DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 22 May 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. MICHAELSEN (Denmark)

- General exchange of views (continued)

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81-61135
The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian):
Mr. Chairman, allow me on behalf of my delegation to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of our Commission. I am certain that under your leadership the Commission will fruitfully discuss the questions that are on its agenda.

Czechoslovakia, like many other States Members of the United Nations, upholds the view that the work of the international bodies dealing with disarmament questions must be more decisively directed towards the discussion and implementation of specific practical measures to curb the arms race and to bring about genuine disarmament. Since it is a deliberative body of the United Nations General Assembly, our Commission is not called upon to serve as a forum for the conducting of direct negotiations on disarmament, but it can stimulate such negotiations, which is extremely important in view of the complicated international situation. Moreover, as is known, we are not faced with a lack of constructive, balanced proposals dealing with both nuclear and conventional types of weapons. A set of such proposals was, for example, presented by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. Some extremely important new proposals for solving the most acute disarmament questions of the day are contained in the programme adopted by the twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which in April of this year was fully supported by the sixteenth Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Many constructive proposals requiring the most careful consideration were presented by other countries as well.

In view of the above we have definite doubts about the policy of conducting numerous studies on various aspects of the disarmament problem or the policy of drawing up reports of a theoretical or technical nature, and so forth and so on. In our view, this rather costly practice produces little in the way of effective results, and it even diverts resources and the attention of the international community from concrete
negotiations. It is precisely on the basis of that understanding that we approach the questions on our Commission's agenda today, including the question of the reduction of military budgets. Indeed, that question has a special place in the list of approaches to disarmament because it touches upon the material basis for the arms race. Its solution would bring great benefits for all mankind. It would speed up mankind's economic and social progress, in particular in the developing countries.

As we see it, the most realistic approach to the question of reducing military budgets is still that set forth in resolution 3093 A (XXVIII) 1973, which contains the key elements on which we should base ourselves at this time also. It provides that the reduction should start with the militarily most powerful States - that is, it should start with the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. It establishes specific measures for such a reduction; it provides for the allocation of part of the resources released for assistance to the developing countries. It contains provisions for the establishment of relevant international machinery for the distribution of those resources.
The socialist countries, including my own country, have repeatedly urged moving ahead. In particular, they have indicated the possibility of reaching agreement on the reduction of military budgets in absolute figures, which would, it is hoped, eliminate any possible difficulties in implementing an agreement on the reduction of military budgets. By the same token, we should like to point out that the studies which have been made on the comparability of military budgets with respect to this question not only do not advance our cause, but in fact divert us from a solution of the problem. The basis for concluding any agreement on the reduction of military budgets should be not a comparison of them but a voluntary decision that expresses the political will of the relevant States.

My country attaches great significance to the extremely complicated problems of disarmament in the field of conventional weapons and to the negotiations being carried out in that regard. In particular, Czechoslovakia has for eight years been a direct participant in direct negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe. Jointly with other socialist countries, we are making consistent efforts to draw up an appropriate agreement based on the principle of undiminished security for all the participating parties. We fully support also the United Nations work and, in particular, that of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. Its task is to work out international agreements on conventional types of weapons, such as, for example the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the use of certain types of such weapons for humanitarian reasons. That was opened for signature by States on 10 April of this year here in New York. Furthermore, Czechoslovakia is a co-sponsor of a whole series of proposals for the reduction and the banning of conventional weapons. For example, we, along with other States members of the Warsaw Pact, proposed the conclusion of an agreement to ban the development and production of new types of conventional weapons possessing great destructive power. We proposed forgoing an increase of armies and of conventional weapons and we proposed concluding a treaty with the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) prohibiting the first use by either side of either nuclear or conventional weapons.

The Czechoslovak delegation also fully shares the concern of a number of delegations in connexion with the danger of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the South African racist régime. We feel that that agenda item also deserves the most careful consideration.
During the current session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, we intend to come back to these items on our agenda within the framework of the relevant working groups.

Mr. KOMATINA (Yugoslavia): Sir, I should first of all like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for this year. I am all the more gratified to see you occupying this important post as you were, prior to this, Ambassador in Belgrade, where you personally contributed to the promotion of relations between our two countries. We are convinced that your well-known diplomatic skill will contribute to directing the proceedings of this session of the Commission towards substantive problems of disarmament, in other words, towards the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in launching the disarmament process. That is one of the fundamental tasks of the international community in the implementation of which all countries should participate.

I also wish to congratulate the other officers of the Committee.

We attach great importance to the work of the Disarmament Commission; first, because of its general role in dealing with disarmament problems and, secondly, because this session is taking place at a time of deteriorating international relations. Besides, the Commission should get increasingly involved in preparations for the second special session devoted to disarmament.

There is no doubt that the intensified arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, is one of the dominant factors of the tense international situation. The arms race is flaring up in all its aspects: qualitatively, because it is entering a phase of uncontrolled technological refinement of deadly weapons; quantitatively, by the accumulation of ever larger quantities of means of destruction which have already exceeded every reasonable measure and have long ago surpassed the limits of security requirements; and geographically, because of the concentration of military arsenals in geopolitical regions that are focal points of crisis in addition to the proliferation and modernization of military bases. Finally, the arms race is spreading to all parts of the world through an ever greater expansion of the arms trade.

The great Powers and their military alliances that dictate the tempo of the race, the degree of its technological sophistication and the level of military expenditures play a leading role in all this. International relations are negatively affected by such a development in several ways. First of all, there is a cause-to-effect relationship between the arms race and the concept of
international relations. Engaging in the arms race is not so much a means of defence; that long ago became an illusion because more arms do not guarantee greater security. It is actually a lever for domination and the preservation of the existing system of relations in the world on the basis of force, inequality and subjugation. There is no doubt that the "funnelling" of large quantities of weapons into otherwise sensitive and latently explosive regions of the world contributes to the exacerbation of existing crises or to the breaking-out of new ones and hinders the solution of crises with which the international community has been coping for decades. Besides, the engulfing of vast and rapidly growing human and material resources and production potential by the arms race is in stark contradiction with the world economic crisis, unresolved economic problems and, above all, with the underdevelopment of a great part of mankind which is fighting for survival.

In other words, the arms race penetrates into every pore of international life and poisons and hinders relations in all fields in the world. This is especially true because of the absurd theory that a balance of terror and destruction can be a stabilizing factor in international relations. Its most dangerous aspects - nuclear armaments and bloc rivalry - mean that a finger is constantly on the atomic trigger of universal destruction and the whole of mankind is turned into a kind of hostage.
In spite of all this, we must note with the greatest concern that little or almost nothing has been done so far to halt and reverse the arms race. The tremendous efforts exerted by the international community, a large number of resolutions, studies, decisions, recommendations and agreements, in which great hopes and expectations were placed, have remained a dead letter. The negotiations conducted up till now have not had any impact on the real state of affairs. There have been fewer and fewer contacts and negotiations recently, while the situation in the sphere of the arms race is, in fact, worsening, bringing into question even what has already been achieved.

In order to identify the ways to overcome such a state of affairs, we must determine the causes which have brought it about and which do not make it possible to halt, restrain and reverse this dangerous process.

In our view, which we have stressed repeatedly, the responsibility for the constant evolution and acceleration of the arms race rests with the proponents of an international security system based on the balance of power, which leads to the strengthening of bloc policies, expansion of spheres of influence and interest, attempts to expand domination, and constantly revives the spiral of the arms race. With that purpose in mind, there is ever more frequent recourse to the use of force, to interference in internal affairs by military interventions, and to the establishment of military bases and facilities and neo-bloc treaty obligations. All this exacerbates rivalry in regional and global proportions. In the final analysis, it leads to new strategic concepts of defence and attack, of counter-defence and counter-attack, including the possibility of a nuclear war. Such approaches render détente fragile and limited, and hold the world on the brink of a general conflict, which is perhaps nearer today than ever before in the post-war period.

