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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 20 May 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. VELLODI

(India)

Agenda item 4: (continued)

- (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
- (b) Consideration of the agenda items contained in section II of resolution 33/71 H, with the aim of elaborating, within the framework and in accordance with the priorities established at the tenth special session, a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament

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Agenda item 5:

- (a) Harmonization of views on concrete steps to be undertaken by States regarding a gradual agreed reduction of military budgets and reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries, noting the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly
- (b) Examination and identification of effective ways and means of achieving agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 4 (continued)

- (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
- (b) CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA ITEMS CONTAINED IN SECTION II OF RESOLUTION 33/71 H, WITH THE AIM OF ELABORATING, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED AT THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION, A GENERAL APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS ON NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT

Mr. SLANINA (Czechoslovakia): At the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic supported the resolution relating to the proclamation of the 1980s as a Disarmament Decade. We also proceeded from the fact that in the course of the first Disarmament Decade in the 1970s a number of significant results were achieved.

However, despite these results, a decisive positive turn in the disarmament negotiations has not been reached. The arms race goes on at the cost of great expenditures. Recently, moreover, we have witnessed an activization of the opponents of international détente. The militarist circles of imperialist States not only reject any further progress in the field of military détente, but even try to cast doubt on what has so far been achieved in that respect. The specific steps and decisions made by reactionary circles in recent months

(Mr. Slanina, Czechoslovakia)

are clearly aimed at increasing international tension and initiating another round of the arms race which would deal a grave blow to the process of international détente and the security of nations.

That is why in this complicated international situation we see the main task of the second Disarmament Decade as that of defending what was achieved in the field of disarmament in the 1970s and of making further progress.

The Warsaw Treaty countries, including Czechoslovakia, have submitted a whole range of concrete constructive disarmament initiatives and proposals, the implementation of which would represent the fulfilment of the goals of the second Disarmament Decade. In this context, we should like to draw attention to the following:

Since the greatest threat to international peace and security of nations is presented by nuclear weapons, we think it is necessary to begin, as soon as possible, negotiations on the halting of the manufacture of all types of nuclear weapons and on the gradual reduction of their stockpiles until their complete liquidation. A suitable basis for such negotiations is provided by the proposal of the socialist countries submitted at the beginning of 1979 in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament.

As long as arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons exist, it is necessary to strengthen the political guarantees of the security of States through international legal measures and to provide, through an appropriate international agreement, safeguards for the security of non-nuclear States that have renounced nuclear weapons and have no such weapons stationed in their territories. An important contribution in that respect would be made by concluding also an international agreement banning the deployment of nuclear weapons in territories where at present there are no such weapons.

(Mr. Slanina, Czechoslovakia)

Extraordinary importance is attached by us to the further limitation and reduction of the stockpiles of nuclear weapons and to their further qualitative limitation. In this process the security interests of all the parties involved must be taken into account.

(Mr. Slanina, Czechoslovakia)

While tackling the problem of nuclear weapons, it is necessary to adopt a number of further measures with a view to preventing their proliferation, especially by achieving the full universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, concluding an agreement on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and encouraging the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various regions of the world.

Of an extraordinary importance in the coming decade would be the conclusion of a general agreement prohibiting the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and of new systems thereof. Among these types of weapons, it is most urgent, in our opinion, to reach agreement on the banning of radiological weapons.

An important success of the second Disarmament Decade would be the conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the manufacture, stockpiling, deployment and use of neutron weapons.

A task of particular urgency is the conclusion of an agreement banning chemical weapons.

It is also necessary to strive to prevent the development of new conventional weapons of great destructiveness and to work out an agreement prohibiting or restricting the use of certain conventional weapons deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects.

A limitation and the subsequent reduction of the military presence in the Indian Ocean and the establishment in that region of a zone of peace would be of extraordinary importance for the reduction of tension in the region.

In the coming decade appropriate attention should be paid to the question of restricting the transfer of conventional weapons and the first concrete steps in that direction should be taken.

The achievement of progress in disarmament negotiations would be greatly facilitated by the reduction of military budgets, in absolute figures or in percentages, of States permanent members of the Security Council and of other militarily important States.

(Mr. Slanina, Czechoslovakia)

As a State situated in Central Europe, we attach special importance to the successful conclusion of the talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.

The strengthening and deepening of détente in Europe would be facilitated to a decisive degree by reaching progress in military détente. An important contribution to the fulfilment of the goals of the Second Disarmament Decade would be made by reaching an agreement among States participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe not to be the first to use against each other either nuclear or conventional weapons. Another contribution in that respect would be made by further expanding confidence-building measures in Europe. These and other questions of military détente could be considered by a conference of military détente in Europe pursuant to an initiative submitted recently by Poland's leader Edward Gierek.

An extraordinary contribution to the military détente on a world-wide scale would be made by convening, in the course of the 1980s, a world conference on disarmament. Given the prerequisite of the political readiness of States to assume specific commitments, the results of this conference, in view of their universal nature and full powers, could bring about a decisive positive turn in the question of disarmament.

The Czechoslovak delegation is convinced that by uniting the efforts of all peace-loving States and by resolving the above-mentioned problems, it is possible to halt the arms race, to reach a decisive positive turn in disarmament negotiations and to undertake a number of concrete steps towards reaching general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

(Mr. Slanina, Czechoslovakia)

In the interest of reaching the goals set forth for the Second Disarmament Decade, we are highly interested in the development and the application of the principles of international co-operation in this field formulated in the Declaration on International Co-operation for Disarmament (resolution 34/88), adopted on the initiative of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic by the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly and aimed at uniting the efforts of all States for the achievement of the desired progress. In view of the importance that we attach to the implementation of the aforementioned Declaration, we trust that the principles of that Declaration will find an appropriate reflection in the elements of the draft resolution that is to be prepared by this session of our Disarmament Commission and submitted to the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the French delegation is happy to see you again presiding over the debates of our Commission. We know the eminent role which you have played in the work of disarmament and we have in particular appreciated the authority and the competence with which you have guided the discussions we have had so far. A weight of experience allows us to be sure that the present session will be conducted under the best of conditions. To this end I extend to you my most sincere and friendly wishes.

Our debate concerns agenda items 3 and 4; but it would be difficult for my delegation to begin this discussion without first recalling an international situation which, from all the evidence, affects disarmament prospects. The events in Afghanistan have, in fact, seriously jeopardized the security and confidence without which this disarmament effort cannot make progress. The French Government therefore attaches primordial importance to a prompt settlement of the Afghan problem.



(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

We consider that such a settlement must ensure as an essential object that the Afghan people be allowed to determine freely their destiny outside the field of great-Power competition and without the presence of foreign troops. It is not therefore a question of imposing upon it a status that has not been freely chosen. On the other hand, it is incumbent upon the great Powers and upon Afghanistan's neighbour countries to undertake to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the country, not to interfere in its internal affairs and to refrain from establishing any military presence on its soil.

While the French delegation is rightly concerned about the present international situation, it attaches yet more importance to our Commission's mandate from the international community. My delegation can therefore give an assurance of its full co-operation in the tasks that lay before us here.

The consideration of agenda item 4 calls for us to present our views on the approach to disarmament and its general conditions. I refer in this respect to the declaration made on behalf of the Nine countries of the European Community. That declaration recalls the principles which must lay at the heart of our enterprise: security, the balance on which security depends, taking into account regional situations, international verification and the strengthening of confidence by appropriate measures.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

France's position with regard to the twin fields of nuclear weapons and conventional weapons is based on these principles.

With regard to the former, our position takes into account two factors that are of primordial importance.

