



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.58  
18 May 1982

ENGLISH

---

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 17 May 1982, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. WYZNIEC

(Poland)

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

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages, preferably in the same language as the text to which they refer. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also, if possible, incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza.

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

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: After the meeting held this morning informal consultations were conducted with the wide participation of interested delegations, including the officers of the Commission, with a view to reaching agreement on the question of the organization of work for the session. The Commission will recall that this morning we agreed on two points in that regard: the first is the equal treatment of all the items on the agenda to be considered at this session; the second is the decision to have no more than two simultaneous meetings. Following the consultations I am happy to report that, thanks to a spirit of understanding and co-operation among the delegations, a general agreement has emerged with regard to the other point concerning the organization of work, namely, the establishment of working groups.

The proposal put forward at this morning's meeting by the representative of Egypt was followed by several statements either endorsing the proposal or suggesting some minor changes that would accommodate the position of various delegations. During the consultations general agreement was reached on the establishment of two working groups: working group I dealing with (a) the nuclear-race and nuclear disarmament and (b) nuclear plans and capability of South Africa; and working group II dealing with (a) reduction of military budgets and (b) elaboration of a mandate for the study group on conventional disarmament.

I should like to say at this juncture that the numbering of the respective groups or the order in which the respective items appear here has no influence on the priority or lack of priority to be given them.

It was also agreed that the two working groups would start working simultaneously on Tuesday 18 May and would work until the evening of Monday 24 May. The Commission's Committee of the Whole will meet informally on Tuesday 25 May to begin consideration of the report of the Commission to the special session of the General Assembly and will continue its consideration until Thursday 27 May at noon.

(The Chairman)

The Commission will commence considering the reports of the working groups on the four items in order to include them in the report to the special session. In this regard, the Commission can meet informally or formally, and it is hoped that we shall finish our work by the evening of Friday, 28 May. If more time is needed, we might take some time during the following week in line with the decision of the Commission at the organizational session it held in December 1981.

With regard to the question of the chairmanship of working groups I and II and also discussion of the particular items involved, the consultations are still going on, and I hope we shall be able to announce their results tomorrow morning at the latest.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that that is the decision of the Commission.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the members of the Commission for the co-operation and support they have so kindly given to me. I think we are now ready to continue the exchange of views we began at this morning's meeting.

#### GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. SHUSTOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, as my delegation is taking the floor for the first time today, allow me first of all to congratulate you on your election to the high post of Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for this year. We are glad to see in this post a representative of fraternal Poland and we are sure that, under the leadership of such an experienced and skilled diplomat as Ambassador Wyzner, the Commission will successfully carry out the work of this session.

The fact that agreement was reached rather quickly on organizational matters in this Commission indicates that our Chairman has successfully begun carrying out his duties and in addition that the members of the Commission taking part in the consultations and in today's meeting have demonstrated to a sufficient degree the constructive spirit and positive approach which will enable us to settle organizational questions quickly.

(Mr. Shustov, USSR)

Allow me to express a few general views in connexion with the questions on the agenda we have adopted for this session. The present session of the Commission is taking place on the eve of the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament, which, in the view of the Soviet Union, can and should provide a new stimulus to negotiations on the specific questions of limiting the arms race and of disarmament.

The position of the Soviet Union regarding the negotiations on the limitation of arms and on disarmament is well known. As was stated by Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev in his statement at the 17th Congress of Trade Unions of the Soviet Union in March of this year:

"We see the future not as an unlimited piling up of a mountain of weapons but as the achieving of reasonable agreement with other countries on mutual reductions in the level of military confrontation."

Consequently, we favour the full implementation of all decisions which have the objective of ending the arms race, including the useful decisions adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. The Soviet Union is ready to eliminate and to ban on an equal basis, in accordance with agreements with other States, weapons of any type - of course, without any damage to the security of anyone and in conditions of total reciprocity on the part of states that possess such weapons.