A logical question arises as to how to find a way out of this situation.

Obviously, there are no two solutions. The continued accumulation of weapons and the use of force for threats and subjugation intensify the competition between blocs and threaten to sever the last frail threads of understanding, confidence and negotiation. Therefore, one has to embark on a new road. This is the demand of the whole international community. The option is clear and we wish to contribute towards opening a new road of reason and co-operation.
and the creation of a system in which peace and security, as the framework and
the foundation of development and progress, will be equally accessible to
all peoples and countries.

Since armament is not an isolated technological phenomenon evolving
outside the context of over-all international relations, in order to promote
genuine disarmament all international relations should be directed towards
extending détente to all regions and all problems in the solution of which
all countries will participate on a footing of equality; establishing
conditions for solving crises on a lasting basis in accordance with the
legitimate interests of peoples and countries; enabling the solution of
economic problems and accelerating the development of the developing countries
within the framework of the New International Economic Order; and enabling
every people freely to determine its destiny.

In order to make this possible, it is necessary to take urgent
measures to halt the arms race and start a genuine process of disarmament.
At the same time, we should see to it that nothing that we would not wish to
happen to us should happen to anyone else in the world — namely, threats to
freedom and independence. This means that we have to oppose the use of force
and any encroachment upon the freedom, independence and territorial integrity
of any country, under any pretext and from any quarter whatsoever. Therefore,
it is indispensable to create conditions that will allow all countries to
participate equally in negotiations concerning the solving of crucial
international problems, including, of course, disarmament, because no one is
willing to play the role of passive onlooker anymore. This calls for deeds
and not for meaningless words.

The non-aligned countries have, in fact, always been the protagonists
of genuine efforts, in which the process of disarmament is an integral part
of the establishment of a new system of international relations whereby every
people and country should be able to develop freely and safely on both the
national and social levels.

There are several items on the agenda of this year's session of the
Commission which are concerned with substantive aspects of the arms race and
disarmament. We are convinced that a thorough examination of these items
and appropriate recommendations may contribute to a closer identification of problems and to the emergence of concrete views regarding future tasks.

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament determined clear priorities, goals, principles and a programme of action for their implementation. The provisions of the Final Document are certainly not to be blamed for the fact that this has not happened so far, nor is it the result of lack of involvement on the part of the international community; but it is due to a lack of political will and resolve precisely on the part of those who bear the greatest responsibility and obligations in the field of disarmament, and those are precisely the countries that produce, dispose of and sell the largest quantities of weapons.

Disarmament problems should be approached, in our opinion, in their totality and within the context of over-all international relations. For example, the reduction of military budgets is undoubtedly a goal towards which we must tend, and we support the initiative of Romania and Sweden in that sense. The whole concept deserves our full attention, as regards both its substance and the method through which it is to be achieved. In order to make real progress in this field, one has to start, no doubt, with the countries that dictate the tempo of the arms race. Concurrently with the elaboration of principles for the reduction of budgets, it is necessary to exert efforts on all levels for the purpose of launching initiatives in all aspects of the complex and ramified field of the arms race and disarmament.

This applies also to conventional armaments, although their case is perhaps even more characteristic. There is no doubt that conventional armaments reflect the image of the present-day world and the state of international relations. Actually, all armed conflicts, interventions, occupations and other forms of interference are carried out with the help of conventional weapons. However, these weapons are also manufactured, developed, refined, accumulated and used under the umbrella of the threat of an over-all nuclear cataclysm. These weapons are, on the whole, manufactured, owned and ever more frequently used by the nuclear-weapon-States and their allies, which
are also the major providers of these weapons, not only deriving economic benefits therefrom but also establishing political bonds of dependence and domination with regard to those who must possess such weapons in order to ensure their own security. Hence those who produce or purchase these weapons for their own security cannot be placed on the same footing with those who do so for the purpose of achieving domination.
Therefore the problems of conventional armaments should be examined within the context of the priorities clearly determined by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and within the framework of over-all efforts for easing tensions in the world. Speaking concretely, we believe that the consideration of agenda item 6 should not obscure that of the broader aspects of the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, or divert attention from this field where the present standstill in negotiations is most characteristic.

We must therefore not lose sight of the well-known general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional armaments. We should also be guided by this approach when determining the framework, contents of work and tasks of the working groups to be set up by the Commission, because the final outcome of our common efforts will depend on that.

An item on the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid on nuclear co-operation with South Africa is again on the agenda this year. This item was on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission last year also; however, it could not be discussed owing to lack of time. We feel that this should not happen again, at the current session, and that the Commission is under obligation to examine thoroughly all the aspects of this problem and to adopt appropriate conclusions and recommendations. South Africa's nuclear capacity, that is its mastering of nuclear weapons, poses a direct threat to the independence of countries in the region and to peace in the world, it strengthens the policy of apartheid and instigates repression of the people of Namibia and aggression against neighbouring countries.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission should join the other voices of condemnation and contribute towards compelling South Africa to comply with the decisions of the United Nations on the elimination of racial discrimination, withdrawal from Namibia, non-proliferation, disarmament and the transformation of the African continent into a nuclear-weapon-free zone.
The Disarmament Commission is a very important organ for orienting efforts concerned with the consideration of the elements of a comprehensive disarmament programme, the follow-up of the implementation of the decisions taken at the special session of the General Assembly and recommendations to the General Assembly in connexion with various disarmament problems. Consequently, the Commission should deal concretely with all aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear aspect, and with disarmament, including the drafting of general guidelines for negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, measures for the reduction of military budgets and expenditures, and so on.

The primary task of this session, as it was of earlier ones, should be the halting of the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, and dealing with questions concerning a general approach to nuclear and conventional disarmament. The Commission must clearly identify the causes of the deterioration in the international situation, determine the responsibility for the failure to implement the decisions and recommendations of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and stress the necessity of taking measures leading rapidly and directly towards the start of the disarmament process. Here we have in mind the basic goals: the acceleration of the negotiating process on substantive questions of nuclear and conventional disarmament, in which all countries should participate; opposition to any marginalization of the United Nations in this crucial field of international relations; and the elaboration of basic principles for negotiations on disarmament problems.

The Commission should also be constantly involved in preparations for the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Yugoslav delegation is ready to contribute actively to the performance of those tasks.

Mr. Tsvetkov (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and on my own behalf, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the present session of the Commission. We are convinced that, under your competent guidance, the Commission will discuss the tasks facing it
in a constructive spirit and will be able to achieve definite, positive results. Allow me also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and to wish them success in their work.

The Commission's present session is being held in the circumstances of a difficult and contradictory international situation. It can and should promote new efforts for the establishment of a constructive dialogue on disarmament questions and on the creation of the necessary preconditions for a breakthrough in this area. In preparing for a successful second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, States should make use of all opportunities for the exchange of opinions on these questions and seek ways that would guarantee their settlement.

As is known, in the 1970s, thanks to the approval of the policy of détente as a leading trend in international relations, there was a significant impetus and stimulation given to international efforts for halting the arms race and eliminating the threat of nuclear war. Within the framework of the United Nations, those efforts reached a peak at the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

Unfortunately, the aspiration of peoples for political and military détente has recently come up against constantly growing opposition in specific circles in the West where, apparently, that development in international relations is not really appreciated. As a consequence of that the arms race is now on the threshold of a qualitatively new stage, while the situation in the world has seriously deteriorated.

No one who dispassionately and objectively assesses past events can fail to come to the conclusion that it is precisely the policy of those circles and their striving to change the balance of forces in the world in their favour and to carry out a policy from a position of force that are the main cause for the worsening international situation.