First, the nuclear problem is marked by the overwhelming supremacy of the United States and the Soviet Union. These Powers have sought, through the strategic arms limitation negotiations, to control and restrain their quantitative and qualitative competition. We have welcomed that effort; we hope that it will be resumed and carried further, and that it will lead to effective measures on the reduction of their nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament, as such, remains in fact the responsibility of these two Powers and it will remain so as long as the disproportion between their arsenals and those of the other nuclear countries remains unchanged.

Furthermore, the approach to nuclear disarmament must take into account regional situations. In those areas of the world where nuclear weapons do not exist, their introduction would have dangerously destabilizing effects on peace. On the other hand, in the area of which France is a part, nuclear weapons, and therefore nuclear deterrents, have long constituted a factor tending to equilibrium and, therefore, to security. The reduction of nuclear weapons in this area could therefore only result from a specific process, one involving first of all, of course, the arsenals of the two major nuclear Powers.

As for conventional disarmament, it represents a major element of our undertaking and should be given appropriate status therein. Conventional weapons and the forces that deploy them, in fact, absorb the greater part of the resources devoted to defence, and all the conflicts that have occurred since the Second World War have involved conventional weapons.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The initiatives to be taken require, as we see it, a regional approach: it is up to the countries in a particular region to undertake among themselves, if they so desire, negotiations aimed at achieving disarmament measures relating to conventional weapons. It is also up to those countries to conclude with their arms suppliers appropriate agreements to limit such purchases.

It goes without saying that such decisions are basically the responsibility of those countries themselves.

However, although initiatives with regard to conventional disarmament require a regional approach, it seems to us that international disarmament bodies -- our Commission and the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva -- could also usefully examine, at the appropriate time, the principles, conditions and methods that would be most suitable for governing any regional disarmament efforts.

As for the relationship between nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament, this must be determined by the imperative need for maintaining security. Hence, the need to adjust the measures to be taken with regard to both types of disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, in order to maintain a balance and to avoid any destabilizing effect.

The French delegation attaches great importance to the task assigned to us here under agenda item 3. The declaration on the Second Disarmament Decade -- whose elements we are to prepare -- should, as we see it, have a special place among the statements of principle emanating from the General Assembly in the field of disarmament. This declaration is not intended to repeat the Final Document of the 1978 special session which remains the Charter of Disarmament. Nor is it intended to proclaim an over-all programme. That task has now been entrusted to the Committee in Geneva. The declaration we have been called upon to prepare should solemnly express the determination of the United Nations with regard to the primordial task of disarmament, and it should also, therefore, stimulate the interest and support of political forces and public opinion in all countries.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

To this end, the declaration should, in our opinion, describe the present status of the disarmament process; it should refer to the ongoing efforts that are being made; it should set forth fundamental principles, major objectives and prospects; it should, finally, affirm the commitment of the international community as a whole, as well as its rights and responsibilities. Disarmament is, in fact, the business of us all.

Thus, the document we are to prepare will contribute to continuing the process set in motion in 1978 at the General Assembly's tenth special session. Despite some disappointments and circumstances of which we are all aware, this impetus has, to a certain extent, been maintained. Progress has been achieved on certain concrete points, and further progress will be realized in the near future. There is, for example, the commitment of the Committee on Disarmament to engage in substantive negotiations and discussions, as indicated by the creation of working groups and, in this context, the opening of a preparatory phase of multilateral negotiations dealing with chemical weapons and radiological weapons. There are also the initiatives that have been taken to convene a European Disarmament Conference and, in this regard, the work of the forthcoming meeting in Madrid. Such developments allow us to hope that the General Assembly's special session in 1982 may be held in a renewed spirit of confidence, and that it will represent a major step forward in the Second Disarmament Decade.

Mr. SASTROHANDOYO (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, my delegation is indeed happy to see you again presiding over our deliberations as we continue our efforts at what may well be regarded in many respects as a crucial stage. We fully agree with what you said in your introductory remarks, when you stated that the results achieved in the recent past are far from satisfactory and, furthermore, negotiations in several endeavours toward disarmament have reached a stalemate. This despite the tenth special session, on disarmament, which adopted

(Mr. Sastrohandoyo, Indonesia)

the Final Document embodying a Programme of Action. These developments, in turn, have focused on the need for a fresh approach which would eschew the introduction of extraneous issues unrelated to our task and adopt a more constructive approach that would enable the Commission to generate a new momentum and play a positive role in advancing the process of disarmament. This is particularly so in view of the fact that even with regard to those issues which seemed susceptible of solution, no progress has been achieved. It is therefore incumbent upon us, at this stage, to show the necessary political will, and thus to justify the special role which the General Assembly, at its tenth special session, conferred upon our Commission.

During this brief intervention, my delegation would like to comment on agenda items 3 and 4 in a general way, while reserving its right to speak at a later stage on other issues inscribed on the agenda.

(Mr. Sastrohandoyo, Indonesia)

Indonesia has welcomed the General Assembly's designation of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. As is well known, the modest arms control measures of the last decade were conspicuous by their failure to halt and reverse the arms race - a task which has undoubtedly emerged as the most important one confronting us. The implications of this phenomenon of the arms race have indeed been manifold. One of its striking features is the constant risk of war that it entails, thus jeopardizing international peace and security. It is incompatible with efforts to establish trust and harmony between States, and it generally undermines the evolution of co-operative relationships among nations.

The main task of this decade is therefore the implementation of agreements on the cessation of the arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race, and removing the threat of a nuclear war. Negotiations in this regard should begin with a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons, the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons and its gradual reduction and ultimate elimination and the negotiation of a treaty on the banning of nuclear weapons. We believe that today more than ever before, in view of the gravity of the international situation to which several members have alluded, the ban on the use of these weapons has become an even more urgent necessity.

Furthermore, these measures should be supplemented by others for the cessation of the arms race. Among these, priority should be attached to further prohibitions of the use of the sea-bed and outer space for military purposes, renunciation by the permanent members of the Security Council and their allies of the expansion of their armies and the increase of conventional weapons, regional military disengagement by external Powers, and zones of peace in the Indian Ocean and other regions.

Finally, one of the important tasks of the international community during the Second Disarmament Decade is the mobilization of public opinion concerning the catastrophic consequences of an uncontrolled arms race and the imperative need for meaningful arms control and disarmament measures.

(Mr. Sastrohandoyo, Indonesia)

It is therefore essential to promote knowledge of and information about disarmament and thus contribute to the cessation of the arms race, which is an essential prerequisite to achieving the objective of general and complete disarmament. The Indonesian delegation is pleased to have received document A/CN.10/14, prepared by the delegations of Romania and Sweden, which stresses the need for reallocation of resources that would be freed by disarmament measures and which in turn could be used to promote the economic development of developing countries.

In conclusion, I would recall that several delegations which spoke in the deliberations earlier have referred to conventional disarmament. My delegation is fully aware of the increasingly dangerous and destructive capabilities of conventional weapons. In our opinion this question should be considered along with the question of nuclear disarmament, even though we realize that the pressing need for the latter is naturally greater. In this connexion, the documents submitted by Denmark and Spain constitute a useful basis for further consideration.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, it gives my delegation great pleasure to see you presiding over our work once more. The renewal of your stewardship testifies to the confidence that we all have in you.

The heavy agenda of our Commission is a sign of the urgent need to make new efforts for real and authentic disarmament. It is a sign also of the need to make positive recommendations in order to maintain the impetus in the negotiations on disarmament and to get the question of the reduction of military budgets out of the present deadlock.

