmament mechanism which are to function in a co-ordinated fashion and to which my country attaches paramount importance. The agenda for our Commission which was approved the year before last at the organizational meetings and endorsed at the first meeting this week is made up of three main items. Last year it was also agreed that the first item which would receive priority at this session would be consideration of the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, and that is precisely the mandate of this Commission.

In this regard my delegation agrees with what other speakers have said to the effect that it is most desirable for this Commission at this time to devote itself to what has been expressly requested of it, namely, to consider the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, which is a formidable task no doubt. For that work the Final Document of the tenth special session will be of great use.

In this context my delegation believes it important to emphasize that an essential element of a comprehensive programme of disarmament is constituted by the basic principles intended to give greater vigour to political will, because without a political will there will be no genuine disarmament measures.

(Mr. Carrasco, Chile)

I shall now refer briefly to the specific items which, in our opinion, must be given priority in a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

First, it must be considered that nuclear disarmament is the most urgent task, and that is clearly expressed in the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament. In this task of achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility.

No doubt, within the framework of nuclear disarmament the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) play a preponderant role and the world has been pleased to see that the SALT II negotiations have reached their final stage. But these negotiations must continue on the limitation of strategic weapons so as to arrive at significant reductions and qualitative limitations of those weapons. That would represent an important step forward towards nuclear disarmament and towards the bringing into being of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Another element of a comprehensive programme must include all weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons.

Likewise, it is important to consider within the set of elements designed to achieve general and complete disarmament the limitation and reduction of the production and international transfer of conventional weapons.

Of course, the adoption of disarmament measures must be carried out in an equitable and balanced manner so as to guarantee the inherent right of States to their security.

At the same time, verification methods must not be overlooked as they are an essential part of disarmament measures since for any agreement on a disarmament programme it must be clearly established that there will be a process of verification so that the measures agreed to are in fact complied with. In this delicate matter, everything possible must be done to develop adequate methods and procedures which will not be discriminatory.

The Disarmament Decade so solemnly proclaimed in 1969 by the United Nations is about to come to an end. Regrettably, the objectives

(Mr. Carrasco, Chile)

then set by the General Assembly appear very remote today as there has been no interruption in the arms race and our goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control seems to be difficult to reach. My delegation feels that the time has come for action rather than for discussion.

(Mr. Carrasco, Chile)

In this context, we believe that the work of attaining a comprehensive disarmament programme is a most positive and important goal. In my delegation's view, we should emphasize the measures on which we can agree within a relatively short time so that we may come to the second special session devoted to disarmament, to be held in 1982, with tangible results.

Those, in brief, are the points my delegation wished to put before the Commission at this stage of its work. I have not dwelt at length on my country's position because in our reply to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (A/CN.10/1) my Government has already set forth its views on this subject of such far-reaching importance.

The CHAIRMAN: At this stage I should like to make a strong appeal to all members to try and see if we can start punctually at 10.30 and 3 o'clock tomorrow so that it may be possible to complete the list of speakers tomorrow. However, if for any reason we are not able to do so, we may require a meeting on Monday morning to complete the general exchange of views.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.