The policy of achieving military superiority now being pursued by some States is not only not being hidden, but on the contrary is being talked about directly and openly by some political and governmental leaders. The dangerous consequences of this policy in all areas of international life become ever more obvious. A direct result of the pursuit of that policy is also the fact that it undermines the very basis for negotiations on limiting the arms race. This can be seen, for example, in the fact that a number of important negotiations on disarmament have been unilaterally broken off by delaying tactics and by the proposal of all sorts of prior political conditions for beginning any type of disarmament negotiations.
That tactic, known as "linkage", can lead to no other result than delay in or failure of all serious efforts towards disarmament.

The irrationality of that approach can be seen in the fact that, under it, disarmament is regarded as something responding to the interests of only one set of States and acting to the detriment of others. That is, disarmament is viewed as a concession for which definite compensation should be received.

In fact, matters are quite different. Disarmament responds to the interests of all States, large and small, rich and poor, in the East and in the West. It is precisely as a result of the implementation of measures in this domain that favourable prospects are opened up for peacefully settling current contentious questions and for eliminating the sources of tension. Huge human and material resources can be released towards solving the social and economic problems facing mankind. Furthermore, the danger of war can be eliminated.

Today, when the policy of détente is being put to severe tests, when the tried and true principles of equality identical security are being bombarded by concepts of strategic superiority, it is more than ever necessary to put forward constructive and realistic initiatives and to take a sober and restrained approach. All the efforts and the entire foreign policy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, as well as of the other socialist countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty, are subordinated to that requirement. From the very day when the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization was established, as a necessary defensive measure in response to the establishment of the bloc of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Warsaw Treaty Organization has consistently been fighting for peace and for disarmament. That is evident in its numerous initiatives and in its specific proposals.

This policy was confirmed once again during the recent congresses of the communist parties in various socialist States. For example, the Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union put forward - in further development of its programme of peace - a package of new proposals concerning
confidence-strengthening measures in Europe and the Far East and measures for negotiations to limit strategic and other types of weapons, as well as a proposal for a moratorium on the deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe. Those Soviet initiatives are permeated with a sincere desire to overcome the current worsening of the international situation, to open up possibilities for harmonizing and adopting measures to curb the arms race and to eliminate the threat of nuclear war.

So far as the People's Republic of Bulgaria is concerned, from the rostrum of the Twelfth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, the First Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Comrade Todor Zhivkov, unambiguously expressed our commitment to the cause of peace, détente and disarmament. He also expressed our commitment to and full support for all the new Soviet proposals and initiatives.

Carrying out a consistent policy of peace and mutual understanding, friendship and co-operation with the peoples of the Balkan peninsula, the People's Republic of Bulgaria has been undertaking energetic efforts to make its specific contribution to the cause of peace and détente. Our constant aspiration remains to transform the Balkans into a region of stable détente. That is the meaning and the content of recent initiatives taken by the People's Republic of Bulgaria and put forward during the Twelfth Congress, to which I have just referred.

It is now widely acknowledged that at this time, when the political situation in the world is deteriorating, it is becoming ever more important to stimulate efforts to curb the arms race and reduce military tension. That point of view has been reflected in the statements of almost all countries at disarmament forums. Hence, one cannot fail to be concerned at the position that has been taken on the new Soviet initiatives by those to whom the initiatives are addressed. I have in mind the communiqué of the last session of the NATO Council, in Rome. From that communiqué it is clear that the States members of that bloc reaffirm their decision adopted in December 1979
on the deployment of new American medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe, and that they reject the USSR proposal for a moratorium on the deployment of such weapons; moreover, the agreement by the United States to begin negotiations on that question is hemmed in by all kinds of conditions.

The Bulgarian delegation is firmly convinced that the interests of all peoples demand the immediate beginning of serious negotiations on those and all other disarmament questions that are now ripe for solution. The People's Republic of Bulgaria shares the overwhelming opinion that priority must be given to efforts to curb the arms race and achieve genuine nuclear détente. A highly important factor in that regard is the continuation of negotiations on the limitation and reduction of strategic nuclear weapons, while maintaining everything positive that has been achieved in this domain so far. In that connexion, the Bulgarian delegation emphasizes that it shares the widely expressed concern at the United States policy with regard to SALT II. It is also extremely important to get on with negotiations to cease the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually to reduce the stockpiles of those weapons, until they are finally liquidated.

At the same time, we must speed up work on the conclusion of an agreement on a comprehensive ban on all nuclear-weapon tests. The People's Republic of Bulgaria attaches great significance also to questions of strengthening guarantees for the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States. We are convinced that the conclusion of a convention on that question, as well as of agreements not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of countries where they do not exist at present, will fully meet the security interests of the non-nuclear-weapon States. By the same token, it is important that, as a first step towards the conclusion of an international convention, all the nuclear-weapon States should make similar sober statements on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, States that do not have such weapons on their territories. That is what is advocated in General Assembly resolution 35/154.
The People's Republic of Bulgaria gives priority attention to the efforts to prohibit other types of weapons of mass destruction as well, including chemical weapons, and new types of weapons of mass destruction, including radiological weapons.

In the context of the European continent, it is especially important that the Madrid meeting take a decision to convene a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe.
In emphasizing the primary importance of that work for the questions I have mentioned, the Bulgarian delegation does not in any way underestimate the need for parallel efforts to elaborate effective measures in the area of conventional disarmament. The socialist countries have always given due attention to this question and repeatedly put forward specific proposals to halt the arms race in this area and reduce military forces and weapons, giving due consideration to the legitimate security interests of States and also observing the principles contained in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. In particular, we wish to refer again to the proposals to halt the development of new types of conventional weapons of great destructive force and to achieve an agreement among the permanent members of the Security Council and their allies in the military blocs to refrain from any increase in their armed forces and conventional weapons.

Unfortunately, however, those proposals and steps did not meet with a constructive reply from the other States concerned. That is why the Bulgarian delegation feels that it is now important to promote in every way possible practical steps in the area of limiting the arms race in conventional weapons. We approach the question of carrying out studies on disarmament questions, including on conventional weapons, on that basis.

The position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on the question of reducing military budgets has been set forth in detail in our reply to the Secretary-General, contained in document A/CN.10/23/Add.2. It is based on our understanding that the adoption and implementation of measures for the genuine reduction of military budgets would promote the achievement of progress in other areas of disarmament as well. It would lead to the releasing of material and human resources for the goals of social and economic development of all countries, in particular the developing countries.

We are deeply convinced that the efforts of the United Nations in that area should be practical. A solid basis for such efforts is the proposal of the USSR to begin the definition of specific measures for reducing in percentage or in absolute terms the resources devoted to armaments. A first step could be the freezing of military budgets.
The study of the structure of military expenditures and the fruitless attempts to solve the problem of comparability of military budgets will not lead to success. Such studies and attempts only lead us to a dead-end in this problem of reducing military budgets. They take us a step backward away from the specific United Nations decisions that have already been adopted in this regard. This becomes even more clear in the light of statements by some delegations at this session to the effect that the successful completion of a study on the budgetary question is a necessary precondition for undertaking any kind of practical steps in this area. We are convinced that a successful solution of this question depends only on the political will, sincere aspirations and readiness of States to create a further reliable bulwark against the arms race.

In conclusion, I should like to assure members that, at this session of the Commission too, the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria will continue actively and constructively to co-operate with other delegations to achieve genuine progress on the important agenda items before us.

Mr. LEHNE (Austria): A year ago the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission were overshadowed by the dramatic deterioration of the international climate. Many delegations expressed their concern that the prevailing atmosphere of crisis and tension would severely hamper the disarmament process and add new fuel to the arms race.