The First Disarmament Decade has just concluded in a climate of tension and conflict, but this First Decade was not without some success in the sphere of weapons control. Several arms control agreements were signed or implemented in this period. A special session devoted

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

to disarmament was successfully organized, and it made possible the adoption by consensus of a document which establishes objectives and principles for the disarmament process and sets up a Programme of Action and negotiating machinery. The first Disarmament Decade also saw the implementation of policies aimed at improving the international situation and establishing greater confidence among States. All these successes seem to be threatened today because of the rivalry between politico-military blocs.

The Second Disarmament Decade is thus starting under not very favourable auspices. Our Commission, because of its universal membership and the mandate set for it by the General Assembly, should study this disturbing situation and make recommendations to promote a return to a climate which would be more favourable for disarmament negotiations.

For this, my delegation believes that the document which should serve as the basis for the resolution on the Disarmament Decade should set a certain number of goals to be achieved in the sphere of disarmament, in view of the urgency of the problems, the recommendations of the General Assembly and priorities defined in the Final Document.

My delegation considers in this respect that, first of all, we should have an assessment of the situation relating to disarmament negotiations. In fact, the threat currently hanging over the disarmament process is a reflexion of the precarious results achieved here. Disarmament agreements, it must be conceded, only affect peripheral problems. It suffices to stress that nuclear and conventional arsenals have never been so well stocked. Research and development continue at an ever growing rate. Nuclear tests continue freely. Hence, my delegation believes that the major task during the Second Disarmament Decade must be to orient negotiations towards true disarmament, to attack the underlying problems and particularly to halt and to reverse the arms race.



(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

A first step in this direction would be the conclusion within the near future of a treaty completely prohibiting nuclear tests. It is not too much to ask to propose that this agreement should be concluded in the first third of the Second Disarmament Decade. Another objective is the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the production and use of chemical weapons. This question has been pending for a long time, and it is high time now that it was brought to a conclusion.

Another problem, which only worsened during the First Decade, is that of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In fact, in the Middle East and in Africa this question has become so alarming that the General Assembly in its thirty-fourth session called for an inquiry into Israeli nuclear weaponry and the nuclear capacity of South Africa. In the case of the latter country, its apartheid policy is a danger to international peace and security. It is thus urgent that South Africa submit its nuclear installations to control by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Similarly, countries collaborating with South Africa in the nuclear field should put an immediate halt to such co-operation because they are threatening the status of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

My delegation believes, however, that proliferation of nuclear weapons can only be halted over the long term if the nuclear Powers fulfil the obligations into which they entered in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As long as the nuclear arms race continues, there will be great danger that the nuclear club will expand.

Now turning to the second point in our agenda relating to resolution 34/83 H, we should say that our country is very disturbed by the current worsening of the international situation. In fact, the great Powers are speeding up their preparations for war, increasing their military budgets and deploying new kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately, we must deplore the fact that it is the non-aligned countries that are running the risk of having to pay the bill for the warlike preparations of the super-Powers.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

It is the non-aligned countries which are the victims of military intervention or the threat of military intervention by the super-Powers. On one hand, they deny to small countries the right freely to choose their social and political system and on the other hand they endanger control by those countries over their own natural resources. Such acts constitute a serious threat to the security of small countries and a great danger for world peace.

With regard to the question of the reduction of conventional weapons and of armed forces, my delegation is aware of its importance, for it is conventional weapons which since 1945 have claimed the greatest number of victims. The approximately 100 conflicts which have occurred since the end of the Second World War led to massive and sometimes unrestrained use of conventional weapons. Thus, it is urgent that we deal with the problem of conventional weapons, particularly their development, production, deployment and transfer. In its paragraphs 81 to 86, the Final Document has defined the approach which must be taken in this area.

Moreover, the Final Document clearly established the responsibility of the States with the largest nuclear arsenals in the opening or the continuation of negotiations on the reduction of conventional armaments and of armed forces. In the view of my delegation, it is up to those great Powers to set an example by reducing the weapons which they have concentrated in certain regions of the world, in particular in Europe and the Indian Ocean.

Furthermore, following the recommendations of the Final Document, bilateral or regional negotiations must be undertaken wherever conditions are favourable, to reduce armed forces and conventional weaponry. All these negotiations must be guided by the principle of equal security for all States. Indeed, it would be misguided, in my delegation's opinion, to deprive certain States of the means to exercise their right to self-defence under the pretext of limiting the transfer of conventional weapons. Such a policy would have as a result the handing over of certain States, bound hand and foot, to armed intervention and destabilization. In the final analysis it would encourage the use of force in international relations, not eliminate it.

The third important item on our agenda is the question of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. We must recognize that this question is linked with the reduction of armed forces and of nuclear and conventional weapons. In fact,

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

four-fifths of the world's military expenditure is today absorbed by the conventional arms race.

For its part, the General Assembly recognized, in paragraph 89 of the Final Document, that

"Gradual reduction of military budgets on a mutually agreed basis, for example, in absolute figures or in terms of percentage points, particularly by nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant States, would be a measure that would contribute to the curbing of the arms race and would increase the possibilities of reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries." (A/S-10/4, para. 89)

The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to carry out, with the help of a group of experts, a study on the relationship between disarmament and development. This group is carrying on with its work and will present its conclusions to the thirty-sixth General Assembly session.

Furthermore, several countries have made proposals aimed at reducing military expenditures and at transferring the resources thus saved to developing countries.

Through President Senghor, Senegal has proposed the establishment of a five per cent tax on military expenditures, a tax which would be allocated for development assistance. This proposal, along with so many others, deserves thorough study.

As may be noted, it is neither the lack of directives nor the absence of concrete proposals which prevents progress in the area of the reduction of military budgets. In the view of my delegation, the obstacle lies in the will of rival military alliances to continue the arms race. The reduction of military budgets is feasible, for there already exists the example of the super-Powers during the 1960s.

Further, the group of experts on military budgets has prepared a standardized instrument for the publication of military budgets. This document can facilitate the useful exchange of information on military budgets and can create a climate of confidence leading to a reduction of military budgets.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

But it is important today that the great Powers add concrete actions to their declarations of intention. Instead of increasing their military budgets, they might, as a sign of good faith, freeze their military expenditures for a specific period.

Such a measure, if it were to be backed up by a reduction in armed forces or by a halt in the manufacture of certain weapons, would constitute real progress towards a reduction in military budgets. My delegation hopes that the present session of our Commission will make it possible for us to embark on a serious discussion of the question.

Mr. VENKATESHWARAN (India): Having had the privilege of joining these deliberations of the Disarmament Commission only yesterday, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate this opportunity to make a brief statement on some salient aspects to which the Indian delegation attaches importance. I must also express the satisfaction of my delegation at seeing you in the office of chairman at this second substantive session of the Commission. We see this both as a tribute to your considerable contribution in the field of disarmament and also as a signal honour to India.

As we prepare ourselves for the tasks that confront us in the Disarmament Commission, we cannot but be aware of the grave developments taking place around the world and of the serious setbacks which the cause of disarmament seems to have suffered recently. In the past few months, the nuclear-weapon States have taken a number of decisions and measures committing themselves to a further and more dangerous escalation in the quantity and quality of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in their arsenals.

As the Chairman rightly pointed out in his opening address,

"notwithstanding the realities of the world situation - possibly even because of them - it is important that we should strive even harder to explore ways and means of preserving and strengthening international peace and security." (A/CN.10/PV.25, p. 2)

An important aspect of the work of the Disarmament Commission at its present session will be the preparation of elements of a draft resolution on the

(Mr. Venkateshwaran, India)

1980s as the second Disarmament Decade. In this context it may be relevant to draw attention to the annual report of the Secretary-General for 1968-69, issued on the eve of the first Disarmament Decade, wherein, after deploring the continuing spiral of military expenditure and stockpiling of both nuclear and conventional armaments, the Secretary-General expressed the hope that States Members of the General Assembly "could establish a specific programme and time-table for dealing with all aspects of the problem of arms control and disarmament." The Decade of the 1970s is behind us, and it is the view of the great majority of Member States present here that substantive progress in disarmament has been painfully slow. The list of various specific measures or agreements reached in multilateral as well as bilateral forums is perhaps apposite and, in some instances, commendable as steps in the right direction, but the over-all expansion of the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States has far outweighed the above achievements in terms of its grave implications for the very future of mankind.

