DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTY-SEVENTY MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 11 May 1983, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil)

- General exchange of views (continued)

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83-60589
The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. Suja (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, Sir, allow me to express the profound satisfaction of the Czechoslovak delegation on your election to the post of Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and to wish you success in discharging your responsible task. I should like to assure you that the delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, in cooperation with all delegations, will expend maximum effort to achieve fruitful work and positive results at this session.

The activities of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in seeking ways to resolve a number of extremely pressing problems in order to reduce the arms race and bring about disarmament have in recent years become an important focal point for efforts to achieve progress in this field, which is of vital importance to the whole of mankind.

We are convinced that the Commission will be able effectively to proceed to resolve the responsible tasks facing it this year as well if all members of the Commission demonstrate the necessary political will to do so.

The solution of the issues on the Commission's agenda requires primarily the elaboration of clear, generally acceptable conclusions and recommendations which subsequently would provide a basis for appropriate agreements and other mutually agreed specific measures on the disarmament issues under discussion.

In the light of this understanding of the role and tasks of the Disarmament Commission, the delegation of Czechoslovakia, which, as members know, was an initiator of the United Nations Declaration on International Co-operation for Disarmament, listened with satisfaction to a number of positive, constructive statements made at yesterday's meeting.

At the same time, we fully share the viewpoint that the United Nations Disarmament Commission - as, indeed, the United Nations as a whole - cannot isolate itself from the international situation, which has become seriously
worse, and the increasing threat to peace which has come about over recent years. A characteristic trait of this highly unfavourable development is the move in the arms race to a qualitatively new and much more dangerous phase, which encompasses all types of weapons, both nuclear and conventional, all forms of military activity and practically all regions of the world.

It is understandable that the disquieting situation which has arisen as a result of this is a matter of concern to peoples and Governments and causes concern on the part of world public opinion itself.

The statements made by delegations at this session quite definitely reflect their profound concern at the threat of a nuclear catastrophe and, consequently, the need to take the most decisive, most far-reaching measures to prevent it.
Efforts to reduce the arms race, primarily the nuclear arms race, the adoption of specific disarmament measures and the creation of the necessary political and international legal security guarantees are the cornerstone of the peace-loving foreign policy of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, of which my country is a member. That policy of principle was further developed and consolidated in the political Declaration of States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, adopted at the top-level meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, which took place in January this year in the capital of Czechoslovakia, Prague.

The far-reaching major proposals contained in that Declaration and initiatives are a concrete response to the question as to how one can follow up efforts to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, guarantee peace and build inter-State relations in the spirit of a policy of détente.

The proposal of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty to States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is well known: to conclude a treaty on the non-use of military force - that is, on the non-first use against each other of either nuclear or conventional weapons - and on the maintenance of peace. It should be noted that States members of the Warsaw Treaty are proposing to include in the Treaty a similar commitment on the non-use of force by States members of both alliances against third countries, whether linked to them by bilateral alliances or whether they are non-aligned or neutral.

As we see it, the adoption of that proposal by the NATO member States would promote a decisive move towards improving the political situation in the world and become an important milestone in disarmament efforts. For example, how much easier would the discussion of the most vital questions of the limitation of the arms race and disarmament be in international forums, particularly in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, if there were a full and most authoritative treaty prohibition on the first use of military force in general. That, we feel, is quite obvious. Therefore, if we heed the voices calling for a resumption and strengthening of mutual trust as a prerequisite for progress in disarmament negotiations, then presumably this proposal of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty should be examined in that light.
The initiatives of the States members of the Warsaw Treaty put forward at the Prague Conference touch on a number of other important proposals devoted to various aspects of disarmament. Some of those proposals have to do with the situation in Europe, others are more general in character and broader, especially as regards the items on the United Nations Disarmament Commission's agenda. But the common denominator of all those proposals is their specific and practical nature, the fact that they can be implemented; that they are aimed at bringing about real, substantive progress in the disarmament field, primarily nuclear disarmament.

I do not think it is possible to discuss the problem of nuclear disarmament as a whole, as is envisaged, for example, under item 4 of the agenda, in isolation from the situation that has been produced in Europe as a result of the well-known plans to station hundreds of new American medium-range nuclear missiles there. The position of Czechoslovakia, like that of other States members of the Warsaw Treaty, on this highly important matter does not give rise to any doubt. We favour the radical reduction of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe on the basis of the principles of parity and equal security. Quite recently, on 3 May this year, that position of principle was further specified in a fresh proposal put forward by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov, on reaching agreement on the quality of nuclear potentials in Europe as regards war-heads and launchers. We hope that that very important proposal, which reflects the highly responsible approach to the main issues regarding the prevention of the threat of a nuclear war and the maintenance of peace, which we fully support, will lead to a desired turning-point in the Geneva negotiations and will open the way to more radical disarmament measures.

We read with interest thereport regarding the preparation in the group of non-aligned countries of a working document on item 4 of the agenda and we are prepared to discuss it constructively and on an all-round basis in the light of our approval of the result of the decisions adopted this year at the Seventh Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, which took place this year in the Indian capital, New Delhi.
Progress in the disarmament field, we feel, requires us to concentrate our efforts at the same time on a broad front of various aspects of this global problem, for success in one direction can create conditions for moving forward on other aspects.

On the basis of this approach Czechoslovakia, together with other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, has proposed the elimination of chemical weapons in Europe and called for the start of consultations with all States interested in order to reconcile these issues. We believe that our proposal will be studied carefully and that appropriate countries will adopt a constructive attitude towards it.

The agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for a number of years now has contained the important issue of the reduction of military budgets. In seeking to break the deadlock on this item, the States members of the Warsaw Treaty made a proposal to embark on direct negotiations with the NATO countries on the non-increase of military expenditures and their subsequent reduction in percentage and in absolute terms and to see to it that the resources saved would be used for economic and social purposes, including those of the developing countries. At the April conference of the Committee of Foreign Ministers of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, held in Prague, it was again stressed that, given the growth of international tension, it is particularly important that that appeal should meet with a positive response from the NATO countries and that appropriate negotiations should be embarked upon without further ado.

The member countries of the Warsaw Treaty gave momentum to efforts towards the speedy and successful conclusion of the Madrid Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.
As President Gustav Husak of Czechoslovakia stated a few days ago in reply to the message by the Heads of State and Government of the non-aligned and neutral countries that participated in the Madrid meeting, the positive results of that meeting, and especially the adoption of a decision to convene a conference on confidence-building measures, security and disarmament in Europe, would help improve the international situation and lead to further development of the process of European détente and, indeed, the strengthening of universal peace.

In this connection we express the hope that the discussion of the item on our agenda devoted to confidence-building measures will take place in a constructive and fruitful atmosphere and lead to positive, practical results. We lay great stress on the discussion at this session of the conclusions and recommendations of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues which without doubt are of significant interest for the international community, bearing in mind in particular the possibility of applying them within the United Nations context.

We feel it is high time that the United Nations Disarmament Commission adopted clear-cut, unequivocal conclusions on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability.

The delegation of Czechoslovakia will state its views in more detail on the various agenda items at a later stage during the meetings of the working groups.