Today we have to admit that those pessimistic predictions have become reality. Violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in various parts of the world persist today unabated. New hotbeds of crisis have emerged, while long-unresolved regional conflicts are becoming ever more dangerous. As mistrust and tension continue to dominate relations between the two major alliance systems, efforts to control the arms race have suffered serious setbacks. The SALT II Treaty - the product of seven years of negotiations - has not entered into force. One after the other the arms control talks between the super-Powers were suspended and we have arrived today at a virtual standstill of the negotiating process. The Committee on Disarmament has been unable in these circumstances to achieve any concrete results even in relation to those disarmament measures on whose urgency and priority there is universal agreement.
While the disarmament process has stagnated, the armaments race has reached a new level of intensity. Military expenditures spiral upwards to previously unimaginable heights. The weapons programmes of the major military Powers both in the nuclear and in the conventional field are being accelerated and expanded, military research is leading to the development of technologically superior new armaments which in turn induce changes in strategic thinking that seem to increase the likelihood of their use. Burning social and development concerns are increasingly displaced in the calculations of Governments by the quest for security through military strength.

There is a tendency today to consider disarmament an unattainable goal in the present conditions. It is argued that such efforts should be postponed until better times. In the view of the Austrian delegation, this line of reasoning is totally erroneous and irresponsible. There will not be any better times until we succeed in curbing the arms race. Without addressing this problem, which in itself is a major source of tensions, we cannot hope to improve the international climate. Rather than lapsing into a defeatist attitude, we should view the present dangerous course of events as a challenge to us to multiply our efforts and to seek with imagination and courage practical means to achieve progress towards disarmament.

I should like to quote the eminent American diplomat George F. Kennan, who in a recent article summed up what we should be striving for much better than I could:

'What is necessary is the overcoming of the military fixations that command the reactions on both sides and the mustering of greater courage by the statesmen in relating military affairs to the other needs of modern society. What is needed is that statesmen on both sides take their military establishments in hand and insist that these establishments should be the servant, not the master, of political action. Both sides must learn that there is no security in the quest for military superiority, that only in the reduction, not the multiplication, of the existing arsenals can the security of any nation be found.'
It is the firm conviction of the Austrian delegation that the Disarmament Commission, notwithstanding its inherent limitations as a deliberative body, can make a real contribution to this end. This can be achieved through a concrete and subject-oriented discussion aimed at identifying possible areas of agreement and reducing gaps in the positions of States on the important issues of the agenda.

Having that in mind, I should like to set out briefly the views of the Austrian delegation with regard to one aspect of the complex of problems covered by items 4 (a) and (b), namely, the relationship between nuclear and conventional disarmament. The Austrian delegation will present its position on items 5 and 6 at a later stage.

In view of their unprecedented destructive power and the entirely new threat they pose to the survival of mankind, nuclear weapons immediately after their emergence became the focus of all efforts for disarmament. This preoccupation with the nuclear threat has remained unchanged throughout the years since 1945. Today, when the stockpiles of nuclear weapons could kill all mankind several times over and technological developments are increasing the risk of nuclear war, the utmost urgency of nuclear disarmament is more evident than ever. The nuclear arms race thus remains the paramount concern of the international community.
Discussion of this matter has, however, to a far too great extent overshadowed the conventional aspect of the arms race.

Since the Second World War many millions have been killed in conventional warfare. In different parts of the world, particularly in Europe, vast arsenals of conventional weapons have been accumulated, whose destructive capacity constitutes an increasing danger to the populations of those regions. The technological progress in the field of conventional weapons has similar potentially destabilizing and cost-generating effects as in the nuclear field. Spending on conventional weapons amounts to 80 per cent of global arms expenditures. Any efforts to redepoly resources in order to tackle economic and social problems will therefore have to focus primarily on conventional arms arsenals.

It is the firm belief of the Austrian Government that the enormous dangers and costs of the conventional arms race call for much greater attention to this matter within and outside the framework of the United Nations.

The urgent need for progress in this area becomes even more obvious if we consider the interdependence between nuclear and conventional armaments. The total military strength of the major participants in the arms race is a composite factor, in which nuclear and conventional capabilities play their role. Emerging imbalances in one area tend to intensify the arms race in the other. The relative strengths and weaknesses in the conventional and nuclear fields are one of the most important factors in determining the strategic doctrines of the military alliance systems. The existence of the so-called "dual-purpose" weapons and the growing risk of a blurring of the distinction between nuclear and conventional warfare are further evidence of the intimate interdependence of the two problems.

For all those reasons it seems evident to the Austrian delegation that disarmament objectives with regard to one category of armament can be successfully pursued only if the other category is fully taken into account. This fact was recognized in paragraph 81 of the Final Document.
The Austrian delegation would, however, warn against establishing any kind of linkage between nuclear and conventional disarmament. We should neither consider progress on nuclear disarmament a precondition for negotiations on conventional weapons nor accept the notion that we should first address ourselves to conventional disarmament and then, if we achieve results, attack the problem of nuclear disarmament. We are convinced that a simultaneous pursuit of both objectives is the only promising approach. Austria continues to ascribe the utmost importance to an early resumption of negotiations on nuclear disarmament between the United States and the Soviet Union and to the opening of multilateral negotiations on the basis and within the framework provided by paragraph 50 of the Final Document. We shall also support any effort directed towards beginning serious discussion of the conventional arms race.

Mr. BLOMBERG (Finland): Since this is the first time that my delegation has taken the floor at the current session of the Commission, allow me, Mr. Chairman, to extend the warmest congratulations of my delegation to you and to the other officers of the Commission. Apart from your eminent personal qualifications, Sir, it gives me particular pleasure to see the representative of a fellow Nordic country in the Chair of this Commission.

The Disarmament Commission has established itself as an integral part of the international disarmament machinery. While having a clearly defined mandate of its own, it also performs specific tasks requested by the General Assembly. Through a pragmatic, action-oriented approach, the Commission can enhance actual disarmament negotiations conducted in other forums.

The current international situation is marked by a virtual standstill in disarmament negotiations. Although a general appraisal of the state of the arms race does not fall within the basic mandate of the Commission, the realities of the accelerating arms race should constantly be kept in mind in our deliberations. If anything, the prevailing situation gives added urgency to the work of the Commission. I am confident the Commission will be able to discharge its duties in a realistic and constructive manner.
The Finnish delegation has welcomed the initiative of Denmark in regard to the United Nations study on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces. It is true that nuclear disarmament is the most urgent over-all target. Yet it is a fact that the build-up of conventional arms constitutes the bulk of world military expenditure. Further, the continuing, even accelerating, arms race at the regional level is a most immediate threat to international security.

A variety of approaches to that issue may have to be applied. Arrangements for mutual restraints and limitations in the transfer of arms to specific regions should be actively considered and pursued. Also, regional arrangements to limit and reduce conventional arms and armaments would be in the interest of the States of the region concerned, in that the security of the region would be strengthened at a lower level of armaments.

The working paper submitted by the Danish delegation and contained in document A/CN.10/25 puts forth several valuable ideas and suggestions for working out a general approach to the study, its structure and its scope.

My delegation will have an opportunity to present further observations on this subject in the working group which is to be established.

With regard to the other major item on the agenda of the Commission, Finland has supported all steps and proposals to facilitate the agreed reduction of military expenditures in accordance with the fundamental principles of disarmament contained in the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. Finland, in its reply to the Secretary-General, has expressed its views on the principles which should govern the further action of States in the field of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. The working paper (A/CN.10/26) submitted by the delegations of Romania and Sweden is a significant contribution to the elaboration of such principles. My delegation looks forward to further discussion on the subject in the appropriate working group to be established.