The task before the international community is therefore clear. My delegation believes that the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, which was unanimously adopted by all Members and which lays the foundations of an international disarmament strategy, should provide the basis for planning and action during the second Disarmament Decade. Our efforts during this Decade should be directed strictly within the framework of the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control and the highest priority objectives of the elimination of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. In its paragraph 45, the Final Document clearly identified the priorities in disarmament negotiations.

(Mr. Venkateshwaran, India)

Members will recall that at its first substantive session the Disarmament Commission, while adopting the objectives, principles and priorities of the Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament, had further agreed that

"During the first stage of the implementation of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, special attention should be given to the immediate cessation of the nuclear arms race and the removal of the threat of a nuclear war." (A/34/42, para. 11)

In order to ensure credibility and the urgency of the disarmament process itself it is important that negotiations be conducted on agreed specific measures in the field of disarmament with a view to completing them successfully during the Second Disarmament Decade. It is essential that we try to ensure that a time-bound programme of activities is worked out that will set the pace and inspire confidence in the capacity of this world body to serve the cause of humanity as a whole. Such a time-bound programme is essential if only because, in the long run, we shall all be dead, and we would like to see results in our own lifetime.

My Government has repeatedly stressed the need for the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is our firm view that such a treaty would be meaningless if it were not universally subscribed to, if it did not cover all weapon tests and if it did not have adequate provisions for safeguards to prevent breaches of the treaty. We have also proposed in the past that pending the conclusion of such a treaty all nuclear-weapon Powers should refrain from further testing of nuclear weapons. We regret however that even the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva has been reduced to a position of waiting for the tripartite negotiations to produce some tangible results. It is our conviction that the Committee on Disarmament must assert its proper role and take the initiative in examining the actual drafts of a possible treaty so that they could be concluded in time for the second special session on disarmament.

Over the years India has consistently argued that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of such weapons from the stockpiles of nuclear-weapon States. Pending that, all States possessing such weapons should give a binding

(Mr. Venkateshwaran, India)

commitment not to use such weapons under any circumstances. Nuclear disarmament and non-use of nuclear weapons are intimately related. It is necessary that our search for adequate guarantees from nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should not deflect us from our primary responsibilities of pressing for urgent measures on nuclear disarmament.

While we attach the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, we recognize the need for progress in the field of conventional disarmament as well. In this context we should like to state that while we support moves to control the spread of sophisticated conventional weapons, we are particularly anxious that the major Powers should set an example by embarking on genuine disarmament measures of their own. In order to reach an equitable solution, several non-aligned and third world countries have asked for a conference of major suppliers and recipient countries on the question. On regional disarmament, my delegation feels that progress would be best initiated in the most heavily armed theatre of the world, namely, Europe.

In spite of the positive and encouraging outcome of the special session devoted to disarmament and the persistent demand of the peoples of the world for an end to the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field, and for the establishment of international relations based on peaceful coexistence, co-operation and understanding, the decade of the 1980s has started with ominous signs of even further escalation in the arms race. It is clear that if the emerging trend is to continue and meaningful efforts are not made to check and reverse this trend, international tensions will be exacerbated and the danger of war will become greater than even the pessimistic assessment of the special session on disarmament had foreseen. It is ironic that while intensive discussions are under way in various forums on global economic problems and on the depletion of resources available for coping with present international economic problems, proposals for an increase in resources devoted to the unproductive and wasteful arms race are being made by the same group of countries that have been complaining of economic recession.

(Mr. Venkateshwaran, India)

The close link between disarmament and development has been underscored in the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament, which emphasized that the

"... resources released as a result of the implementation of disarmament measures should be devoted to the economic and social development of all nations and contribute to the bridging of the economic gap between developed and developing countries". (A/S-10/4, para. 35)

It is, therefore, only appropriate that simultaneously with the declaration of the Third United Nations Development Decade in the 1980s, the Second Disarmament Decade has also been proclaimed.

An essential condition for progress in the field of disarmament is the preservation of international peace and security and the promotion of trust and confidence among States. The non-aligned countries all along have played a leading role in the activities of the Disarmament Commission right from the enunciation of the proposal at the special session on disarmament in 1978. At its last summit in Havana the non-aligned countries reaffirmed the importance of strengthening détente to make it an irreversible process in favour of a just and lasting universal peace which must entail, inter alia, the halting or reversing of the arms race, particularly of the nuclear arms race, and the urgent implementation within a specified time-frame of the Programme of Action, particularly of the nuclear disarmament measures contained in the Final Document of the tenth special session.

Mrs. MAVCHA (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the People's Republic of Mongolia would like to express its satisfaction that the work of this session of the Commission is once again being presided over by you, Mr. Chairman, the representative of a country with which our country has most friendly relations.

The General Assembly, at its thirty-fourth session, asked the Commission to consider several questions; amongst others, to prepare elements for a draft resolution proclaiming the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.



(Mrs. Navcha, Mongolia)

The People's Republic of Mongolia, inspired by its position of principle, of maintaining peace and security amongst peoples, of limiting the arms race and ensuring disarmament, constantly supports every effort to implement the tasks relating to disarmament. It is in that context that the Mongolian delegation views the proposal that the 1980s should become the Second Disarmament Decade. It attaches great importance to the elaboration by the Commission of the elements for a draft resolution on this question.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Mongolia fully supports the idea that in the 1980s we should maintain and develop the positive results that were achieved in slowing down the arms race. I think we have already achieved a great deal, if we consider certain specific agreements and understandings excluding or reducing types of weaponry from whole parts of the earth. Certain of the results may be considered by some to be modest, and my delegation can understand the disappointment felt by certain delegations here, but I think it would be unfair to deny everything that has been achieved in this respect. Such an attitude, in the view of my delegation, would prevent us from an objective appreciation of the situation relating to the slowing down of the arms race and of disarmament, which would have a negative impact on the determination of realistic tasks awaiting us in the years ahead. Much has to be done to bring about disarmament, as has been shown recently. An unbridled arms race could lead to a reduction in political détente and would threaten not only talks on disarmament but could render meaningless agreements already achieved.

(Mrs. Navcha, Mongolia)

Those opposed to détente and disarmament persist in worsening the international situation and speeding up the arms race. As evidence of this we have the last session of the committee on military planning of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which confirmed the previous NATO decisions to ensure unilateral military superiority, to the detriment of the principle of the equality and identical security of all parties. NATO's policy is aimed at speeding up the arms race and undermining talks on disarmament, leading to a confrontation with the socialist States. Such a policy would doubtless have disastrous results for the peace and security of peoples.

The People's Republic of Mongolia is also very concerned at the activation of aggressive military forces in Asia. The shadows of the past are once again resurgent in long-suffering Asia. The forces of great-Power hegemonism and imperialism have concluded a dangerous alliance which is a threat, not only to neighbouring States, but to the continent as a whole. Therefore, in our view, efforts should be increased to ensure disarmament and halt the arms race. All States should work together to this end and a primary role should be given to efforts by strong military Powers, particularly the nuclear Powers. Without minimizing the primary role which can be taken and the example that can be given by the great Powers in the field of disarmament, we consider it incorrect to think that certain Powers should disarm and that the others can do nothing until they have decided themselves that it would be useful to take part in disarmament talks.