In conclusion, I should like to express once again our conviction that this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission will carry out its work in a constructive and co-operative spirit and that it will lead to positive results. I should like to assure you that the Czechoslovak delegation will bend every effort towards achieving that goal.
Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I should like to voice my delegation's pleasure on your election to the chairmanship of this important Commission and assure you of our entire co-operation in the discharge of the highly responsible task entrusted to you. We should like to extend our congratulation to the other officers of the Commission as well and to members of the Secretariat staff. We are grateful to them for the good organization of the Commission's work.

A few months ago the General Assembly of the United Nations examined in detail the various disarmament problems and adopted a record number of resolutions. Throughout the world problems relating to the arms race and disarmament, primarily nuclear disarmament, are the focal point of attention on the part of Governments and public opinion. The popular masses are coming out firmly and in a great variety of ways in favour of peace and disarmament and for the prevention of nuclear war.

In total contrast with the concern and aspirations of peoples, the frantic arms race continues and military expenditures continue to increase at an alarming rate.

According to plans more or less openly announced, in the very near future the arms race, and in particular its qualitative aspects, will be intensified at an unprecedented rate.

In Europe, where the quantity of arms far exceeds any rational defence requirements, gigantic nuclear arsenals have been accumulated and the stationing of new missiles, as well as those already in place, will in no way strengthen the security of any State but will merely increase the danger of a nuclear war.

As President Nicolae Ceausescu recently stated:

"Humanity has reached a stage where the level of armaments, in particular nuclear armaments, endangers civilization itself and the existence of human society. Therefore the basic problem of our era is to prevent war and guarantee peace."
We share the evaluations and conclusions contained in the political declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi, and we fully support the proposals contained in that document—proposals that are of great political importance to the urgent attainment of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, the prevention of nuclear war and the strengthening of international peace and security.

These are the basic considerations that govern the approach taken by the Romanian delegation to the highly important problems that are before the Commission at its present session. Their constructive examination, with the equal and active participation of all States, can enable our Commission to make a significant contribution to the creation of the conditions necessary for moving on to genuine disarmament negotiations.

The items on the agenda for this session are closely linked in content, and the solutions to the problems they raise are interdependent.

The inclusion of those problems on the Commission's agenda, most of them at the request of the General Assembly, constitutes furthermore a recognition and consolidation of the Assembly's role, which no one here can seriously question.

In this general exchange of views, our first comments have to do with problems relating to the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. My country's position on these matters was clearly set forth in the set of disarmament measures submitted by Romania at the second special session on disarmament, and in the recent positions taken by the Head of State of Romania and in political documents to which my country has subscribed at the bilateral or multilateral level.

As regards those proposals, we attach the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, to the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons, to their gradual reduction and eventual total elimination and to the definitive prohibition of all types of nuclear weapons.

For several years the nuclear-arms situation in Europe has been at the focal point of attention on the part of all States. The changes that have occurred on that continent are fraught with danger for the international situation as a whole. We believe there is a need for resolute action to halt
the deployment of medium-range missiles in Europe, to reduce the number of missiles already in place and to conclude agreements - including interim agreements - that can provide a basis from which to move on to measures to bring about the total elimination of such missiles.

The conclusion of such agreements this year would be of vital importance to all States, for if we miss this crucial opportunity it would open up a new and lengthy phase of military rivalry with incalculable consequences for all of Europe and for mankind as a whole.

While we favour the priority of nuclear disarmament, we believe that, to halt the arms race and maintain international peace and security, it is of particular importance to adopt effective measures to achieve a total ban on all weapons of mass destruction, the freezing and reduction of military budgets, a substantial reduction in conventional weapons and an increase in trust among States, a peaceful solution of all problems and the final elimination from international life of the threat or use of force.

In Romania's view, the implementation of all measures to bring about a halt in the arms race and the transition to disarmament, primarily nuclear disarmament, must be carried out in conditions of mutual confidence and of equal security for all countries by the achievement of military balance at the lowest possible level and under appropriate international control. I should like to recall here the proposal of Romania regarding the creation within the United Nations of an international inspection unit with the right to ensure that commitments entered into in the field of disarmament, both nuclear and conventional, and in the field of the reduction of military expenditures, are respected.
In view of the particularly grave conditions of the present time, the supreme duty of all Governments is to contribute by all the means at their disposal to the solution of the urgent problems of disarmament, the halting of the present course of events and moving in the direction of détente.

It is in that spirit that we consider the proposals of the socialist countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty contained in the Political Declaration adopted this year, and we declare that we should move urgently towards practical actions for embarking on negotiations with the States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and other States on the major problems relating to peace, disarmament and security in Europe and throughout the world.

We believe that all disarmament proposals, from whatever quarter, must be closely examined; that there are differences between this or that proposal makes it all the more necessary to work towards bridging the gaps between viewpoints and arriving at compromises through reciprocal concessions, for in this interdependent world of ours the peace and security of everyone can be guaranteed only if there is collective security based on the full equality of the rights of States and respect for their sovereignty and independence.

The question of the reduction of military budgets has been on the agenda of the Commission since its establishment. Indeed, States have in the clearest terms been reaffirming their gravest concerns over increases in such budgets.

Irrespective of the way in which they are viewed — economic, political or military — present military expenditures, particularly those of the heavily armed States, sadly reflect an international situation characterized by general insecurity, with higher and higher costs which, eventually, no one will be able to afford any longer.

The debates now going on in certain industrialized countries concerning the allocation of resources towards either military or civil uses show that even the most developed States with impressive economic and technical potential can no longer afford the luxury of constant increases in their military budgets.

Recent studies make it clear that the diversion of enormous material and human resources to military purposes has increased budgetary deficits and balance-of-payments problems, representing a source of additional inflationary pressures and reducing investments and productivity even in the highly developed countries.
At the military and political level, the increase in military budgets is based on the misconception that national security can be maintained and strengthened by the continued accumulation and sophistication of weapons. Post-war experience, which is sufficient to allow observation of this phenomenon over a long period, shows that the constantly increasing arms expenditures have not led to enhanced security for any nation or for mankind as a whole. On the contrary, the level of security has continually worsened, and there has been an increase of mistrust, instability and international tension, as well as the risk of war.

A stable balance of forces and security for States and for mankind as a whole cannot be based on the accumulation of weapons and on increases in military expenditures but on their progressive reduction. Similarly, there can be no balance of forces and security as long as the economies of States are shaken by crisis and the phenomenon of under development grows.

On the contrary, we are convinced that a freeze of military expenditures and their gradual reduction would provide concrete steps for bringing about a balance of forces at lower levels of armaments and really strengthen security by curbing the arms race and vas preparations, thereby creating the necessary conditions for overcoming the world economic crisis and rejuvenating economic and social activity. The limitation of military expenditures, particularly by the States heavily involved in the arms race, is likewise one of the most effective and urgent measures for eliminating mistrust and establishing and strengthening confidence among States.

Those are some of the thoughts which explain the consistent interest of Romania in the matter of freezing and reducing military budgets.

As is well known, Romania has for three successive years reduced its defiance expenditures and decided recently on a freeze of its military budget until the year 1985 at the 1982 level. The resources thus saved have been and will continue to be devoted to economic development and the improvement of the standard of living of the population.