Finland has followed closely the work carried out within the United Nations with regard to defining and reporting military expenditures in a standardized way. The widest possible participation in this work by
countries with different social systems and budgetary practices could contribute to the devising of tangible measures for the freezing and reduction of military expenditures as well as the verification thereof. With regard to the recommendation by the General Assembly in resolution 34/152 B, Finland, for its part, intends to report on its military expenditures.
Mr. SHELDOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, in participating in the present discussion, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR also would like to express its views on some of the questions being discussed. As was rightly pointed out by a number of speakers, the past decade of the 1970s was an important step on the way towards strengthening co-operation and good-neighbourliness among States with different social systems. It was a period of positive steps in the entire range of inter-State relations and in strengthening peace and international security. Not everything in the context of genuine possibilities was achieved. However, on the whole the development of international relations was promoted in a positive way. It is a matter of deep regret that we must note that recently the world has borne witness to a serious worsening of the international situation. Along the road to détente there have arisen significant barriers, the forces of imperialism having taken the course of undermining détente, increasing international tension and strengthening their military capability and feverishly giving yet another dangerous twist to the arms race spiral. All this has happened.

Under these conditions there lies in the forefront of the problems the urgent and immediate task, namely, that of stopping the unfavourable development of international events and of not slackening but, on the contrary, reintensifying the efforts of peace-loving forces to strengthen peace, to curb the development of the arms race.

"Defending peace," - as Leonid Brezhnev emphasized at the twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union - "there is nothing more important than that in terms of the international task for our Party, our people; yes, for all peoples of the planet".

For the carrying out of this extremely important task, what is necessary is a comprehensive effort on the part of all countries.
As far as the States of the socialist community are concerned, there is no lack of readiness for specific and decisive steps in the area of limiting the arms race and in the matter of disarmament. As has been emphasized in the Declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, which was adopted at the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee held in Warsaw on 15 May 1980, "there are no types of weapons which they would not be willing to limit or reduce on a basis of reciprocity" (A/35/237, annex II, p. 10).

One of the main roads to disarmament is that of the limitation and halting of the nuclear-arms race. These are the weapons that are most harmful and dangerous for mankind. The Final Document adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament says: "... effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority". (General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 20)

As is known, in the Final Document and in the resolutions adopted at subsequent sessions of the General Assembly, it was noted that all - and I emphasize this - all States possessing nuclear weapons bear special responsibility for the task of achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament. The fact is, however, that the situation in the various negotiating bodies shows that by no means all those Powers are showing a realistic and responsible approach to the problem, whose solution will determine the fate of both present and future generations. Thus one of the important principles in approaching negotiations on nuclear disarmament which was laid down in that consensus document is not being carried out.

The United Nations, for its part, should promote a speedy beginning to negotiations on the substantive question of nuclear disarmament in keeping with General Assembly resolution 35/152 B.

Progress in negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Committee on Disarmament can be promoted by the establishment of a special working group, which has been given a specifically defined mandate; and that too is provided for in the resolution which I have mentioned, and of which the Byelorussia SSR was one of the sponsors. The specific positions taken on this question by States in the Committee on Disarmament show with sufficient clarity which States are on what side of the disarmament issue.
In a situation where the international situation has worsened, where negotiations on very important questions of arms race limitation - in particular, of strategic arms limitation - have been broken off or suspended, the Soviet Union felt it necessary to come forth with proposals which would offer a way out of the situation.

A whole set of large-scale, realistic proposals for the strengthening of peace, for deepening détente and for curbing the arms race were set forth in the report of the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Leonid I. Brezhnev, at the twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Among them was the expressed willingness of the USSR to continue without delay the relevant negotiations with the United States on limiting strategic weapons and reducing them, while also maintaining all gains thus far achieved in that area. The particular timeliness and importance of such a proposal in terms of principle is, I think, something that is clear to all present in this room.

The logic of the arms race initiated by militarist forces is such that each step towards increasing it results in a reaction on the part of the other side. As a result of the well-known and recently reconfirmed decision of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on the deployment in Europe of additional nuclear weapons, there now exists a growing danger that such weapons will be increased. The Soviet Union, advocating that this vicious circle be broken, put forward a proposal for immediate agreement on establishing a moratorium on the deployment of new medium-range nuclear missiles by NATO and the USSR, including, of course, forward-based nuclear weapons of the United States in that region. Implementation of this proposal would create a more favourable atmosphere for negotiations to reduce the number of nuclear weapons that have been stockpiled in Europe by both sides.

In putting forward measures for nuclear disarmament, the socialist countries, however, do not approach this question from a position of "all or nothing". The Soviet Union has repeatedly expressed its readiness to move ahead with partial solutions capable of limiting the nuclear arms race, thus blocking one after another various channels for its development. New evidence
of this readiness is the proposal made to the United States to agree to the limitation of the development of new submarines and to prohibition of the modernization of existing, and of the establishment and development of new, ballistic missiles on those submarines.

An extremely important and timely measure, in terms of halting the nuclear arms race, could be the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and comprehensive banning of nuclear weapons testing. That would put an end to the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons. It would promote the avoidance of their further proliferation and the further development of new types.
In spite of the constructive position of the USSR, the trilateral negotiations on this question still have not reached a successful conclusion. Moreover, they have been unilaterally broken off by the Western side.

The establishment of more favourable preconditions for preparing a nuclear-weapons test-ban treaty would be the implementation of the proposal put forward by the Soviet Union at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly that no type of nuclear explosion should be carried out for a period of one year from a date to be agreed on among the nuclear Powers. The results of the General Assembly session attest to the fact that such an approach is approved by a whole series of States in various regions of the world.

Experience teaches us how hard it is to put out the fires of military conflict once they have been lit in various regions of the world. It would be significantly better to take preventive measures and not allow such fires to break out. Therefore, we are deeply convinced that the elaboration and implementation of measures for nuclear arms limitation and disarmament should be indissolubly linked with the strengthening of political and international legal guarantees of the security of States and the maintenance of peace. This is an important element in the over-all approach to negotiations which must never be lost sight of. Of key significance here are the development and conclusion of a universal treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, work which has been going on within the United Nations for many years now.

The implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 35/152 G, namely, through dissolving existing military blocs and, by way of a first step, refraining from any activities that might lead to an expansion of existing military groupings could play a role of inestimable importance. The Warsaw Pact Organization has repeatedly shown a readiness for such measures. In present-day circumstances an important element in restoring a healthy international climate would be unswerving respect for the status of non-alignment chosen by the majority of States of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the rejection of the notion of involving them in any type of military-political blocs.

The question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons occupies a special place in the whole complex of disarmament problems, because an increase in the number of States possessing such weapons would mean a huge increase in the threat to the cause of peace. In these conditions, the task of the United Nations is comprehensively to strengthen this system for the non-proliferation of nuclear
weapons, the king-pin in which is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The proposal of the Soviet Union for the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of security guarantees for the non-nuclear States is directly related to this task. Such a convention would provide the non-nuclear States with a universal international legal guarantee of their security. The benefits would be reaped by all, with a resultant lessening of the threat of nuclear conflict and, in turn, an improvement of the international atmosphere.

Unfortunately, since that proposal has not in fact been put into practice, despite the fact that in principle there was no objection in the Committee on Disarmament to the idea of such a convention, it would be advisable, as a first step towards the conclusion of such a treaty, if all States possessing nuclear weapons were to make similar solemn declarations on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States which do not have such weapons on their territory. Subsequently, the Security Council could adopt a relevant resolution approving those statements.

It is our delegation's opinion that these measures, provided for in General Assembly resolution 35/154, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority, are entirely realistic and could be undertaken immediately.

In the context of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the proposal for drafting an international agreement on the non-deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of countries where such weapons do not yet exist is a constructive element. In this connexion we should like to express hope for extremely rapid progress in the Committee on Disarmament, in accordance with its mandate, contained in General Assembly resolution 35/156 C. One important measure for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which deserves comprehensive support by the entire Organization is the matter of a territorial limitation on the deployment of such weapons in non-nuclear zones and in various other regions of the world.