In view of the inadmissibility of a situation in which the pace of the arms race is such that it far outstrips the results of negotiations designed to limit it, the Soviet Union favours a more active use of all existing channels of negotiation, of all bodies for the discussion of questions of disarmament, in order to increase their practical results. This applies fully to the Soviet delegation's participation in the work of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

On the basis of the fact that nuclear weapons represent the most serious threat to the existence of mankind, the Soviet Union has consistently favoured the granting of high priority to consideration of questions relating to the cessation of the arms race and to nuclear disarmament. Precisely for this reason, we shall be ready to make a constructive contribution to the discussion of items 4 and 7 of the Commission's agenda, which directly bear on the question of limiting the nuclear arms race.

(Mr. Shustov, USSR)

My delegation has an equally serious and positive attitude as regards its intention to participate in the discussion of item 6 of the agenda for this session, which deals with the elaboration of the general approach to the study on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces. The Soviet Union has already stated its readiness to participate in the group that will be preparing such a study and for that purpose has selected an extremely qualified expert.

The Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament stresses that progress in the area of limiting the arms race and the consequent reduction of nuclear weapons would promote at the same time the adoption of political and legal measures, and the adoption of such measures would facilitate progress in the area of limitation of armed forces and conventional weapons of States that possess nuclear weapons and other States in the relevant regions. At various stages of the negotiations on disarmament this question had been considered from various points of view, and at the present time there is no aspect of this question which could not become the subject of agreement without in any way damaging the security of anyone and in conditions of complete reciprocity. However, serious progress in the resolution of questions concerning the reduction of conventional weapons, unfortunately, so far has not taken place.

In that connexion, I should like once again to focus attention on the proposal that, as a first step for such reductions in armed forces and conventional weapons, the Powers that are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and countries linked with them by military agreements renounce increases in their armed forces and conventional weapons.

The Soviet delegation will be ready to consider also proposals dealing with the area of conventional weapons which may be put forward by other delegations. Inter alia, we are ready to discuss the question of the limitation of the sale, supply and delivery of conventional weapons.

As regards the question of the elaboration of the mandate of the group of experts on the preparation of a study on conventional weapons, the Soviet Union proceeds on the basis that the necessity and usefulness of such a study will be defined first and foremost by the extent to which it will practically promote the elaboration and concluding of specific agreements on limitation of the arms race.

Yet another important item on the agenda of the Commission's present session is the question of the reduction of military budgets, which appears as agenda item 5. It is well known that questions relating to the reduction of military budgets have been discussed in various bodies, including the United Nations, for a long time now. But this matter seems not to be moving forward, but rather backward. During the last two decades, the annual total military expenditures of States have increased at least twofold.

For its part, the Soviet Union reaffirms that it is ready at any time to enter into negotiations with other States which possess great economic and military potential, including all the States permanent members of the Security Council, to discuss concrete ways of reducing military budgets, on either a percentage or an absolute basis.

As a first step to bring about such a measure, we could come to an agreement on freezing military budgets. The Soviet Union is also ready to reach an agreement on the size of the sum by which assistance to developing countries is to be increased. Needless to say, the distribution of the resources to be allocated to developing countries must be carried out on a just basis, bearing in mind the most urgent needs and demands of the recipient countries and without any kind of discrimination. With those goals in mind, the Soviet Union has stated that a special committee could be established for the distribution of those funds. The Soviet delegation will take an active and responsible part in the discussion of the reduction of military budgets at the present session of the Commission, as it did at the Commission's last session.

The tasks of the Commission's current session include the preparation of its report to the General Assembly at the second special session devoted to disarmament. This is a most important document, which must be the result of our work. In the view of the Soviet delegation, the report must appropriately reflect the multi-faceted activities of the Commission during the entire period of its work as well as the positions of the various States on specific questions, if we are unable to arrive at consensus wording.