Last December Romania formulated a proposal that the countries of the two military blocs - NATO and the Warsaw Treaty - should agree by common agreement to move to a reduction by 20 per cent of their military expenditures until the year 1985, as compared with the 1982 level.
We consider as particularly important the fact that the Political Declaration of the Warsaw Treaty countries, adopted in Prague, calls on the member States of NATO to embark as soon as possible on direct negotiations on the problem of a freeze of military expenditures and their subsequent reduction in percentage or absolute terms. We are convinced that the achievement of such an agreement on this problem would be of decisive importance in improving the world political climate and increasing trust and would create the necessary conditions for agreement on more radical disarmament measures.

Pursuant to resolution 37/95 A, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly at its last session, this Commission is called upon at this session to continue work on identifying and elaborating principles governing future action by States on the question of freezing and reducing military expenditures, bearing in mind the possibility of codifying these principles in an appropriate document in due course. In the opinion of my delegation, we have before us a well-defined and precise task. As is well known, the process of identifying and elaborating these principles is based on a joint initiative by Romania and Sweden in the Commission in 1981, seeking to expedite genuine negotiations aimed at achieving international agreements on freezing and reducing military budgets.

The substantive considerations regarding the contents and the practical usefulness of these principles were submitted in full in the working paper (A/C.10/26) presented by Romania and Sweden and distributed in the Commission in 1981, as well as in our statements at recent sessions of the General Assembly and of the Commission. The principles to which we refer are contained in the Background paper annexed to the reports of the Commission in 1981 and 1982 which was drawn up after consideration of all the proposals and ideas put forward by States.
However, I should like to dwell on some more general points found in resolution 37/95 A which we believe could be appropriately reflected in the Commission's work on this problem.

First there is the urgency the resolution recognizes to stimulating action in the field of freezing and reducing military budgets. That is fully justified by the profound concern of States regarding the extremely dangerous effects of the arms race on their economies and on international peace and security.

Secondly it should be clearly established that, in addition to the task of identifying and elaborating principles which is already before the Commission for consideration, other activities going on in the United Nations concerning the problem of military budgets should be viewed as seeking the same final goal, that is, reaching agreements on the reduction of military expenditures. This should be all the more stressed since the study of certain technical aspects of the problems of verification, reporting of data and comparability is often seen as a goal in itself or a precondition to any practical action towards the reduction of military budgets.

In favour of consideration of these technical aspects, to the solution of which we are endeavouring to make a contribution, we proceed from the premise that all efforts along these lines should be mutually complementary, in harmony with each other and interacting in a single process creating the necessary conditions for the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of military budgets.

Thirdly, we wish to emphasize the responsibility of nuclear-weapon States and other militarily important States in the adoption of measures for reducing military budgets. The provisions of resolution 37/95 A in this connection are based on the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, which established the primary responsibility of those States with respect to the cessation and reduction of the arms race.

Finally, I should like to recall that that resolution recognizes the contribution that identifying and elaborating principles for freezing and reducing military budgets can make to the harmonization of the views of
States and the creation of mutual trust in the achievement of agreements on the reduction of military budgets. As we know, the resolution in its operative part contains a number of fundamental ideas which, in view of its adoption by consensus, could be the core of principles the Commission is called upon to elaborate and adopt.

Those, in our view, are the basic elements on the basis of which the Commission’s activities this year should be based as it addresses the question of the reduction of military budgets. We feel it is possible, with the joint efforts of all States and in view of the generally recognized objective of preparing principles for the reduction of military budgets, to finalize, on the basis of a constructive and very flexible approach, the identification and elaboration of principles at this session.

I should like now to turn to other subjects included in our agenda.

First, with regard to the nuclear capacity of South Africa, we believe that it constitutes a grave danger to international peace and security, in particular the security of African States and increases the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons. We view as legitimate the concern expressed by African countries and the international community in this connection and support the request contained in the relevant resolution of the General Assembly to the effect that the Committee on Disarmament should examine this question in depth in order to reach the appropriate conclusions on this serious question.

The Romanian delegation welcomes the initiative that our Commission should examine the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues which, given its new approaches and proposals, constitutes in our view a constructive and timely contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security. We hope that the Commission’s discussion of this important document will enhance its impact on world public opinion and persuade Governments to give greater attention to the concrete proposals contained in the report. In this connection, let me express the value of the concept of common security on which the report is based.
Romania has supported from the beginning the initiative of the
Federal Republic of Germany concerning confidence-building measures. A
Romanian expert took active part in the elaboration of the United Nations
study on this question some years ago. My country's delegation was one
of the sponsors of resolution 37/100 D, which requests "the Commission to
consider the elaboration of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-
building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global
or regional level."

We are fully convinced that the adoption of concrete and urgent
confidence-building measures is a type of practical action enabling all
States to contribute to improving the world political climate and creating
the necessary conditions to move on to authentic disarmament negotiations.

Those were the considerations that my delegation wished to put forward
in the framework of this general exchange of views. Of course, we reserve
the right to speak on other agenda items as they come up for consideration
in the Committee of the Whole and working groups.

I assure you once again, Mr. Chairman, of our full co-operation in the
course of the Commission's work and express the hope that the results we
achieve will contribute to promoting the cause of disarmament, peace and
international security.
Mr. TROJANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation would like to take this opportunity to make a general statement to set forth some of its ideas on the most pressing aspects of the problem of disarmament as a whole and on the basic items on the agenda of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

Before I do that, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to that responsible post. We have no doubt that you will successfully and effectively guide the Commission's work.

In our opinion, the purview of the Commission as a consultative body in which all States Members of the United Nations participate can and should promote progress in the field of disarmament. A necessary precondition for this is the demonstration by its members of a constructive approach to the discussion of the items on its agenda. The Soviet delegation is ready to adopt that approach.

The present session of the Commission is taking place in a very complex international situation. It is clear that, as a result of the further activization of the aggressive and militarist Powers, the development of world events is becoming ever more dangerous in nature. Those circles are becoming ever more insistent and want to subvert the only sensible basis for relations between States with different social systems, that is, peaceful coexistence.

Tangible progress in improving international relations which in the 1970s had an impact on the general development of world affairs is now threatened: significant damage is being done to détente, co-operation is being supplanted by confrontation, attempts are being made to undermine the peaceful foundations of inter-State relations, and the development of political contacts, as well as mutually beneficial economic and cultural links between States, is being questioned.
The arms race is entering a qualitatively new, much more dangerous, phase. It encompasses all aspects of arms, both nuclear and conventional, all types of military activity, and virtually all regions of the world.

The programmes adopted recently, and already being implemented, by the United States to develop and manufacture nuclear weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction, based on the most recent scientific discoveries and including systems for the conduct of military operations in and from outer space, will increase many times the destructive might of the United States military arsenal. That policy of arms build-up pursued by the United States and certain of its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in order to achieve military supremacy over the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries has led to a new spiral in the arms race and to the destruction of international stability.

We must realize that the amount of time left to resolve problems of disarmament and international security is limited, and is becoming shorter all the time. Given the rapid improvement of military technology, the arms race threatens to get out of control forever and to place the world on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe.