Given the danger of nuclear weapons and the attention justly paid to the problems of nuclear disarmament, it is of prime importance, in terms of United Nations priorities, that we not forget that the arsenals of weapons of mass destruction do not comprise nuclear weapons alone. Military technology is making great strides; it is developing and changing. Even now there exist other types of weapons of mass destruction, and we cannot rule out the possible creation of new, even more monstrous types. This may make their control, or agreed limitation an exceptionally difficult, if not impossible, task.
In these circumstances, the problem of preventing the emergence of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons has become most acute, demanding of the United Nations measures more energetic than those taken thus far.

The relevant General Assembly resolution - namely resolution 35/149 - of which the Byelorussian SSR was a sponsor, provides for two possible approaches to solving that problem: the Committee on Disarmament could draft a comprehensive agreement on prohibition of the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction, or it could draft possible agreements on specific, separate types of such weapons. I am happy to note that no one voted against that resolution. At the same time, we must note with regret that, in spite of the inclusion of both possible approaches in the draft resolution, its adoption by consensus was not possible, although that would have promoted rapid progress in the implementation of that draft resolution.

It remains an important task of the international community to reduce military forces and conventional weapons. One direction for very concrete actions to take here might be the prompt launching of an appeal in this regard along the lines indicated in General Assembly resolution 35/152 G: an appeal to all Member States, the permanent members of the Security Council and the countries linked to them by military alliances, to undertake, as from an agreed upon date, not to increase their military forces or their conventional weapons, as a first step towards their subsequent reduction.

One such step might be the halting of the production of new types of conventional weapons of great destructive power. That too has been proposed by the Soviet Union. However, here again there is an absence of political will on the part of other parties to take even partial specific measures. That is where the problem lies and not in the lack of a "theoretical" development of the question.

The direction for actions and specific steps is also clear in the question of reducing military expenditures. The Byelorussian SSR has set forth its position on this in its reply to the request of the Secretary-General contained in document A/CN.10/23/Add.1. Any attempt to complicate this question in terms of the so-called problem of the comparability or the transparency of military budgets is clearly artificial in nature.
Speaking about the general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional weapons, the elaboration of which is included in the Disarmament Commission's agenda, we must, in our view, point out one important thing: we should not worsen the already complicated problems of disarmament with various kinds of artificial obstacles, because the concept of "military superiority", the doctrine of "limited nuclear war" and all possible "linkages" work very considerably to the detriment of the cause of international peace and security and also cause obstacles to the achievement of disarmament.

It is time to act, and to act together. It is extremely important to understand that the danger threatens not one country, not one group of countries, but all peoples, all countries and continents. The logic of nuclear war is inevitable; if it is unleashed it cannot be limited. It cannot in any way be "limited". In this connexion, it is clear that the recently proclaimed doctrine of the so-called limited or partial nuclear war is substantially a threatening step in the material preparation for a nuclear missile conflict and does not in any way help the cause of negotiations.

What is necessary is an open realistic approach to solving the problems of disarmament. Such an approach was something that was dealt with in proposals put forward at the Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union this year and also at a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact countries in May of last year. There are proposals in the USSR memorandum entitled "Peace, disarmament and internatioanl security guarantees" issued as a document of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I am referring to document A/35/482.

The proposals and the specific steps undertaken by the Soviet Union are convincing evidence that any attempts to talk about some kind of equal responsibility for the arms race are groundless. The policy of the Socialist commonwealth in international affairs is not subject to
passing fluctuations; it is not subject to any kind of narrow egotistic goals; and it is not directed against any people or State. It is directed against war and towards the guaranteeing of peace, the priceless achievement of mankind; and the defence and strengthening of that goal is the noble task of all peoples of goodwill.

Mr. CHOU Nan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, Allow me first of all to congratulate you warmly on your assumption of the chairmanship of the present session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

During the last two sessions of the Commission a lot has been accomplished as a result of the joint effort of its members. In particular, the "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade" was prepared at last year's session and adopted by the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In an objective analysis of the international situation the Declaration explained the threat to international peace and security resulting from the use of force against the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of other countries, military intervention and occupation of other countries, the pursuance of hegemonism and interference in the internal affairs of others; it pointed out that countries in possession of the largest arsenals bear special responsibilities for disarmament and reduction of military budgets; and it prescribed certain reasonable objectives for our future effort in the field of disarmament. It is a document of positive significance for rallying international public opinion in support of the people of the world in their struggle against super-Power arms expansion, war preparations, aggression and expansion and for the safeguarding of peace and security and the achievement of genuine disarmament.

A year has elapsed and the United Nations Disarmament Commission is now meeting in its third session. Regrettably, however, the international situation has not taken a turn for the better. The wars of aggression and military occupation, directly launched by a super-Power or carried out through its agents, are still continuing. Moreover, this super-Power is
intensifying its efforts in arms expansion and war preparations, massing troops and deploying new weapons in areas of strategic importance and seizing every opportunity to expand its sphere of influence. At present, the world situation is tense and turbulent, with an ever-increasing number of "hot spots" and growing danger of war. It is utterly futile for that super-Power to try to cover up what it is actually doing by means of repeated submissions of so-called peace initiatives or by the launching of a new round of a "peace offensive".

The United Nations Disarmament Commission, a large-scale political forum composed of the entire membership of the United Nations, is in duty bound to make sure that its agenda items are closely relevant to the world situation and to identify the root cause of the present international tension, the intensification of the arms race and the lack of any progress in the field of disarmament. It has been claimed that only disarmament questions, as such, can be discussed in the disarmament forums; and that any reference to the international situation, particularly to the acts of aggression that are now taking place, would be regarded as an attempt to poison the atmosphere for negotiations. This is absurd. Disarmament questions are by no means isolated, but closely linked with the entire international situation, especially with events which involve international peace and security. The achievement of disarmament is inconceivable while aggression is unchecked and the sovereignty, independence and security of States remain unprotected. We can talk about promoting genuine disarmament only when international peace and security are safeguarded.

I will now turn to the questions of conventional disarmament and the reduction of military budgets.

China has always attached importance to the question of conventional disarmament. As early as the first special session on disarmament, Mr. Huang Hua, China's Minister of Foreign Affairs, pointed out that:

"Important though nuclear disarmament is, it cannot by itself eliminate the danger of war. Thus the reduction of conventional armaments has become a matter of increasing urgency." (A/S.10/PV.7, p. 71)
He pointed out further that:

"Conventional forces are being used by the two super-Powers in the struggle for world hegemony to carry out aggression and expansion everywhere, posing an ever greater threat to the independence and security of all peoples."

(Quoted in p. 72)

What warrants special attention is the fact that all wars and conflicts that have taken place in various regions of the world since the Second World War have been fought with conventional arms. Numerous wars and armed conflicts plotted, supported or instigated by the super-Powers in their quest for world hegemony have also been fought with conventional weapons. In particular, the weapons used by that super-Power in threatening the use of force and in its armed aggression in pursuance of its policy of hegemonism are not strategic nuclear weapons, but tanks, airplanes, guns and warships.

At present that super-Power is massing large-scale conventional forces in Europe and the Far East. It used its own conventional forces in the invasion and occupation of the independent and sovereign State of Afghanistan, and used its agents to fight a conventional war in the invasion of Kampuchea.
In its global strategy for world domination, this super-Power is using nuclear weapons as its main deterrent and leverage for blackmail but is regularly resorting to its conventional forces as tools for aggression. The conventional forces it has massed constitute a serious threat to the peace and security of countries in Europe, Africa, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, South-East Asia and the Western Pacific and aggravate international tension and turbulence. The present reality has forcefully shown up the deceptive nature of the "peace proposals" advertised by the Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR. People have gradually come to realize the inescapable fact that, while nuclear disarmament is of utmost importance, the expansion of conventional arms on the part of one super-Power for the furtherance of its policy of hegemonism and its global strategic objectives has also greatly increased the likelihood of war.