As far as disarmament efforts in the 1980s are concerned we feel that States should adopt bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the danger of nuclear war, as that would be a very important step in strengthening international peace and security. To that end, in our opinion, it is necessary firstly to reach an agreement by all States on the reduction of nuclear weapons in all forms and the gradual reduction of all reserves until they are entirely liquidated. In that connexion it is very important to note the initiative taken by the socialist countries, as put forward in the Disarmament Committee, namely to undertake negotiations to curtail the production of and to liquidate nuclear weapons with the participation of all States of military significance, in particular all States with nuclear weapons.

(Mrs. Davcha, Mongolia)

The conclusion of an agreement on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing should be one of the major measures of the new decade, since such an agreement would make it possible to put an end to the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and thus prevent the appearance of new types. Measures aimed at heightening the effectiveness of the agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, ensuring its completely universal character, are very important. In preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons, international agreements are very significant and should take a juridically binding form, so that all States should agree not to emplace nuclear weapons on their territories where no such weapons exist at the present time. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace, including the zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, represents one more measure aimed at limiting nuclear arms waste and at increasing détente and strengthening international peace and security at regional and world levels.

The rapid ratification of a second Soviet-American agreement on limiting strategic offensive weapons and the undertaking of negotiations on SALT III are of very great significance in limiting the arms race. We should also direct attention to the question of prohibiting the development and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. The conclusion of an international convention on that matter would assist the limitation of the arms race in its most dangerous aspects. It is necessary to conclude international conventions which would prohibit the production and deployment of neutron weapons, on the basis of the draft convention which the Committee already has before it. It is also necessary to prohibit radiological weapons at the same time. The time has come to prohibit the development, production and accumulation of reserves of chemical weapons, and to destroy and thus fully eliminate from the arsenals of States this type of weapon of mass destruction which is designed exclusively to destroy human beings and all other forms of life. Effective measures to limit and reduce armed forces and conventional weapons must also be provided, since the intensive improvement of such weapons makes their application that much more dangerous. A reduction in military budgets could be a real disarmament measure too. In order to implement that task it is necessary first to achieve agreement among the States members of the Security Council and other States possessing major economic and military potential, on concrete measures for reducing their military budgets.

(Mrs. Navcha, Mongolia)

We feel that a comprehensive disarmament programme will be worked out and developed in the new Disarmament Decade. Achievement of agreement on the cardinal questions of disarmament would promote the adoption of parallel measures to strengthen international political guarantees of States' security. To that end it is necessary in the first place to conclude a universal agreement on the non-use of force in international relations which would prohibit all forms and uses of all weapons, above all nuclear ones. It is also necessary to work out in the Disarmament Commission an international convention strengthening the guarantees of the security of the non-nuclear States, under which the participants would undertake not to use nuclear weapons against States which refuse to produce or acquire nuclear weapons and do not have any on their territories.

To examine the questions of disarmament in their entirety and to adopt effective measures with respect to them, it is necessary to have a truly universal forum, with participation by all States. A world-wide disarmament conference would be such an authoritative forum. The convocation of such a conference should be one of the major steps taken during the Second Disarmament Decade.

(Mrs. Navcha, Mongolia)

It is necessary to mobilize world public opinion also in order to curb the arms race and to foster disarmament. Thus, in our opinion, it is necessary to make the maximum use of the communication media, as indicated in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. We feel that having a Disarmament Week every year would also help to meet that goal.

My delegation is profoundly convinced that the implementation of constructive proposals to curtail the arms race and promote disarmament as set forth by the parties to the Warsaw Treaty at the meeting of the political Consultative Committee on 15 May of this year and also other important initiatives undertaken by those States recently with respect to the practical efforts to strengthen the process of disarmament on the European continent and to strengthen confidence among the States of that continent, will without doubt promote the diminution of tension not only in Europe but also in other regions and promote the strengthening of the peace and security of all peoples. Therefore the Mongolian delegation fully supports those proposals and initiatives and hopes that other States also will be very attentive to the steps undertaken, particularly in the light of the preparation of the elements of a draft resolution proclaiming the decade of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now completed the list of speakers on item 4. Some delegations have requested that they be permitted to exercise their right of reply. While I certainly should not wish to impose any restraints in that regard, I would appeal to those speakers to make their statements brief so as to help expedite our work. I shall now call on them.

Mr. SOUTHICHAK (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): The representative of the United States in his statement at a previous meeting of the Commission made slanderous allegations against the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The allegation by the United States

(Mr. Southichak, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

of the use of chemical weapons might lead one to forget what was done in the war of aggression by the United States against my own country, but the representative of the United States cannot try to shirk United States responsibility for using during that war of aggression chemical weapons against the Lao people and against its territory.

I do not intend here to go into the ecological consequences of the use by the United States of various chemical agents against Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea but I should like to say that it was only the United States that dared to wage chemical warfare on a large scale against the environment of the people of the countries of Indo-China. Laos, a country with 3 million inhabitants, needs in this post-war era as many hands as possible in order to reconstruct the country after the devastation created by that imperialist war. Therefore why would we resort to such weapons?

Similar charges were made against Kampuchea, but in this respect the United States representative deliberately ignored the results of the studies carried out by the International Committee of the Red Cross in a Geneva laboratory on blood samples taken last March from patients treated on the Khmer-Thai border, which showed that no trace of the use of such weapons was found in those samples. These charges by the United States are aimed at camouflaging the crimes of genocide against the peoples of Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea and are a manoeuvre it is carrying out, after its dirty war against Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea, aimed at continuing to spread discord and to interfere even more crudely in the internal affairs of those countries. My delegation energetically rejects such slanders by the representative of the United States and would also like to say that the crime of genocide committed by the United States can never be wiped out by slanderous propaganda.

Mr. SHUSTOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Using the right of reply, the Soviet delegation would like briefly to set forth its views on statements made by certain delegations in which the policies of the Soviet Union have been presented in an improper and incorrect light and in which assertions have been made which are entirely devoid of any foundation in view of the true situation.

First of all, we cannot agree in any way with the thesis advanced by certain speakers here to the effect that both the United States and the Soviet Union, both the NATO countries and the Warsaw Treaty countries, bear responsibility for the arms race and the increased tension in various regions of the world. The facts themselves show that such assertions are incorrect from beginning to end. This is quite easy to demonstrate from the example of the Indian Ocean, which has been mentioned here and which is indicative of the situation in other regions also. It is well-known that the Soviet Union has never undertaken any actions that would represent a threat to the States of the Indian Ocean. It has not created and is not creating there any military bases and it is not undertaking any military demonstrations. In contrast to that, the United States has declared the vast area of the Indian Ocean a sphere of its vital interests, it has concentrated there important units of its Navy, it is expanding its military base on the island of Diego Garcia and it is trying to implant new military bases in Africa and the Persian Gulf. In supporting the idea of creating a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, the Soviet Union undertook negotiations with the United States on mutual limitation of the military activities of both countries in that area. The United States broke off those negotiations. In the summer of last year the Soviet Union proposed a resumption of those negotiations, but the United States refused. In the light of these facts, if one is to speak about competition between these two States, it could only mean competition between two opposite political courses, one aiming at the strengthening of peace in the Indian Ocean and the other at the transformation of areas of that ocean into an arena of the arms race.

(Mr. Shustov, USSR)

Who could be misled by attempts to justify the expansion of the United States military presence in the Indian Ocean by the events in Afghanistan? Only those who do not know that the United States military base on Diego Garcia and the United States warships in the Persian Gulf appeared long before those events; only those persons who may have forgotten that the Soviet-American negotiations on the Indian Ocean were interrupted at a time when no one had even mentioned Afghanistan yet.