In conclusion, the Soviet delegation would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of its intention to co operate fully with you and with the delegations of other States in order to ensure that the coming discussions and the work of the working groups and of the Commission as a whole will be carried out in a businesslike and constructive spirit.

Mr. LUNDVIK (Sweden): First of all, Sir, may I congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission. Your diplomatic skills are well known in Sweden and I can assure you of the full support of my delegation in your task of guiding this session to a successful conclusion.

I should like to take this opportunity to comment on some aspects of the work ahead of us. In doing so, I want to recall that our session takes place on the eve of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Since discussion of nuclear disarmament issues can be expected at the special session, I shall limit my comments now to two of the items on our agenda, that is, the questions of reduction of military budgets and of the study of the conventional arms race.

In view of the alarming threat to mankind posed by the huge and increasing military expenditures in the world today, as well as the deplorable waste of human and material resources represented by those expenditures, no efforts should be spared to curb the arms race and to bring about a freeze and subsequent reductions of military expenditures. It is my Government's firm belief that such reductions could and should be agreed upon and carried out without detriment to the national security of any State. On the contrary, agreements to freeze and reduce military expenditures, be they global or regional, could undoubtedly strengthen the security of all States concerned. Furthermore, resources released by reductions in military expenditures could be better used for economic and social development, in particular for the benefit of developing countries.

The question of reducing military expenditures has been discussed for several years both by the General Assembly and by the United Nations Disarmament Commission. It is generally considered that agreements on such reductions should not replace, or be replaced by, other arms control measures. They would, however, have the additional advantage of exerting constraints not only on certain specific and sometimes substitutable kinds of weapons, but on all types of military activities. They could also lead to actual reductions in fields in which it is difficult to arrive at agreed restrictions in physical terms.

Since the subject was introduced on the agenda of the General Assembly in 1973, work has been carried out along two parallel lines in order to promote and facilitate future negotiations. Along one of these lines there have been efforts to study and develop solutions to different technical problems that would

need to be resolved before an agreement on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures could be expected. Such problems include those of defining, valuing and reporting military expenditures, as well as the problems of comparing military expenditures in different periods of time and by different countries, and of verifying the compliance of all parties with the provisions of a possible agreement.

Along the other line there have been attempts to study and discuss the political conditions for arriving at negotiations and to develop political principles and methods that could be accepted by all States for their future actions in the field of freezing and reducing military expenditures.



(Mr. Lundvik, Sweden)

Concerning the first of the two lines, substantial progress has been made by the elaboration, testing and adoption by the United Nations in 1980 of an international system for standardized reporting of military expenditures. A world-wide participation in the reporting system would help to increase confidence among States, which in turn would help to create the necessary conditions for fruitful negotiations. The Swedish Government is convinced that the reporting should continue and strongly hopes that those countries that have not yet participated in the reporting will do so in the future.

By the elaboration and implementation of a reporting system, which by all means may be further refined, we have not only contributed to greater openness and confidence but also provided a widely agreed definition of military expenditures and collected a good deal of experience related to this issue. Independently of the degree of participation in this system for reporting purposes, the work done so far could therefore facilitate future negotiations on the freezing and reducing of military expenditures by providing useful experience and at least a starting point for the discussions between future negotiating parties. Although it would be up to them to decide what means and modalities they wanted to use in order to reach agreement, they would undoubtedly in the course of negotiations have to deal with the problems of defining, valuing and reporting military expenditures. It should therefore be officially recognized by all States, whether they choose to report their military expenditures to the Secretary-General or not, that in the process of such negotiations a reasonable availability of statistical data would be required.

Along the same line, work has also continued with regard to the problems of comparison and verification. The Expert Group appointed in 1980 by the Secretary-General in pursuance of resolution 35/142 B has studied these matters and arrived at the conclusions and recommendations presented in its recently adopted unanimous report.