Yet again and again we hear the call to increase preparations for nuclear war, to create conditions for a victory in such a war, which, allegedly, can be both limited and protracted. The right to launch a first pre-emptive nuclear strike is being defended.

However, in a nuclear war there can be no victors. It will lead inevitably to the extermination of entire peoples, to colossal destruction and to catastrophic consequences for civilization and for life itself on this earth.

What should be done, then, to prevent this mortal danger, to achieve practical progress in the field of disarmament, and thus reduce international tension?

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, in the present complex international situation it is extremely important not to slacken — quite the contrary, to activate — efforts by all States to achieve concrete measures to prevent a nuclear war and to reverse the arms race.

For its part, the Soviet Union is making determined, consistent efforts to maintain peace and to bring about disarmament. No one can disregard its recent steps without admitting open allegiance to militaristic policies.
The Soviet Union unilaterally undertook not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. That was a decisive, bold step, given that the Western Powers have not lifted a finger to make progress in that direction. But we are still waiting for those nuclear-weapon States which have not assumed similar commitments to follow the example of the Soviet Union in accordance with the appeal made by the General Assembly at its last session. This, in practice, would be tantamount to a renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons, because if nobody uses them first then there will be no second or third nuclear strike. Such an undertaking would not require protracted negotiations or agreements: the only thing required is good will and a sincere striving for peace.

However, the United States and its NATO allies, continuing to rely on the first-use of nuclear weapons, are evading following the example of the Soviet Union. They allege that they cannot pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons because, they say, there is a threat of the use of conventional weapons, which - apparently - the USSR and its allies possess in greater quantities.

First of all, arguments regarding predominance of the conventional weapons of the USSR and its allies do not tally with the facts. Secondly, the Soviet Union proposed in 1979 that all States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, at Helsinki, reach agreement on non-first-use of both nuclear and conventional weapons. And the answer of the Western countries was, in essence, a refusal.

The Soviet Union and other States parties to the Warsaw Treaty recently said again that they were prepared to come to an agreement of this kind: that was in January of this year, when they proposed to the NATO countries that a treaty be concluded on mutual non-use of military force, including both nuclear and conventional weapons, and on maintaining peaceful relations.

Since nuclear weapons constitute the gravest threat to the existence of mankind, the Soviet Union has consistently favoured priority consideration of cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, an issue which figures on the agenda of this session of the Commission.

From our point of view, the true way to resolve this problem involves speedily embarking on negotiations to halt the production of all types of nuclear
weapons and gradually to reduce their stockpiles until their complete elimination. In this connection, we advocate the elaboration of a programme for phased nuclear disarmament and, in this context, we seek agreements on cessation of the manufacture and development of new nuclear-weapon systems and a halt to the production of fissionable materials used in the making of various types of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. All this would create conditions for proceeding to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Our proposals are on the negotiating table in the Geneva Committee on Disarmament.

As a nuclear Power which acknowledges its responsibility for the fate of the whole world, the Soviet Union approaches positively the idea of a freeze on nuclear arsenals as a first step, to be followed by truly tangible nuclear disarmament measures. For its part, the Soviet Union has stated that it is prepared to seek agreement on a mutual freeze of nuclear arsenals by all nuclear-weapon States, or, as a start, by the Soviet Union and the United States alone.

A reliable barrier to the creation of new types and systems of nuclear weapons would be a complete general cessation and prohibition of their testing. A good basis for speedy agreement on this question is found in the basic provisions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests put forward by the USSR at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. That document takes account of the level of agreement reached in recent years in the course of discussion of the question of prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing. It takes account of the ideas and wishes expressed by many States, including those regarding the question of verification. The conclusion of such a treaty would be a radical way to resolve the problem of nuclear testing.
Other priority nuclear disarmament items include the guaranteeing of positive results in the Soviet-American talks in Geneva on questions of limiting and reducing strategic weapons and limiting nuclear weapons in Europe. For its part the Soviet Union is doing everything in its power to achieve progress at these negotiations. Concrete proof of this is the new proposal on nuclear medium-range weapons in Europe put forward by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Comrade Andropov, in May this year. As members know, he said that we were prepared to seek agreement on nuclear parity in Europe in terms of launchers and number of warheads alike, bearing in mind, naturally, the weapons possessed by the United Kingdom and France. Those who say "no" to this proposal are assuming a serious responsibility vis-à-vis the people of Europe and the whole world, because each week, each day that is lost in reaching an agreement in this respect increases the nuclear threat.

The Soviet delegation would like to assure the members of the Commission that at the Geneva talks the Soviet Union is doing everything possible to find solutions which would reduce the danger of war.

The elimination of the threat of nuclear war depends to a large extent on efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. No one can have any doubt as to the serious threat to peace posed by the emergence of nuclear weapons in countries situated in regions where the danger of war is heightened, particularly in States seeking to possess them to pursue aggressive purposes.

In this context we lay great stress on the work of the Commission in examining the question of the nuclear potential of South Africa. We share the concern of many delegations, in particular those of the African countries, about the nuclear ambitions of Pretoria. The emergence of the nuclear weapon in the arsenals of the aggressive régime of South Africa would doubtless increase the threat to peace and security not only in that region but also throughout the world. Therefore, it is important that South Africa be prevailed upon to renounce its nuclear ambitions and that Western countries cease collaborating with South Africa in the development of its nuclear potential.
The Soviet Union has been consistently seeking the strengthening of the non-proliferation régime. To attain that goal, as long as the United Nations has not yet taken action, it stated that it would never use nuclear weapons against States that had renounced their production and possession and that did not have any such weapons on their territory. The Soviet Union, in the context of a treaty, is prepared to give appropriate guarantees to any of these non-nuclear-weapon countries.

One of the most effective ways to resolve this problem would be the conclusion of an appropriate international convention. However, given the negative position adopted by certain States on this, the Soviet Union has said that it would be prepared to examine another possible version. In particular, we have proposed that all nuclear weapon States make identical or near identical statements on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States that do not have such weapons on their territory. Where such statements to be in line with this goal, they could be strengthened by an authoritative decision of the Security Council of the United Nations.

An important contribution towards reducing the nuclear threat could be provided by implementation of the Political Declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, that is the conclusion of an international agreement under which nuclear weapons would not be deployed in countries where they do not exist at present and their numbers would not be increased in those countries where they have already been deployed.

In the opinion of the Soviet Union, these are the basic directions on which efforts in the United Nations should be focused in order to resolve the problem of reducing the nuclear arms race and promoting nuclear disarmament.

We believe that the Disarmament Commission would be acting correctly were it, in its report to the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, decisively to support the action of talks on nuclear disarmament and on individual measures promoting a solution. We are prepared to support any constructive proposals in this regard.

The task of eliminating nuclear arsenals should not of course make us blind to problems relating to conventional weapons and armed forces. Bearing in mind the constant improvement in, and the ever-growing might of, conventional
weapons, we must make fresh efforts for a substantial reduction in the present levels of conventional weapons and armed forces, both on a global scale and in individual regions.