(Mr. Shustov, USSR)

Such efforts of American representatives to justify by the events in Afghanistan the delay for an indefinite period in the ratification of the SALT II Treaty are also pointless. This agreement, which is so important for the whole world, has been dragged into a swamp of endless and purposeless discussions in the American Senate, and this had already begun in the autumn of last year when there was still no question of anything happening in Afghanistan. Obviously, recognizing that their own position was shaky, the representatives of the United States - as they always do in such cases - undertook to resort to completely improbable inventions, similar to the statement made here yesterday about the possible use of poisonous substances in Afghanistan, Laos and Kampuchea.

In the recent past chemical weapons were in fact used on the Asian continent against persons and against the environment. They were used, as is known, by the American armed forces on the territory of Viet Nam and other countries of Indo-China.

Certain of those who have spoken here have mentioned the theme of Afghanistan. In this connexion, anyone who sincerely desires a political settlement of the situation concerning that country should direct his attention very firmly to the recent proposals consisting of seven points made by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. This far reaching and constructive initiative is a good basis for the elimination of tension in the Middle East and for the establishment of peaceful and good neighbourly relations among the countries of that area. This can be ignored only by persons who are deliberately striving to heat up the atmosphere around Afghanistan and thereby to retain the situation as an excuse for their own actions against détente in international relations, actions designed to force the tempo of the arms race.

Mr. CU DINH BA (Viet Nam) (interpretation from French): Recently, in close correlation with China and the reactionaries at its service, the United States launched false and slanderous allegations of the use of toxic chemical weapons in Laos and Kampuchea. It is clear that by this act the United States wishes to mislead public opinion and conceal the successive war crimes and crimes of genocide committed in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The United States is evading its responsibility for the crimes it perpetrated against the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea, as well as its responsibility to the victims of chemical warfare among its soldiers and those of its allies that took part in the war of aggression in Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea.

The fascist plot by the United States will fool nobody. The genocidal crimes committed by the United States against the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea cannot be effaced by deceit and calumny. My delegation categorically rejects the slanderous allegations made by the United States against my country.

The CHAIRMAN: We have now completed the general exchange of views on item 4. We have heard some thirty-nine statements in this exchange of views and we should at this stage establish the method of following up our work on item 4, in order to decide on our report to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly on this particular item.

As Chairman I have had fairly wide ranging consultations and have also discussed this matter with the officers of the Commission. My understanding is that there is, at least among those whom I have consulted, a general desire that the continued consideration of item 4 should be in informal meetings of the Commission, which will begin after we have completed the general exchange of views on item 5. In other words, as far as item 4 is concerned, we shall not be setting up a working group, as was done for item 3. Here the general view seems to be that item 4 is a comprehensive item, and to that extent somewhat different from item 3. I have also been requested personally to preside over the meetings of the informal exchange of views in the Commission on item 4. It is possible that, after an informal exchange of views on that item, which could last perhaps for three or four meetings, it

(The Chairman)

might become necessary for us to set up a drafting group on it. I have been requested to preside over the meetings of the drafting group as well.

If this suggestion is generally acceptable, I am personally prepared to go along with it. It is my view that on item 4 there is a need for informal consultations because at the moment many of us are perhaps not quite clear on the form and content of our report on this item to the General Assembly. I think some constructive suggestions have been made during the exchange of views, and perhaps we might take a couple of days for informal consultations on this item before the informal meetings of the Commission begin. In any case, the formal exchange of views on item 5, which it is my intention to begin today, will continue certainly tomorrow and possibly even the day after. In this connexion I should once again like to appeal to all delegations who wish to speak on item 5 to inscribe their names with the Secretary if they have not already done so.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the suggestion I have made regarding the follow-up work on item 4 is generally acceptable.

It was so decided.

## AGENDA ITEM 5

- (a) HARMONIZATION OF VIEWS ON CONCRETE STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY STATES REGARDING A GRADUAL AGREED REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS AND REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES NOW BEING USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, NOTING THE RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
- (b) EXAMINATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF EFFECTIVE WAYS AND MEANS OF ACHIEVING AGREEMENTS TO FREEZE, REDUCE OR OTHERWISE RESTRAIN, IN A BALANCED MANNER, MILITARY EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING ADEQUATE MEASURES OF VERIFICATION SATISFACTORY TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED

Ms. GONTHIER (Seychelles): Let me take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you on the competent job you are doing. My country has friendly and warm relations with yours and I am sure you know that my President has just concluded a successful State visit to India.

I know the world is well aware of our position on the dismantling of all foreign bases in the Indian Ocean and the world should be equally well aware of our strong support for making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. It is not our wish to address ourselves to those issues today. Rather, I should like to confine my statement to item 5 (a) of the agenda.

The Government of Seychelles commends the endeavours of the United Nations to obtain a gradual reduction of military budgets and the reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development programmes, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

It is imperative, however, that the declaration of the Second Disarmament Decade should include a programme incorporating targets for the accomplishment of objectives and goals of disarmament. The Government of Seychelles appeals for global concertation at the highest level over the Brandt Commission Report, from which the Government of Seychelles notes with concern that while the annual world military expenditure is \$450 billion, official development aid account for less than five per cent of that figure. This preoccupation of the big Powers and their allies in accruing as many arms as their thirst for supremacy permits is indeed a major concern of the Non-Aligned Movement and was not over-stressed during the Havana Summit last year by President Castro.

(Ms. Gonthier, Seychelles)

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles is convinced that effective disarmament measures should release resources from the unproductive arms race for economic and social programmes, and in particular for international economic co-operation. However, the Government of the Republic of Seychelles also profoundly believes that gradual disarmament can only be achieved if the developed countries change their policy of fostering tensions in the developing world to protect their imperialist interests to the benefit of their arms industry.

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles wishes to reiterate that it makes no difference whether a human being is killed in war or is condemned to starve to death because of the indifferences of others, who squander their wealth in the arms race.

Despite the excruciating cry of the Third World countries for increasing economic aid, the developed countries should discard all pretensions of charity towards the Third World countries and adopt a frank attitude of interdependence in unabashed acknowledgement of the fact that 60 per cent of world exports of major agricultural and mineral commodities originate from the Third World. Without a fundamental re-organization of international economic systems, increased economic aid will be to no avail. However, it must be borne in mind that the majority of mankind will not indefinitely live in a state of bare survival while a few societies grow opulent at their expense.

In concluding, I wish to stress my Government's support for the endeavours being undertaken by the United Nations towards obtaining a gradual reduction of military budgets and the reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development programmes and to reiterate that any positive action in that respect must entail implementation of practical reforms aimed at a New International Economic Order and the discontinuation of the unproductive and annihilatory practice of military build-up by the big Powers and their allies.

Mr. PFEIFFER (Federal Republic of Germany): First and foremost, Mr. Chairman, I should like to express my delegation's satisfaction that the United Nations Disarmament Commission can convene once more under your experienced chairmanship. We are all aware of the dedication you have shown to the goal of our common efforts.

The positive results reached by the Commission's first substantive session in 1979 are very much due to your untiring efforts in bringing about a consensus and finding ways to compromise. This personal commitment of yours and of the members of the Bureau inspires my delegation with the confidence that this year's substantive session will achieve an equally positive result.

The results of last year's substantive session were the more encouraging as they fully corresponded with the concepts laid down in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, while establishing the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body entrusted, inter alia, with the task of designing the general outlines of the process of disarmament. The Disarmament Commission, which is open to all States Members of the United Nations, has its own significant role to play as a forum in which every State may contribute to the progress of arms control and disarmament.