One of the Group's main conclusions is that a common understanding would be needed among negotiating parties for the construction of relevant tools of comparison, such as military price deflators and purchasing power parities. Given such understanding, however, it should, according to the Group, be possible

(Mr. Lundvik, Sweden)

to resolve the technical problems in a way satisfactory to all parties. The Group also recommends that its theoretical study should be followed up by a practical exercise aiming at the elaboration of such deflators and parities. States should be invited to participate in this exercise, which it is suggested be conducted by the Secretary-General. The successful demonstration of the feasibility of constructing military price indices and purchasing power parities for different States would contribute much to preparing the ground for future negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. The Swedish Government fully supports the Group's conclusions and recommendations, and is of the opinion that its report deserves to be carefully discussed at the special session on disarmament next month and that proper action on this report should be taken at the next regular meeting of the General Assembly later this year.

Along the second line, dealing with principles that should govern the further actions of States in the field of freezing and reducing military expenditures, there has unfortunately been much less progress. As the solutions to remaining technical problems could be different and as a consequence might involve choices with strong political implications, it is important that the political aspects be carefully considered and agreements reached also on certain essential principles and methods to be applied by all States in the carrying out of future negotiations.

This issue has been discussed during two successive sessions of this Commission, partly on the basis of working papers jointly submitted by the Romanian and Swedish Governments. So far no concrete results have been achieved.

It is, however, my Government's firm conviction that these discussions should be continued with a view to reaching a general agreement on principles and methods for further actions by States in this field of disarmament. Such an agreement should provide an important basis for the discussions at the special session and should also help to promote and facilitate future negotiations on the freezing and reducing of military expenditures.

(Mr. Lundvik, Sweden)

Let me also briefly touch upon another matter of great importance to my Government, namely, the question of conventional disarmament. Increased efforts are called for in order to initiate negotiations on limitations and reductions of armed forces and conventional weapons. Such conventional armaments account for the bulk of world military expenditures. One particularly alarming aspect of the conventional arms build-up is that its pace has been greatly increased by the rapid advance of military technology. The increasing sophistication of modern weapons tends to increase the intensity and scope of armed conflicts. The soaring costs of arms constitute a serious drain of scarce resources away from essential social and economic needs. We think that this problem must now be given greater attention than it has received in the past. The Swedish Government considers it important to prepare the ground for future negotiations in this field.

For this reason, it is a matter of satisfaction to my delegation that the Disarmament Commission continues its consideration of the question of conventional disarmament. We attach great importance to the study which the Secretary-General has been requested to carry out on all aspects of the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces. My delegation hopes that this session of the Commission will succeed in reaching agreement on the general approach, structure and scope of this study. My Government is prepared to nominate a candidate for this expert group. My delegation hopes that in the course of our discussion on this subject we shall have the opportunity to comment in more detail on the working paper by Denmark circulated as document A/CN.10/33.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): May I say first, Mr. Chairman, how happy we feel that you are chairing this important Commission. We have known each other for a long time in the United Nations, and I am certain that you will conduct the important proceedings of this Commission with your known impartiality and skill.

We are a deliberative body, as distinct from the Committee on Disarmament, which is a negotiating body. We should bear this distinction in mind, because it is very important that we do not repeat what they are doing, or should be doing.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

We have to do the thinking with regard to the ways and means of bringing about more effective negotiations aimed at reaching disarmament agreements. We are well aware, despite very devoted efforts in the Committee on Disarmament, how difficult this has been, and I should like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation of what the members, or at least some members, of that Committee are doing in this regard. We, however, must deliberate and, I repeat, do the thinking, and in these times, thinking within the context of the United Nations is a rare occurrence. To this end, our deliberations at this juncture should be centred on examining the root causes of the failure of the implementation of any part of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. That should be the primary preoccupation of the Disarmament Commission, for we, as a Commission, are going to do the thinking about this, not other committees that are, rather, engaged in the carrying out of the cliché procedures that have proved so ineffective over the decades.