Numerous recent reports have pointed to a tendency on the part of the two super-Powers towards the view that a war between them would not necessarily escalate into a nuclear war and that they should be prepared for a "prolonged conflict that would be fought with conventional weapons and carried out simultaneously in different regions of the world". The Soviet Union has long enjoyed an overwhelming superiority in conventional arms. The United States is stepping up its efforts to improve its unfavourable position. A fierce competition between the two countries is now unfolding. Eighty per cent of Soviet and American military expenditure is devoted to the strengthening of their conventional forces. It is therefore imperative that the question of conventional disarmament be inscribed on our agenda.

Our belief that conventional disarmament should be given equal importance to nuclear disarmament does not detract from the importance of the latter, much less imply any failure on our part to recognize the unprecedented destruction entailed in a nuclear war, or that we disagree with the priority given to the question of nuclear disarmament. In our opinion, there should be substantive progress in genuine nuclear disarmament. The promotion of, and progress in, conventional disarmament, far from distracting our attention from nuclear disarmament, will only serve to advance the general cause of
disarmament, including that of nuclear disarmament. This is because the super-Powers have always regarded nuclear and conventional armaments as two inseparable components of their over-all military strength, especially in view of the fact that that super-Power, which enjoys an overwhelming superiority in conventional arms and is using these arms for aggression and expansion, is doing its utmost to divert people's attention from its enormous conventional forces by means of empty talk on nuclear disarmament. In these circumstances, we would obviously be doing a disservice to the efforts for genuine disarmament if we were to ignore conventional disarmament.

On the principles and procedures for studies on conventional disarmament, the position of the Chinese delegation is as follows:

First, in order to enhance the security of all countries, a basic principle for conventional disarmament should be that the two super-Powers which possess the largest arsenals bear the major responsibility for conventional disarmament. They should undertake not to engage in military intervention or threat of the use of force, direct or indirect, against other countries, withdraw all their occupation forces from abroad, dismantle all their military bases abroad and terminate their military presence in all forms. At the same time, in the reduction of armaments, they can begin by reducing the heavy equipment, particularly the number of offensive weapons and equipment such as tanks, airplanes, warships and artillery. After they have made significant progress in their reduction, the other militarily significant countries would then join them in the reduction of all conventional arms according to a reasonable ratio and assume corresponding obligations.

China has stated long ago that, as long as the two super-Powers take the lead, drastically reduce their conventional arms and demonstrate their sincerity in disarmament by deed, we stand ready to reduce further our respective conventional armaments and assume our share of the responsibility. We need a peaceful international and domestic environment for the building of our nation. We do not have a single soldier stationed abroad. We have solemnly declared on more than one occasion, and have in fact written into our Constitution, that we do not seek hegemony anywhere in the world. Our deed always tallies with our word.
Secondly, conventional disarmament should be closely linked with the safeguarding of international peace and security and with the fight against hegemonism. In the final analysis, conventional disarmament should serve to strengthen and not to limit or to weaken the sovereignty, independence and security of small and medium-sized countries. Therefore, pending the elimination of the threat posed by the super-Powers, for the majority of small and medium-sized countries which still lack adequate defence capabilities, the question is not to reduce but to maintain and strengthen the necessary defence capabilities.

Thirdly, while formulating conventional disarmament measures of a general nature, attention should also be paid to partial measures, particularly regional measures. Zones of peace and neutrality should be established whenever feasible in accordance with local conditions and the desire of the countries concerned. The main purpose of a zone of peace is to prevent the establishment of hegemony in any form by any country in such a zone, to withdraw all occupation forces, to dismantle all foreign military bases, to terminate all forms of foreign military presence and to eliminate all foreign aggression, expansion, interference and control.

Fourthly, effective international supervision should be prescribed for all conventional disarmament agreements.

Fifthly, studies on the various aspects of the question of conventional disarmament are necessary, and the idea of entrusting the task to a group of experts to be appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations is also sound. In our view this would help to promote conventional disarmament, but we also believe that the studies should focus on the crux of the matter - the conventional arms race. Emphasis should be placed on investigating and verifying how the super-Powers are engaged in the conventional arms race and how they resort to such arms for expansion and aggression, and on exploring, on the basis of these findings, possible ways of putting a stop to their conventional arms race.
I now wish to make some preliminary comments on the question of the reduction of military budgets, an item which we also believe should be discussed.

Like other disarmament questions, the reduction of military budgets cannot be treated in isolation from the reality, that is to say, the actual state of affairs regarding the military budgets of various countries must be taken into account lest our deliberations lose their purpose and drift into empty talk.

The present state of affairs is that the two super-Powers have an enormous military expenditure. World public opinion has long held that the combined military expenditure of these two countries has exceeded the total for the rest of the world. It goes without saying that the military budgets of the other three permanent members of the Security Council are completely dwarfed by those of the two super-Powers. In view of such an extreme imbalance, the guiding principle for the reduction of military budgets should be for the two super-Powers to take the lead in assuming the obligation drastically to reduce their military budgets, and only after that can we speak of other countries assuming the obligation to reduce their military budgets according to a reasonable ratio and procedure. It is obviously unfair and unreasonable to call on all five permanent members of the Security Council to assume an equal obligation for the freezing or reduction of military budgets.

It will be recalled that the Soviet Union made a proposal in 1973 calling on all five permanent members of the Security Council to reduce their military budgets by 10 per cent. This so-called proposal is extremely hypocritical and harbours ulterior motives. It is nothing but a piece of claptrap aimed at diverting people's attention and maintaining that country's own military superiority at the expense of others. In recent years more and more people have seen through its designs. So how can anyone be expected to take such a fraud seriously?

Many countries have proposed that there should be international verification of the reduction of military budgets in order to ensure fair play. In principle, we are in favour of such verification. We suggest that the actual expenditure of the super-Powers which is devoted to the arms race should first be
ascertained. Otherwise, we would have no starting-point for the reduction of military budgets. At present there is considerable scepticism regarding the actual military expenditure of a particular super-Power. Such scepticism is well founded. Less than 20 years ago that super-Power was clearly inferior to the other super-Power in terms of nuclear weapons. And now it has not only caught up with but in certain areas has even surpassed its rival. Of course this could only be accomplished at a prohibitive cost. Its conventional arms have also made a tremendous advance in terms of both quality and quantity, which again would have been impossible with anything less than an enormous expenditure. Its declared military expenditure seems to be hardly sufficient for the accomplishment of the above. And even less credible are its claims of repeated unilateral reductions of military expenditure. Therefore, before we come to the real reduction of military budgets, it is first necessary to find a way of ascertaining the actual, and not the fabricated, military expenditure of the super-Powers.

Those are some of our preliminary views. We are prepared to co-operate actively with other delegations and do our share for the success of the present session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Mr. CANALES (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, first of all, I should like to associate myself with previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Commission. You can rely, Sir, on the full co-operation of our delegation in bringing our work to a successful conclusion.

This time we have a heavy agenda and our Commission, which is called upon to consider problems of particular importance that are the very essence of disarmament, can and must count on the goodwill of everyone and make a practical contribution to increasing confidence among States and promoting détente.

The short, medium and long-term solution to the innumerable difficulties faced by the developing countries is part and parcel of the problem of the necessary financial resources which should be released through reducing the present vast military expenditures.
We must highlight the need for the discussions in our Commission to take into account the danger threatening mankind and, hence, those discussions must be action-oriented. They should lead to guidelines and practical recommendations making it possible for the dialogue to continue on the problems of disarmament and for a genuine process of halting the arms race and of proceeding with disarmament to begin without delay.

At its thirty-fourth session the General Assembly, on the initiative of Nigeria, adopted a resolution designating the 1980s the Second Disarmament Decade. The fundamental purpose of this Decade should be, to our mind, to promote a real disarmament process and the implementation of practical measures and action that will finally contribute to achieving general and complete disarmament. We must use the time we have to the full.