As regards Central Europe, these problems have been discussed at the Vienna negotiations. The Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Treaty are doing everything to make those talks successful. Proof of that are the new proposals they put forward in February this year which, if responded to positively by the Western side, would make it possible to break the deadlock and in the near future to embark on the process of reducing the level of military confrontation in Central Europe.

The Commission will be discussing the question of reducing military budgets. Traditionally we have attached great importance to this item. In recent years the Soviet Union has put forward various proposals for breaking the deadlock in this matter of reducing military budgets.

Taking into consideration that growing military expenditures always entail an increase in the arms race, the Soviet Union, together with its friends and allies in the Warsaw Treaty, in January this year put forward another important proposal and appealed to the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to seek a practical agreement not to increase military expenditures and, subsequently, to reduce them in percentage or in absolute terms. Naturally, agreement on this matter should include all States having great military potential. The resources released as a result of reducing military expenditures would be used for economic and social development and for assistance to the developing countries.

For many years now the Soviet Union has declared its willingness to seek flexible and mutually acceptable ways of resolving the question of reduction of military budgets. Its proposals on this score, which have been introduced at the United Nations, are well known to members. Nevertheless, no progress has been made on resolving this question. The reason is that a number of States - some of them permanent members of the Security Council - have refused to achieve practical agreement on this and furthermore are inflating their military budgets at unprecedented and unrestrained levels. Proposals for comparing military budgets and the elaboration of accounting machinery cannot be considered as
anything but a stratagem which would be used to evade a reduction in military budgets. If States have the political will to reduce their military budgets, then not much time would be required to reach agreement; but, if such will is lacking, the most intricate accounting machinery would be used to increase distrust and suspicion, thus prolonging the whole matter.
The Commission also has to elaborate guiding principles for confidence-building measures. The Soviet Union is an active supporter of measures which would promote the strengthening of confidence between States, including naturally the military field. For its part, it has put forth a number of concrete proposals which would really promote greater confidence and mutual understanding among States. We are prepared to consider proposals made by other countries too. Here we are convinced that, in order to allay mutual suspicion and to establish confidence, the situation must be normalized. Propagating hostility and hatred and incitement to nuclear war must be stopped. We view seriously measures to build confidence in Europe, bearing in mind that they can help prevent the emergence of pockets of military conflict in this region, where NATO and the Warsaw Treaty military and political alliances are contiguous. Our proposals in this field are well known. The Soviet Union is ready to seek ways leading to a strengthening of security in the Far East as well. Not so long ago, we proposed that the experience gained in Europe for implementing certain measures to strengthen mutual confidence be examined with respect to this region as well. The Soviet Union is prepared to discuss this matter with the participation of the People's Republic of China and Japan on a practical level. An important contribution to the development of confidence-building measures could be provided by their extension to seas and oceans, in particular to those regions which have highly travelled sea-ways.

The Commission has on its agenda the discussion of the basic recommendations of the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. We commend the study carried out by the Palme Commission, which has adopted a sober, realistic approach to modern-day international relations and reflects the concern about the threat of a nuclear war which all thinking people of this earth feel. This authoritative Commission had as its members public figures, politicians and statesmen from 17 countries of Europe, America, Asia and Africa. The difference in ideological views, political convictions and approaches to the solution of international problems naturally could not fail to be reflected in the final document adopted by consensus. At the same time, we are pleased that the participants of the Commission managed to arrive at a general conclusion which, we feel, is of major importance, that is, that security can be achieved, not at the cost of the other side, but only by taking account of the interests of all
sides. That is, it can be truly reciprocal. Peace and security should not be based on the threat of mutual destruction.

Those are some of our views on the agenda items for this session of the Commission. We feel that States should use every opportunity to have a broad exchange of views on these items in the United Nations, as a result of which useful recommendations could be agreed on. This would be of practical importance for bodies where direct disarmament negotiations are going on. That is the approach of the Soviet delegation to the activities of the Disarmament Commission and its approach to participation in it.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): As I look around this chamber and see a number of dear colleagues with whom I have been working through the cold and gray winter months in Geneva, I am struck by the distinction between this forum and others in which disarmament issues are addressed. By virtue of the broad opportunity for participation here, we have a unique chance, enhanced by the brightness of spring, to improve our understanding of the dimensions of the problems we face, and improve our appreciation of each other's positions on the most important and complex problems facing mankind today. Yet, I cannot but be distressed to note that the majority of seats in this chamber are empty. Moreover, it is now clear that we also run the risk of providing yet another forum for those who would divert attention from specific items on which constructive work might be possible.

In the effort to avoid unhelpful distractions, I am confident that we can rely upon the able guidance of our Chairman. In this regard, Sir, may I offer my congratulations to you, Ambassador de Souza e Silva, upon your election to the chairmanship of this body. We have already benefited from your leadership in setting our course and organizing our work in what must be a record time for such a meeting. I know that we shall all profit from your wisdom, your experience, and your patience in the days ahead. To you, Sir, and to the newly elected Bureau, I offer assurances of the full co-operation of the United States delegation.

The agenda and programme of work we have set for ourselves is ambitious. I would be less than candid with members if I did not state that, in the view of the United States, some of the issues on our agenda do not merit extended consideration in this forum. Others, however, deserve our most careful attention and, in the
view of my delegation, offer an opportunity for enhancing the prospects for real progress in arms control and disarmament. When I speak of real progress, I have in mind, for example, the subject of confidence-building measures. In the opinion of my delegation, our discussion of this subject could provide a very useful impetus for important efforts already under way, and could also reveal new areas in which initiatives profitably could be undertaken.

The United States has a strong commitment to such measures. Last November President Reagan proposed a series of confidence-building measures to lessen the risk of nuclear war by accident, misunderstanding, or miscalculation, and the United States will continue to explore other possibilities. We are pleased that the Federal Republic of Germany has focused attention on this important issue, through General Assembly resolution 37/100 D, which the United States and a number of other countries co-sponsored last fall. That resolution requested the Disarmament Commission "to consider the elaboration of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures". I am confident that our discussions in the working group will be fruitful under the able and skilful leadership of Ambassador Wegener, and we look forward to working with him on this item.
For a number of years, the subject of the reduction of military budgets has been on our agenda. In the view of the United States, there is a serious question as to the value of further discussion of this issue at this time and in this forum. As the United States delegation has consistently emphasized in this Commission and in the First Committee of the General Assembly, any possible consideration of reductions is necessarily dependent upon the participation of all States in the reporting of military expenditures. The General Assembly has repeatedly endorsed the goal of open reporting of military expenditures, and a United Nations experts group is at work on the task of improving comparability of statistics. At the second special session on disarmament last year, President Reagan underscored United States interest in the matter and proposed the convening of an international conference to give added impetus to the reporting of military expenditures.