In attempting to find out why no part of the provisions contained in the Final Document has been implemented, we must enquire whether there is not perhaps something wrong with the whole structure of the disarmament process. Maybe there is. If so, what is it, and how can it be remedied? That, I think, is part of the main function of this Commission.

Political judgement and true appreciation of international interest in disarmament in a nuclear world require a readiness to face facts and to deal with reality. Self-deception may satisfy those who wish to have an easy job, but it serves no good purpose. Recent events are already overtaking us and are abundantly demonstrating, on the one hand, the grave consequences and international problems created by the lack of even a modicum of international order and security in the United Nations era, even with regard to such a minuscule problem as that of the Falkland or Malvinas Islands. On the other hand, we have the significant awakening for the first time of the peoples of the world. And to what have they been awakened? To the approaching intensification of the arms race that is driving mankind, hitherto overcome with inertia, towards a nuclear conflagration and total catastrophe for all. We are witnessing the awakening of individual

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

man to his inherent responsibilities and rights in the global matters that involve the continuance of human life upon this planet.

This is the Commission that must look at the problem in a fashion that is broader than merely dealing with budgets and other details, things we have plenty of time to consider. But we must look at the forest without being blinded by the trees or allowing them to take up all our time. The peoples of the world, irrespective of their political or social affiliations in an unduly polarized international community, are becoming aware of their paramount concern and their common interest in preventing a nuclear holocaust. Military polarization, in its excesses, runs counter to the Charter of the United Nations and is dangerously unadjusted to the demands of a nuclear age for survival. The freeze movement in the United States and in other nations, more or less vocal as the case may be, has assumed proportions that may well make it a considerable influence towards the good of mankind as a whole.

I said that we must look at the facts. What are those facts? The facts are that the Final Document, in its paragraphs 8 and 114, emphasizes, first, that there must be strict adherence and compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, and, secondly, lays stress on the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the disarmament effort. Let us see if the United Nations does play a central role, and, if so, are we content that the United Nations is functioning as it should under the Charter. Is there nothing wrong with the United Nations? Is it not a lame duck, and if we put a lame duck at the centre of the disarmament effort, how can we hope - and we cannot do otherwise - to have a successful process towards disarmament? We must therefore give the "lame duck" the wholeness and healthiness of a proper international organization. We all know what is wrong with the United Nations. The decisions of the Security Council remain unimplemented; they cannot be enforced, and they are therefore not worth any more than the decisions of any other debating society. Yet upon the decisions of the Security Council rests the entire structure of the system of international security, in accordance with

the Charter. The system of international security is invoked in the Final Document when it states that:

"Genuine and lasting peace can only be created through the effective implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter of the United Nations". (S-10/2, para. 13)

The Final Document, which we must discuss here - (for if we do not discuss it here, we cannot discuss it anywhere else) - has not been implemented in its main directive, which is that of ensuring international peace and security through the implementation of the security system provided for in the Charter. Indeed, as far as I can understand, the Committee on Disarmament has not even touched upon the question of international security, whereas, as we well know, it is repeatedly asserted in various forums - and should be asserted in every body dealing with disarmament - that the effort towards disarmament must proceed parallel with efforts towards international security. The Committee on Disarmament has now been functioning for over 20 years under various denominations - the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), the 18-Nation Committee, and so on - and it has always attempted to reduce armaments without considering that one cannot proceed to disarmament or to the reduction of armaments proper without first halting the arms race. That is the one reality that has been ignored. The second is that the arms race cannot be halted without providing nations with an alternative security to that of armaments. If there is no other security to replace the armament competition, the arms race will continue, no matter what we do. The first special session set the comprehensive test-ban treaty as a first priority and the forthcoming special session will probably do the same again, and very rightly so. What is more important than a comprehensive test-ban treaty?