With regard to the problems dealt with in our general exchange of views, it is recognized that firm action on disarmament must constantly take account of the priority of measures of nuclear disarmament. Undoubtedly, the responsibility for attaining this complex objective, which is of central importance for the entire world, lies with the nuclear-weapon countries.

However, taking into account the vital interest of all peoples in the success of disarmament negotiations, it is imperative to give all States the opportunity to carry out their duty, as set forth in the Final Document, thus making their contribution to the efforts towards disarmament.
It is in that spirit that we see our participation in the debate which is proceeding in the Commission on the matter of disarmament and we fully share the opinion of other delegations that, in the general exchange of views, practical measures should emerge to put an end to the arms race and in particular to promote nuclear disarmament.

Of course any consideration of the process of nuclear disarmament must be based on a recognition of and respect for the legitimate right of all States, without any discrimination, to use nuclear technology and energy for peaceful purposes.

Other important aspects of our agenda deal with the reduction of military budgets and with conventional disarmament. In this regard, before going into detail, it is appropriate to recall paragraph 99 of the Final Document, which reads as follows:

"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." (General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 99)

Moreover, paragraph 90 of the same Final Document reads:

"The General Assembly should continue to consider what concrete steps should be taken to facilitate the reduction of military budgets, bearing in mind the relevant proposals and documents of the United Nations on this question." (ibid., para. 90)

We could list here a number of documents and studies made on the topic. However, it is not the lack of guidelines or of practical proposals that is holding up progress towards the reduction of military budgets.

The obstacle resides, to our mind, in the absence of the effective political will required to halt the arms race. Our delegation considers that we have to redouble our efforts to generate this necessary political will, especially among the leaders of the major Powers, in order to make this deeply felt aspiration of all peoples a reality.
One priority task for the Commission, therefore, would be to establish the general approach, structure and scope of the study on conventional disarmament which is to be drawn up pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/156 A. My delegation listened with interest to the views expressed here and welcomed in particular the documents distributed by the delegations of India and Denmark.

My delegation would reiterate that conventional disarmament is an integral part of a whole, namely, general and complete disarmament. In that respect, we view conventional disarmament and nuclear disarmament as parallel processes, although, as we have already said, we give priority to nuclear disarmament. In the light of the foregoing, we share the view of many delegations that progress on nuclear disarmament must not be made conditional upon prior progress on conventional disarmament.

We are convinced that the process of conventional disarmament is the purview, first and foremost of the major Powers, which must begin this endeavour with a gesture that would create a climate of trust conducive to general disarmament.

The transfer of weapons is an important issue in our consideration of this process and it must be considered in all its forms, even in illegal forms and when it furthers causes contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. We support the criterion setting an important limit on the right of States to obtain the means required to ensure their own security and we also support what was said by Denmark regarding the struggle for self-determination and against colonial oppression and foreign occupation.

In our view the study must also include aspects related not only to the quantity but also the quality and use of conventional weapons and as far as possible it should also cover aspects relating to obsolescence and the replacement of conventional weapons so as to maintain means adequate for the security of States.

Finally, we would point out that, although the study will of course be global in scope, the consideration of zonal and regional situations may prove useful and provide a realistic framework for the identification of the component elements in the process of conventional disarmament.
With reference to the work of the Commission as set forth in General Assembly resolution 35/142 A, which relates to the identification and specification of principles with a view to the freezing and reduction of military budgets, our delegation would like to thank the delegations of Sweden and Romania for their important contributions which appear in document A/CN.10/26.

The central elements guiding the work of the Commission on this topic derive from the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the aim of our work must be to achieve agreement on essential issues, if not before then during the second special session on disarmament. To that end we feel it is of prime importance to identify the common elements in the various positions, which would indubitably facilitate our work.

The principles, as is stated in the Romanian-Swedish document, must be of a general nature and consider the conclusion of parallel agreements on important aspects such as devising methods for comparing military expenditures by country and given period.

The matter of methods for monitoring is fundamental, as far as we are concerned, since that is the only realistic way a declaration can be adopted on this subject. Otherwise, its practical and faithful implementation would be extremely difficult.

The reduction must also be equitable and balanced with care being taken, in particular, to maintain the security of States having a lower level of troops and military resources. The role of the United Nations in promoting negotiations and co-operation among all Member States will ensure the effective consideration of the needs of all States.
We agree to the inclusion of the concept of self-monitoring by States while awaiting the conclusion of the relevant agreements, a measure which should promote the reallocation of human and financial resources so that at a later stage the funds released as a result of an agreement on the reduction of military budgets would automatically be channelled into economic and social development programmes for the particular benefit of developing countries.

In closing, it is our hope that this new effort made by the Disarmament Commission is a step forward on the long road we have travelled over several years to obtain a reduction in military budgets and armed forces, with a view to curbing nuclear and conventional arms races and, finally, achieving general and complete disarmament, which is the objective our country has always sought.

We consider that the continuing violations of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations by certain Member States, without effective sanctions being able to be brought against those responsible for them, means that there is no international climate of trust conducive to the attainment of disarmament measures, which would only weaken national security, the inalienable right of every State and the responsibility of every Government.

Mr. MENZIES (Canada): The Canadian delegation considers that the two items on which the Disarmament Commission should be concentrating its attention in the limited time available this year are the reduction of military budgets and the terms of reference of the study on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces. By concentrating on these subjects, the Commission will contribute to the balanced approach to the priority areas for disarmament advocated in the Final Document adopted at the first special session devoted to disarmament.

In reply to the Secretary-General's request for views on the principles which should govern States' actions in the field of freezing and reducing
military expenditures, the Canadian Government stated that the principle of openness is of great importance. Openness is a confidence-building measure. Openness should be instituted and maintained to the extent of providing sufficient details of military expenditures so that budgets may be adequately measured, compared and verified. Without this degree of openness, States cannot be assured that other States, especially those which might be perceived to constitute a military threat, are carrying out their obligations under any agreement to freeze or reduce military expenditures.

The Canadian delegation has read the views of other States and notes with regret the views of those which consider recent efforts to develop a budgetary reporting instrument to be without value. Such an instrument, if completed by all militarily significant States, would provide an objective and concrete basis on which to negotiate an agreement leading to the reduction of military budgets. These same States state that political will is important in reaching agreement. The Canadian delegation agrees and suggests that, in a world where mutual distrust exists between certain States, an effective means of demonstrating political will would be to take measures to dispel distrust. One measure of particular relevance would be to give details of military budgets so that future reductions could be seen to be equitable. Until such concrete gestures are forthcoming, it is understandable that some will consider that such calls for political will may be just a smokescreen behind which an unwillingness to take effective action is being hidden. For its part, the Canadian Government has completed the budgetary reporting instrument in two successive years, and cannot see how progress towards reducing military expenditures is possible while the States which call for political will continue to refuse to make a comparable gesture.

With regard to the elaboration of the general approach, structure and scope of the study on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces, the Canadian delegation considers that the draft working paper developed by Denmark takes into account all the relevant factors and is a satisfactory document on which to base the study. If there are any delegations which believe that the paper does not represent a balanced approach, we would urge them to propose constructive amendments as expeditiously as possible so
that serious consideration of drafting changes may be given. If agreement can be achieved during the present session of the Disarmament Commission on the general approach, structure and scope of this study, I believe that all delegations may derive a certain degree of satisfaction. Whereas this study cannot itself produce a dramatic breakthrough in reversing the conventional arms race, we do think that it may point to areas in which measures to curb it are most urgent and seem most feasible. Such conclusions, agreed to by a geographically balanced group of experts, would be a valuable contribution and could then be followed up by concrete measures.

The Canadian delegation looks forward to the early convening of working groups on the two subjects on which I have concentrated my remarks.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.