The United States will continue to seek practical progress towards universal reporting of military expenditures in accordance with the approved United Nations format. Until there is open reporting by all concerned — reporting which permits realistic comparison and verification — any meaningful discussion of reductions, or the principles on the basis of which agreements could be reached, is pointless. How can we begin to compare military expenditures with a view to mutual reduction in military budgets if some nations keep their military budgets shrouded in secrecy? How can we hope to set out on the long road of genuine disarmament if we cannot even have an open and honest picture of present military expenditures? The United States sees no prospects for progress in the area of reducing military expenditures until States at least take the first step to reveal this basic element of their military data. Hence, we cannot seriously support continued work on the elaboration of principles which would govern further action of States in the field of reducing military expenditures until there is true progress on reporting those expenditures.
We note the creation of a Working Group to address the question of South Africa's nuclear capability. I do not wish to address the subject at length here, but I will merely note that the United States has long recognized the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and we have laboured hard to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. We have consistently urged all nations to adhere to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to accept comprehensive safeguards under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We consider an Africa free of nuclear weapons a desirable goal, and we are encouraged that the vast majority of African States are party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We urge all States to follow their example.

In these, my opening remarks, I had not intended to address all items on our agenda—much less, items which do not appear on our agenda. However, to my regret, I have noted that a number of delegations have found themselves unable to resist taking advantage of this opportunity which our meeting affords to seek to advance their own political purposes through distorted and ill-founded characterizations of the international situation and the United States commitment to arms control. I will not tax my colleagues' patience by a point-by-point rebuttal of these specious charges, which are refuted by the facts themselves—and I shall let them speak for themselves.

Let me assure all in this room that the United States is unwaveringly committed to the objective of preventing war—not just nuclear war, but any conflict which has the potential to expand and to raise the spectre of the use of nuclear weapons. We seek a stable international climate in which all nations can live in peace with their neighbours, free from the threat of aggression. We are totally committed to the Charter of the United Nations. In this United Nations forum, we find it especially disheartening to hear hollow proposals, such as that calling for a new treaty on the non-use of
force - a proposal which can only imply that some delegations in this room do not take their existing obligations under the Charter of the United Nations seriously, as does the United States.

Disarmament does not promote stability and the collective security of nations and peoples cannot promote a just peace. Arms control is not an end in itself but must be seen as part of a broad effort to create an international situation in which peace and justice are strengthened.

Arms control agreements which are not effectively verifiable cannot contribute to a stable world order. We simply will not gamble with the safety of our people and the people of the world. Arms control agreements must be equal and balanced.

With these principles in mind, the United States has undertaken a comprehensive programme of arms control initiatives. In February, in Geneva, Vice President Bush committed the United States to negotiation of a total and verifiable ban on chemical weapons, which I regret to say continue to be used against defenceless people, in violation of existing international law.

Together with our allies, we have offered a comprehensive new proposal for mutual and balanced reductions of conventional forces in Central Europe.

We have proposed to the Soviet Union a series of further measures to reduce the risk of war from accident or miscalculation.

We have proposed to the Soviet Union that we meet to discuss possible means for improving the verification measures contained in two agreements which limit underground nuclear testing.

We have also made far-reaching proposals for deep reductions in the most destabilizing strategic and intermediate-range nuclear-weapons systems. In the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), we have proposed reducing the number of ballistic missiles by one-half and the number of warheads by
one-third. This could leave both sides with greater security at equal and lower levels of forces. In the intermediate nuclear force proposals, we seek to eliminate an entire class of weapons -- nuclear weapons -- from the face of the earth. A zero option remains our preferred solution, but we are also prepared to be flexible and negotiate an interim agreement to reduce the planned North Atlantic Treaty Organization deployment if the Soviet Union will reduce its corresponding warheads to an equal level.

Faced with the awesome threat of nuclear war, with consequences too horrible to contemplate, none of us can afford to fail to do everything in our power to work for the prevention of nuclear war. But in order for that effort to be effective, we must tackle the problem at its roots. None of us can be blind to the aggressive behavior we see around us, nor can we be fooled or misled by empty gestures and rhetoric. The existence of nuclear arsenals does not cause aggression.

These are the considerations that shape the participation of the United States in this Commission. It is our hope that here, in this forum which provides an opportunity for the broadest exchange of views, we may seriously work together towards real progress. For our part, we look forward to continuing this effort under your able leadership, Sir.
Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I should like to begin by conveying our sincere congratulations to you on the well-deserved distinction you have been given in being elected to preside over the 1983 session of the Disarmament Commission. This will enable all members of the Commission to benefit from the sound judgement, thorough knowledge and great experience you have so often demonstrated in your constructive guidance of the Committee on Disarmament.

In this statement I wish to confine myself to expressing some brief considerations which should help us, in the first place, to bear in mind what the Disarmament Commission is, what its functions are and how it should work and, secondly, some considerations which may help to assess the situation now being faced by the Commission with respect to disarmament questions.

With respect to the former question, I think I can do nothing better than to return to the origins of the Commission which, as members know, may be found in paragraph 118 of the Final Document, adopted by consensus in 1978, which was unanimously and categorically reaffirmed by all member States hardly ten months ago at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

It is perfectly clear from that paragraph 118 that the Disarmament Commission is a deliberative body "a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly": that its function shall be "to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament": that that function also extends to the following up of "the relevant decisions and recommendations" of the special session of the Assembly in 1978: that the Commission shall meet every year and submit to the Assembly an annual report on the results of its work; and, last but not least, that it shall function under the rules of procedure relating to the committees of the General Assembly, while at the same time it "shall make every effort to ensure that, in so far as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus".

We have the impression that, unfortunately, there has been a marked tendency in some sectors of the United Nations, small but very influential sectors, to forget the content of these provisions which we might call the "constitutional provisions" of the Disarmament Commission. This is why it seems appropriate to recall that there is a chasm between these and those of paragraph 120 of the same document which made it mandatory for the Disarmament Commission to adopt
its decisions by consensus. The 'every effort' mentioned in paragraph 118
should be understood, as is expressly stated in that paragraph, as something
that will occur "in so far as possible" and it is logical to presume that this
implies a reciprocal effort, an effort not only on the part of the members
advocating the majority positions.

This Commission, which is a deliberative, subsidiary body of the General
Assembly, that is to say, a body which essentially should be viewed as
fundamentally identical to the First Committee of the Assembly itself, would
otherwise be weakened in its very essence and in its functions. We would run the
risk of having the same thing happen here that has happened with the Committee in
Geneva, where a very small number of States, sometimes two or even one, have
paralysed the proceedings through exercising the kind of veto to which the so-called
rule of consensus has become in practice.

To realize how this has happened it is enough to examine the documents
listed in the Secretary-General's note, A/CH.10/37, to which my delegation
would like to propose, parenthetically, that the Secretariat add the
verbatim records of the first part of the session of the Committee for this year,
that is, the records extending from CD/190 of 1 February 1983 to CD/216 of
20 April last.

From reading those documents we note a number of facts that would seem
incomprehensible if they were not expressly shown in an incontrovertible way
in that context.

First, in the recent spring meeting of the Committee it was necessary to
waste nearly two-thirds of the session in achieving the inscription on the agenda
of a topic relating to the prevention of nuclear war. Such a thing is even more
incomprehensible if we recall that the General Assembly, in a resolution adopted
on 9 December 1982 by 130 votes to none, requested the Committee to undertake
negotiations as a matter of highest priority on that question. Moreover, if
the item is now finally included on the Committee's agenda, in practice progress
on the item has been almost non-existent, because there persists opposition to the
formation of an ad hoc working group on the question as proposed in early April
by the Group of 21.
Secondly, a similar situation exists with regard to the item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". Although the two or three delegations that opposed the establishment last year of an ad hoc working group on this subject seem to have been reduced to the veto of a single delegation, it is still impossible to achieve that procedural result on which such importance has been placed.