What, however, happens to it? The first General Assembly decision in favour of a comprehensive test-ban treaty was taken in 1963. Then, it was asserted that the partial test-ban treaty had contained the undertaking that there would be continuing negotiations towards obtaining a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Nothing happened. The following year, 1964, it was again brought up as an urgent priority. Again, nothing happened.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

In 1972-73 it was again presented. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has declared that there are no technical or other obstacles to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The only thing lacking is the will. We failed to do anything at our last session, and we are going to fail again. But we as the deliberating body must see how we can get this thing done, and I say that we can get disarmament on its feet only when we can get the United Nations on its feet. Not otherwise.

In 1969, before he retired, Secretary-General U Thant warned the Members of the United Nations that they had perhaps 10 years left - and that was just over 10 years ago - in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and set up through the United Nations a global partnership to curb the arms race, improve the environment and supply the momentum for a global disarmament effort. What has been done in this direction? Nothing has been done to get the United Nations on its feet, as U Thant's warning suggested. That is the reason why decisions of the special sessions are not being implemented.

In his 1978 annual report, Secretary-General Waldheim, commenting on the lack of means available to the Security Council to enforce its decisions and make them effective, stated:

"This fact has tended to downgrade the prestige and effectiveness of the Organization and to detract from its primary purpose as the impartial and respected guarantor of international peace and security. The practical result has been that some small States no longer turn to the United Nations as the protector of their sovereign rights.

After quoting some examples, the Secretary-General went on to state "... when problems of such magnitude do not come before the world Organization, ... they constitute a potential risk to international peace and security ..." (A/33/1, p. 5)

And in his 1976 annual report to the General Assembly, he stated

"... it should not be accepted that the Council's decisions can be ignored when they do not happen to suit the immediate purposes of one or another Government. If this were to be generally conceded, the already tenuous role of reason and justice in our affairs would disappear and we should return to the age of 'might is right'.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

"The Charter concept of world order is based on respect for the decisions of the principal organs of the United Nations and for international law ... If these are ignored, the system of the Charter for maintaining international peace and security, born of the agonies of the Second World War, will inevitably become a hollow shell which will have little utility when it is needed most - when world peace is seriously threatened ... This is a development which, if allowed to continue, will sooner or later once again put in jeopardy the security of the world community as a whole."

(A/31/1/Add.1, p. 10)

We are now in a time when the security of the world is put in jeopardy as never before, and the reasons are those given by two Secretaries-General, one after the other. I am not the only one who says it. I hope that this Commission will realize that its task is not to urge negotiations: that is the work of the Committee on Disarmament. Its task is not to urge reductions in military budgets; that is the work of the Committee on Disarmament. Our task is to do the thinking; now let us do some of that thinking.

I would further point out some other facts that have to be borne in mind. The General Assembly adopted important resolutions in 1979 and 1980 relevant to the work of this Commission. One of those resolutions is 34/83 entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session". That resolution called for the system of international security to be applied in order that the disarmament process could be effectively carried out in accordance with the decisions of the special session. That resolution was adopted by consensus with the consent of the major Powers.

The next resolution was 35/156 J, which was sponsored by a number of non-aligned countries, and was also adopted by consensus.

Those resolutions are directly relevant to the subject matter under discussion, that is, how to proceed more effectively towards disarmament at the next special session. The resolutions are there and I would like to say just a few words about the last-mentioned resolution. In it the General Assembly

"Reaffirms its resolution 34/83 A of 11 December 1979 on disarmament and international security;



(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

"Calls upon all States to proceed in a positive spirit towards measures under the Charter of the United Nations for a system of international security and order concurrently with efforts at effective disarmament measures".

I want to emphasize again that the Committee negotiating the question of disarmament has not paid attention either to the calls of the special session devoted to disarmament or to the unanimous decisions adopted by the General Assembly.

Operative paragraph 2 of this resolution

"Calls upon all States to proceed in a positive manner towards measures under the Charter of the United Nations for a system of international security ...

"Recommends that the main organs of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security should give early consideration to the requirements for halting the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, and developing the modalities for the effective application of the system of international security provided for in the Charter,

"Requests the permanent members of the Security Council to facilitate the work of the Council towards carrying out this essential responsibility under the Charter:

"Requests the Secretary-General to submit a progress report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session."