The elements of a comprehensive programme on disarmament, which were adopted by the Commission last year, have been referred to the Committee on Disarmament for further consideration. Accordingly, the Committee on Disarmament has set up a special working group with the task of elaborating a comprehensive programme on disarmament.

The agenda of the present session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is long and comprehensive. Considering that during last year's first substantive session the Commission was able to finalize only one item on its agenda, namely "Elements of a Comprehensive Programme on Disarmament", doubts seem to be justified as to whether the Commission will be able this year, during its second substantive session, to deal successfully with all the items on its agenda.

(Mr. Pfeiffer, Federal  
Republic of Germany)

Some thought should be given to what realistically can be achieved during this session. At the same time, it may be advisable to concentrate our efforts - as last year - on one or two items of our agenda and to work out concrete recommendations. This would mean making the best use of the limited time at our disposal and the somewhat limited conference facilities as well.

My delegation supported the view that we concentrate first on item 3 of our agenda, "Preparation of the elements of a draft resolution entitled 'Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade'".

This item is not only the first substantive one on our agenda, but in scope and nature it also bears resemblance to the subject considered by the Commission in last year's session. Taking into account the experiences gained in the United Nations Disarmament Commission by working out during its 1979 substantive session the elements for a comprehensive disarmament programme, it is most appropriate that the Commission take up item 3 on its agenda first.

We have, therefore, welcomed your proposal, Mr. Chairman, to set up an open-ended working group to deal with item 3 of our agenda. We have no doubt that the working group, under the experienced and able leadership of Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria, will do a good job. I can assure him of the full support of my delegation.

(Mr. Pfeiffer, Federal  
Republic of Germany)

Items 4 and 5 of our agenda, with their subdivisions A and B, cover a wide range of disarmament matters. It seems to me that there is also some overlapping between the two items. For example, in each of them reference is being made to limitation and reduction of military expenditure. This is another area which could, in the opinion of my delegation, be taken up by the Commission on a priority basis. The pilot study which is under way for the elaboration and testing of a standardized and verifiable reporting system for military expenditures focuses particular attention on this field.

My delegation believes that the discussion of this item in the Disarmament Commission could contribute to a successful outcome of the study. The Federal Republic of Germany has been actively taking part in this project and has supported it from the very beginning. I should like to express my country's hope that further deliberations of this question in the Commission will induce States from other regional groups to participate in the test as well.

With regard to conventional weapons, my delegation welcomes the two working papers, A/CN.10/12 introduced by Spain and A/CN.10/13 introduced by Denmark. We propose a careful study of the suggestions contained in these two documents.

We notice with satisfaction that the reactions in the United Nations Disarmament Commission so far with regard to the two documents indicate a growing preparedness of Member States to give the question of conventional weapons the attention it deserves. Being one of our recognized priority items, it has so far not been given the treatment it deserved. My delegation hopes that as a result of the initiative taken by Spain and Denmark, and with the support of the other members of this Commission, the item "conventional weapons" will be dealt with in future more specifically and more thoroughly.



(Mr. Pfeiffer, Federal  
Republic of Germany)

Finally, let me state the following with regard to the items of our agenda to which I have referred. Some delegations critically commented on decisions taken recently in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Unfortunately, no reference was made to the already existing and growing superiority in Soviet medium-range systems, nor to the parallel proposal of the Allies for American-Soviet negotiations on the limitation of medium-range systems on both sides. This offer is part of a broad range of proposals in the field of arms control and confidence-building which are still on the table.

It is regrettable that all these proposals have not yet found a positive reply, and that the Soviet Union continues to deploy modern weapons systems at a rapid pace, thereby diminishing the chances for agreed limitations on medium-range systems.

Sober and responsible negotiations with the aim of strengthening security and ensuring that force will no longer be a means of achieving political objectives, is today more imperative than ever before.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania)(interpretation from French): The continuing interest which Romania, like other countries, has in the problem of freezing and reducing military budgets is well known. It reflects a profound concern over the increasingly frenzied arms race fed by the gigantic increases in military budgets. The level, the rhythm and the innumerable negative consequences attendant on these expenses create a climate of instability and mistrust, stimulate the use of force and the threat of force in relations among States, endanger international peace and security, and create serious obstacles to the economic and social progress of peoples and to the solution of problems upon which the future of mankind itself depends.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

The analysis of international life made at the Twelfth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, held last November, noted as one of the particularly disquieting factors of the present day the fact that in many countries the rate of increase in national income is less than the annual percentage of increase in military expenditures. And this tendency has become even more evident since that time. Whereas in many countries economic activity is continually decreasing, and while the economic, energy, financial and raw-materials crises continue to grow more acute and the phenomenon of underdevelopment to worsen with every month, increasingly large material and human resources are being squandered for destructive purposes.

Furthermore, the rapid rate of research and technological improvement by the major military Powers in turn stimulates the exorbitant increase of such expenses.

As the Secretary-General of the Romanian Communist Party, the President of Romania Nicolai Ceausescu, emphasized in his report to the abovementioned Congress:

"In reality, life shows that the situation in which military expenditures are overtaking the growth in national income cannot continue much longer... It is obvious to any rational person that the only solution for overcoming the great difficulties of the world economic crisis resides in the resolute promotion of an economic policy based on a radical change in the relationship between expenses for development and expenses for armaments, on an orientation towards the use, in the first place, of national income for the purpose of accelerating the economic and social progress of peoples, to increase their material and spiritual standard of living."

Far from instilling in us a feeling of resignation or causing us to doubt the usefulness of effective action in this area, the serious phenomenon confronting us should serve rather to stress the highly urgent and pressing need, as a part of

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

any practical measures aimed at halting the arms race, for freezing and reducing military budgets. This is an imperative task, however difficult its accomplishment may be.

Given the great dangers implicit in the present level of military spending, the alternative is to redouble the efforts of States, in the letter and spirit of the Final Document of the tenth special session, particularly its paragraphs 89 and 90, to bring an end to this situation, to halt and reverse the irrational spiral of military expenditure before it becomes irreversible.

Faithful to its firm decision to contribute to the negotiation and solution of disarmament problems, Romania has frequently submitted, both to the United Nations and to other international bodies, concrete proposals for a halt to the arms race and for the freezing and reduction of military budgets. Many of these proposals have been embodied in the documents referred to in the Final Document of the special session, paragraph 125 (a) and (1). On the initiative of Romania and other countries, the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session adopted resolution 34/83 F, expressing the concern of States at the increasing growth of military expenditures and emphasizing that:

"a new impetus should be given to endeavours to achieve agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures." (resolution 34/83 F, para. 1)

We continue to be guided by this necessity in our approach to the agenda item we are at present discussing.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Resolution 34/33 F requests the Disarmament Commission to undertake during 1980 to examine and identify effective ways and means of achieving agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain military expenditures. The terms of this resolution are particularly clear about the way in which our exchange of views on this problem should be undertaken. They should be interpreted, without any doubt, as an appeal for concrete action. Our Commission is expected to submit to the next session of the General Assembly a whole series of recommendations which will orient the efforts of the United Nations in respect of military budgets.

Animated by the desire to make a useful contribution to the stimulation of debates on this matter and to derive from them conclusions of practical value, the Romanian delegation, jointly with the delegation of Sweden, has submitted working paper A/CN.10/14 on the freezing and reduction of military budgets. In elaborating this working paper, we based ourselves on the idea that the ultimate aim of our efforts must be that set forth in its title.