Thirdly, the establishment of another similar group, one that has been advocated since 1980 both by the Group of 21 and the Group of Socialist States, has not been achieved. That group would bring about the initiation of multilateral negotiations on one of the two items with the highest priority on the Committee's agenda, namely, the item entitled "Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament".

Fourthly, basically similar conditions prevail with respect to another item — this one now more than a quarter of a century old — that has been at the top of the Committee's agenda ever since it began work in 1979. I refer to the item entitled "Nuclear Test Ban". Two of three nuclear-weapon States that act as depositaries of what we call the partial test-ban Treaty signed in 1963 and of the Non-Proliferation Treaty that was opened for signature in 1968 continue to maintain a stance that is patently in contradiction with the solemn undertakings into which they entered in those two Treaties. This is all the more regrettable when we consider that the persistence of that attitude could once again lead to a failure of the Committee's efforts to fulfil the task entrusted to it by the General Assembly in the Final Document of 1978 and which the Assembly reiterated during the second special session on disarmament, namely, the elaboration of a comprehensive disarmament programme that would be consonant with the definition that the Assembly included in paragraph 109 of the Document and of which the Committee is required to submit a revised draft to the Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.
(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

The cases I have just put forward as examples to illustrate the paralysis that prevails in the Committee on Disarmament with regard to all of the items that fall within that category, namely, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, which the General Assembly and the Committee itself have always agreed deserve the maximum priority, clearly show in my opinion what type of "recommendations" this Commission should formulate and what complementary measures - to use the terms of paragraph 118 of the Final Document - the Commission should adopt if we wish to contribute effectively to the urgent task set forth in paragraph 17, namely, "to translate into practical terms the provisions of this Final Document and to proceed along the road of binding and effective international agreements in the field of disarmament".

The Assembly was surely moved by a similar consideration when it adopted - by consensus - resolution A/37/78 H, in which, inter alia it requests the Disarmament Commission

'to direct its attention at each substantive session to specific subjects';

and

"to make concrete recommendations on such subjects to the subsequent session of the Assembly". (A/37/78 H)

In view of the foregoing, my delegation takes the view that in examining the recommendations and proposals contained in the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues also known as the Palme Commission after its Chairman, Olaf Palme the Prime Minister of Sweden - a report that has been issued in all the working languages in document A/CN.10/36 - we should give priority to the idea of establishing in central Europe a zone free of tactical nuclear weapons, a zone whose geographical limitations, along with verification procedures and other relevant provisions, would have to be urgently negotiated among the members of the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
There are many reasons that militate in favour of establishing a zone of that type. In the Palme Commission's report we find a thorough explanation of those reasons, and I shall therefore quote from it in concluding my statement. I should like to quote two of the paragraphs that seem to me to be most meaningful in this regard:

"Battlefield nuclear weapons, as well as nuclear air defence systems and atomic demolition munitions, raise important problems of stability. Air defence systems would likely create pressures for delegation of authority to use them before combat actually was initiated. Battlefield weapons also would create pressures for early use in any armed conflict. Their location near the front lines of any war would mean that political leaders may face a choice early in a conflict of either authorizing the use of battlefield weapons or watching them be overrun. Each side's fears that the other side might resort to 'first use' could intensify crises and multiply the dangers of the initiation of nuclear conflict and its escalation.

"Both sides may perceive battlefield weapons as links in a chain of deterrence from conventional to strategic nuclear warfare, made necessary by the existence of similar weapons on the other side. Security for both sides would improve if these weapons were mutually reduced and withdrawn. These weapons are currently not the subject of East-West negotiations. They should be, and urgently. (A/CN.10/38, pp.111-112)
Mr. ROA KOURI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your election to preside over this Commission and also on the manner in which you have organized our programme of work, which we are certain will contribute positively to the carrying out of our task.

It is clear that the dangers to world peace have been increasing in recent years and that never before has our planet been faced with so great a danger of world-wide nuclear disaster which could be the final disaster.

The arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, has become a grave danger to mankind: in addition to the dire consequences of a possible nuclear holocaust, the arms race is harmful in other ways, for the billions of dollars being wasted on this deadly race would, if used to promote development, make it possible to improve substantially the quality of life on this planet which we all share. Those billions of dollars would constitute an effective weapon for the eradication of hunger, ignorance, disease, economic underdevelopment and other hardships which the people of the world are suffering. However, they are being used exclusively to make possible the extermination of human beings and the destruction of schools, hospitals, factories and of all that gives meaning to life.

The arms race, in which the countries of the world in 1982 invested approximately $600 billion, is a race which applies the most sophisticated technology to creating devices for the destruction of mankind: it is a matter no longer of conventional weapons alone but of other new weapons, such as chemical, neutron, radiological and biological weapons.

The peoples of the world have repeatedly demonstrated their opposition to and concern with this dangerous turn of the arms race. In particular, the Non-Aligned Movement has waged a tireless struggle against the arms race and in favour of disarmament, as may be seen in the Final Declarations of its Conferences of Heads of State or Government, which invariably have included appeals for world peace and the security of all nations, for peaceful coexistence and for the democratization of international relations. As is clearly set forth in the Final Declaration of the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of
Non-Aligned Countries held in New Delhi, disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, has ceased to be a purely moral question but has above all become the problem of human survival. In contradiction of all these aspirations, the present Government of the United States continues to pursue a warlike policy based on an attempt to achieve nuclear superiority, which constantly increases the danger of a confrontation of devastating proportions, although it already possesses arsenals capable of destroying several times over the world as we know it and everything that man has created.

In this dangerous setting, it is most distressing to note the lack of progress in disarmament negotiations and the failure of the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, as a result of the stubbornness with which some cling to unacceptable doctrines of military supremacy, the so-called balance of terror and deterrence and the concept of limited nuclear war. The efforts to achieve a general disarmament programme and other disarmament measures, particularly as regards nuclear disarmament, failed similarly as a result of the inflexibility of the positions adopted by some of the principal Powers.

Therefore we feel that the principles and priorities contained in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament are as urgent and valid as ever and that accordingly we should work to implement the objectives and measures set forth therein.

Similarly, my delegation takes the view that the United Nations has a role and a primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament and that this Commission, as the only multilateral negotiating body in this field, should fulfil its mandate and adopt concrete disarmament measures, particularly as regards nuclear disarmament. It is for this Commission to examine and propose effective measures aimed at hastening negotiations to prevent the danger of nuclear war, and we feel that, among the tasks before us, this task of preventing the possibility of nuclear war is one of the most urgent. Therefore we must place at the service of peace all the forces that we represent as countries of the international community in order to achieve that aim. We must seek a commitment on the part of the nuclear Powers that none of them will be the first to use nuclear weapons. Any effort aimed at achieving military supremacy
should be rejected, and an initial freezing, followed by a gradual reduction, of weapons of this type should be sought until their final elimination is achieved.