The Secretary-General was delayed in submitting his progress report, probably because he was unable to submit an appropriate progress report: he does not state anywhere in his progress report that he inquired of the Presidents of the Security Council what it had done or proposed to do in respect of those resolutions. So this matter will have to come before the special session.

Returning now to the work of this Commission, I would support the idea of the General Assembly at its special session in establishing the functioning of this Commission every year to deliberate on the disarmament matters without interfering too much in the work of the Committee on Disarmament. It should prepare the way for negotiations to be effective in the Committee on Disarmament when a modicum of international order and security is established in the world, thus making it possible for nations to disarm and the arms race to be halted, because no nation can disarm in a vacuum and so long as there is no international security the arms race will continue.

Mr. KLINGLER (Federal Republic of Germany) (interpretation from French): At the outset, Mr. Chairman, I would associate my delegation with those other delegations that have expressed great pleasure at seeing you presiding over our work. We are very happy that the Commission has been able to take important decisions since the very first day of its discussions, and we attribute that success first and foremost to the skilful and effective manner in which you guide our work.

At this time, in expressing its position in the context of this session, my delegation wishes only to confirm the interpretive statement it made at the time of the vote on resolution 36/97 A, at the end of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. That statement is reproduced in document A/C.1/36/PV.42. In it the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany made clear its position in the event of this Commission's being once again unable to reach a consensus on the mandate of the group of experts to be established to prepare a study on conventional weapons.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, in contributing to the general exchange of views on the agenda items before the Disarmament Commission at this session my delegation wishes also to associate itself with those delegations that have expressed confidence in your ability to guide the work of the Commission to fruitful results.

The Disarmament Commission has before it four substantive issues: consideration of various aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; reduction of military budgets; elaboration of the general approach to the study on the conventional arms race and on disarmament relating to conventional weapons and armed forces; and, finally, South Africa's nuclear plans and capabilities.

We are fully cognizant of the fact that the present session of the Disarmament Commission is a forerunner of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and that it devolves upon us to strive to achieve meaningful results as an aid to the special session itself.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

It is indeed no longer necessary to seek to justify the rationale behind qualifying nuclear disarmament as the priority issue in disarmament efforts. The deleterious consequences of the nuclear arms race stare humanity defiantly in the face, and we should be running away from existing realities if we were to seek to establish for it parity of status with conventional disarmament. In other words, the priorities established during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament for disarmament negotiations must continue and be enabled to continue to retain their validity. We must seek neither to distort nor to undermine the existing state of play in relation to the two distinct aspects of the arms race.

To put it briefly, at this session the Disarmament Commission must seek to come out with practical and substantive recommendations on nuclear disarmament for the second special session.

The question of conventional disarmament touches all countries. My delegation fully shares the conviction that a study on the conventional arms race would provide a useful input into the ultimate negotiations that are expected to lead to conventional disarmament. We must, however, reiterate our belief that such a study must be global and comprehensive and must include such considerations as the root causes of conventional weapons acquisition even by States less able to sustain an unproductive arms race given their weak economic base.

The issue of South Africa's plans and capabilities in the nuclear field has been with the Disarmament Commission over a period of time now. My delegation recalls with regret the state of play at the last session of the Disarmament Commission, when it became possible for a particular group of countries to have recourse to the use of the veto in the search for agreed language on this particular issue.

It is the expectation of my delegation that at the current session the Commission will seek to address itself substantively to this issue and arrive at specific recommendations to the second special session.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no other speakers I shall assume that we have concluded our general exchange of views for this session.

At the outset of this session we decided that since it has been convened just before the second special session, and in view of the limited time at our disposal, the general debate should be brief and to the point. I think that it can be said that it has been both and as at the same time we have heard a number of interesting ideas, I believe it has been fruitful. I am very grateful to all the participants in the general exchange of views.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.