Despite the initiatives and efforts of States, as indicated by the many resolutions adopted by the General Assembly over the years, negotiations and even more far-reaching debates on the freezing and reduction of military budgets have never yet been undertaken. This is even more difficult to understand and accept in view of the advantages that would accrue from the inclusion of this topic among the urgent and priority disarmament problems. As we have already remarked, regardless of the form it takes, a freeze followed by a subsequent reduction of military budgets depends even more than other disarmament measures on the political will of States. It does not require any more complex negotiations relating to equivalence among different categories of arms the purpose of which is to achieve or maintain military balance.

(Mr. Marinescu Romania)

Agreements on freezing and subsequent reduction of military budgets would serve at the same time to increase confidence among States and to open the door to political decisions in respect of disarmament. Such agreements would limit not certain categories of weapons only but the whole military potential of States parties, since military budgets represent the basic indicator of the power and the military efforts of a State.

While the direct conclusion of an agreement on the reduction of military expenditures might be difficult, the adoption of intermediate measures would, on the other hand, tend to facilitate the setting in motion and carrying forward of the negotiation process. That is why we feel that States Members of the United Nations could reaffirm in the form of a Declaration their will and their common commitment to adopt individually or collectively effective measures to freeze and gradually reduce their military expenditures, together with the decision that until the achievement of this objective States will exercise moderation in their military expenditures, in conformity with the appeal contained in resolution 34/83 F.

In our opinion such a declaration would be an important step of great political significance, both in respect of the freezing and reduction of military budgets and in the larger sphere of disarmament itself. At the same time, while bringing together the experience accumulated over the years in the various United Nations debates on the topic of military budgets, the declaration should contain the basic principles of negotiation and the practical implementation of agreements on the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

Among these principles a special place should be reserved for respect for the equal security of all States. As we see it, the freezing and reduction of military budgets should not be detrimental to the security of any State and should not create any unilateral advantages for any one State or group of States.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Basing ourselves on the provision in the Final Document of the Special Session to the effect that

"...the objective should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces", (resolution S-10/2, para.29) we feel that the reduction of military expenditures offers us a modality for attaining this objective.

The declaration should also give expression to the necessity that negotiations as well as the process of the reduction of military expenditures itself start in the States which are most heavily armed, in view of their primordial responsibility for disarmament. These States are at the highest level of the spiralling military budget process, and thus their weight and their policies in this area will determine the rate and the evolution of military expenditures among other countries. It is obvious that adoption of measures to freeze and reduce military budgets by such States could be particularly effective in increasing confidence and in reducing the arms race.

It seems to us very important that the text of the declaration reaffirm the relation between the reduction of military expenditures and efforts for development on the national or international level. The sums released by such measures to reduce military budgets and expenditures could be used in support of peaceful activities by the countries undertaking such measures and to augment international assistance efforts in order to sustain the economic and social programmes of the developing countries.

The ideas which I have mentioned are not claimed to be exhaustive. We only wanted to emphasize certain principles which have general acceptance, being already set forth in resolutions of the United Nations and in the Final Document of the Special Session. The inscription of such principles in the declaration would stress their urgency and the political will of States to observe them. Together with other guiding ideas which would result from the proposals and suggestions of States, they could also be the political and legal foundation of future agreements for the freezing and reduction of military expenditures.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Another way to facilitate negotiations on and conclusion of agreements in this sphere would be unilateral measures. We might envisage decrees of parliaments or decisions of Governments which would indicate the intent of States not to increase their military expenditures or to reduce them. Such decrees and decisions could be accompanied by the identification of certain specific projects and objectives in economic and social activities which would be financed, entirely or partly, by the resources released by the reduction in military budgets. Of course, it might be objected that such measures would have only a symbolic or demonstrative character. But even admitting that their true value would be no greater than that of a symbolic gesture, is it not true that the adoption of such measures by as large a number of States as possible - and in the first place by those which are heavily armed - and serving as a mutual example, could add a notable contribution to stimulate the process of affirmation of a political will by States to undertake negotiations on agreements to reduce military budgets?

In our view it would be useful for the General Assembly to recommend to Member States that they examine the possibility of adopting unilateral measures to freeze and reduce military budgets.

To facilitate the conclusion of agreements on freezing and reducing military budgets, it would unquestionably be of great importance to continue a more thorough examination of the fundamental legal and technical elements relevant to agreements on freezing and reducing military budgets.

We are thinking, for example, of a precise definition of the aims of these agreements, of the size of the reduction, whether in terms of percentages or absolute figures, of deadlines and timetables for their application, of ways of reporting the military expenditures of different States, of the form of the agreements and of the verification system. Over the past few years, concrete proposals have been made by various countries, including my own.

In document A/34/761, Romania proposed that military expenditures should be reduced by at least 10 per cent by 1985; half the sums thus saved could be allocated to meeting the social needs of each country, and the other half for aid to the developing countries.

With regard to the form of agreements on reduction, this would certainly depend as much on the extent and content of the obligations assumed as on the political significance which the parties wished to attach to them.

Considering the diversity of situations which exists in the realm of military expenditures, the possibility could be envisaged of adopting a skeleton agreement open to participation by all States as well as of concluding additional protocols or subsequent agreements. Such a flexible approach offers the possibility of taking into account particular conditions in different regions of the world and in specific relations between States.

Like any disarmament measure, agreements on freezing and reducing military budgets imply, without any doubt, a series of complex aspects having to do with verification. However, it must not be forgotten that a verification system is not a goal in itself, but only an instrument for the attainment of a well-defined objective, namely the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

As we see it, the point of departure for the solution of this question is found in the provisions of the Final Document, according to which verification measures must be adequate and judged satisfactory by all interested parties, so as to create the necessary confidence and to assure respect for the agreements which they are designed to verify.

Investigations undertaken by experts in this area are a valuable contribution to the process of identifying practical solutions, acceptable to all parties. In declaring ourselves in favour of a continuation of a careful examination of the problems of verification, we believe that these should not be considered from an exclusive point of view or, even less, as a precondition to any practical action aimed at the reduction of military budgets. We are in favour of a constructive and flexible approach which would make possible the identification of elements which could lead us to reduce the gap between the different ways of approaching these problems adopted by States.

On the condition that the political will to undertake true negotiations with a view to arriving at agreements on the reduction of military budgets now exists, the technical aspects connected with verification - however complex and difficult they may be - can be ultimately surmounted.

These are the considerations and suggestions which the Romanian delegation wished to formulate on this point with the aim of contributing to our exchange of views, and our explanations of the working paper proposed by my country and by Sweden.

As it is well known, the next session of the General Assembly has on its agenda an item entitled "Reduction of military budgets". In the context



(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

of the debate which will take place on this problem, the working paper presented by Sweden and Romania suggests the inclusion among the recommendations of our Commission on ways and means of reaching agreement on reduction of military budgets of the idea that the General Assembly could, at its next session, assign the Disarmament Commission the task of elaborating the major elements of a declaration by Member States on military budgets. During the same session, the General Assembly will also have before it the report of the Ad Hoc Panel on Military Budgeting.

In considering these problems, as well as other pertinent proposals, this Declaration should be elaborated and then negotiated on the basis of further recommendations by the General Assembly. We might even recommend that the General Assembly ask the United Nations Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to study the fundamental elements of an international agreement on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures.

In setting forth these proposals, we express the hope that they will be examined with all due attention together with other proposals and ideas which will result from our exchange of views, and that they will be adequately reflected in the report of the Commission.

In arranging the work of our Commission with due care, we could doubtless cover the examination of all the items on our agenda in an organization of work such as my delegation has envisaged.

In conclusion, I should like to express our firm conviction that the United Nations must perform in a more dynamic way its central role in orienting and stimulating negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets, as well as our hope that all Member States will co-operate in this, so that the Organization will be able to discharge the great responsibilities incumbent upon it.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.