In the Final Declaration of New Delhi the Heads of State or Government meeting there embodied important initiatives relating to the elimination of the nuclear danger and the arms race, which we view as being of great importance in our consideration of this subject, because they reflect the desires of the peoples of the world for peace and tranquillity.

In connection with the reduction of military budgets - a subject which cannot be divorced from the arms race and general and complete disarmament - it is apparent that there is an urgent need to halt the increase in military budgets and to make efforts to devote those resources to the economic development of nations, particularly the underdeveloped countries. It is clear that the inordinate growth of military budgets is directly linked to the aggressive and militaristic policies of the imperialist countries, principally the United States and its NATO allies, some of which are now also bent on carrying the arms race into outer space.

The efforts of the present United States Administration to prevent the independent economic and social progress of peoples are clearly reflected in the crisis situations existing in the Middle East, in southern Africa, in Central America and in the Caribbean, where it is sponsoring, financing and arming the racist régimes of Israel and Pretoria, organizing counter-revolutionary bands to destabilize the Governments of Nicaragua and Grenada and maintaining a policy of hostility and threat towards Cuba.

One of the questions that have prompted opposition among all the non-aligned countries is that relating to the efforts of the racist régime of South Africa to achieve nuclear capability, evidence of its determination to continue to maintain its hold over southern Africa. The continued collaboration of certain Western countries and Israel with the Pretoria régime, both in the military field and in the economic and financial fields, strengthens Israel's intransigence and expansionist aims.
In this connection my delegation feels it is indispensable to impose against South Africa the sanctions provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter and once again to urge all Governments and international organizations to break all links with the apartheid régime.

We have carefully studied the recommendations and proposals contained in the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues which are clearly positive in character, especially with regard to measures aimed at preventing nuclear war. Although there is a generally positive and important approach, certain measures — such as that pertaining to the SALT II agreement — are less positive and important; however we feel that we should urge its ratification and not simply make certain adjustments in it.

With reference to the item relating to confidence-building measures and the implementation of such measures at the world or regional level, we believe there needs to be an exhaustive analysis of the measures proposed and the way in which they may be implemented. We understand that positive action aimed at fostering trust and, hence, international peace and security would be the cessation of the aggressive policy against countries such as Cuba, Grenada, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique, among many others, which are attempting to build just and independent societies in conformity with the free will of their peoples. In other words, the establishment of confidence-building measures should be closely related to an effort not to poison the international climate and cease hostile and aggressive actions.

The work ahead of our Commission is of course of great importance. If there is the necessary political will, we shall be able to contribute with our recommendations and suggestions to initiating a true world process in favour of general and complete disarmament and diminishing the danger of a war with disastrous consequences for all. We believe that by such a contribution we can save the resources being wasted on the arms race and enormous military budgets, as well as begin a new phase for all those throughout the world who are enduring hunger, are homeless, have no schools and jobs, and are suffering and dying from diseases which today are curable in any developed country.
Mr. Roa-Kouri, Cuba

My country loves peace. Our greatest wish is to see ignorance, hunger, racial discrimination and social injustice eliminated from the face of the earth. It is with that purpose in mind that we have come to work within this Commission for a world without weapons of mass destruction and an arms race, a world where there is no longer any room for the philosophy of plunder, which is the philosophy of war.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: There are still four names inscribed on the list of speakers. It is therefore my intention to proceed with those general statements in the afternoon. After we have concluded the list of speakers, it is my intention immediately after the plenary meeting to convene the Committee of the Whole for two purposes: first, to make some announcements concerning future arrangements for and organization of our work and, secondly, to introduce agenda item 4.
The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m. and resumed at 3.35 p.m.

Mr. LIANG YUFAN (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The Chinese delegation would like to extend warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this session of the Disarmament Commission. We are convinced that with your outstanding diplomatic talents, you will certainly be able to guide our session's work to a successful conclusion. Our delegation will do its best to cooperate fully with you.

As many other delegations have already pointed out in their statements, this session of our Commission is meeting against a background of continued tension and turbulence in the international situation. The global rivalry between the super-Powers is growing ever more acute, while the arms race aiming at winning military superiority is developing on a wider scale between these two countries. The threat of war is on the rise. This reality once again reminds us that the root-cause for the failure of disarmament to make progress lies in the super-Powers' policy of struggling for hegemony.

In order to achieve progress in disarmament, it is necessary to demand a halt to their arms race, a halt to their global rivalry. We sincerely hope that these two countries will comply with the demand of the peoples of the world and shoulder their special responsibility towards disarmament.

We agreed to the agenda and programme of work for this session. Of course, as far as our own wishes are concerned and in view of the fact that the Disarmament Commission has its own features which are essentially different from those of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva and the First Committee of the General Assembly, we think scheduling a few items for discussion will enable us to concentrate on one or two substantive issues and achieve better results.
This is a matter which involves the question of how to make the Disarmament Commission more effective in the future. If this could be further explored at an appropriate time, it would certainly be useful.

Among the five items on the agenda, the question of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war calls for further discussion in the view of many non-aligned countries and non-nuclear States. In the context of the continued stepping-up of the nuclear arms race between the super-Powers, such a demand is justified. We can fully understand such a demand and fully support it.
China was compelled, in the face of grave nuclear threat, to develop its limited nuclear strength. Our nuclear weapons are there only to deal with the nuclear war menace imposed on us and not to be used as nuclear blackmail against any country. That is why, from the very first day when we possessed nuclear weapons, we have solemnly declared that at no time and under no circumstances will we be the first to use nuclear weapons. We also unconditionally assumed the obligation of not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear State.

China has repeatedly pointed out that only after the super-Powers have taken the lead in halting the nuclear arms race and drastically reduced their nuclear arsenals, will we be willing to join other nuclear countries in adopting further measures for nuclear disarmament. These proposals of ours show that we sincerely wish to see the realization of nuclear disarmament and the elimination of the dangers of a nuclear war. We shall participate in the discussion of this item in this spirit.

As for the two items on the reduction of military budgets and the nuclear capability of South Africa, they have been deliberated many times in the Disarmament Commission and still no correct conclusion could be reached. This is not as it should be. The delegation of Romania and many other countries have made tremendous efforts in pushing forward the discussion of the item on the reduction of military budgets. It is our hope that on this basis this session of the Commission will be able to come to a conclusion acceptable to all parties.

We are also particularly concerned with the question of the nuclear capability of South Africa. This issue not only involves the interests of the African countries but also affects the peace and stability of the whole international community. We resolutely support the efforts of the African countries against the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the South African racist régime. It is our hope that the delegations present at this session will take into full account the large number of facts already uncovered, respect the wishes and interests of the African States and peoples and through discussion draw up generally effective measures to stop the South African racist régime from obtaining nuclear weapons.

As for the elaboration of guidelines for confidence-building measures, we shall present our views on this question in future meetings.
Mr. Liang Yufan, China:

We have noted that the report submitted by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues is a study made by a non-governmental organization. A number of delegations wish to have this report discussed in the Commission and we respect their request. Some interesting views are raised in this report, but the Chinese delegation deems it necessary to point out that this report actually referred more than once to our Taiwan province as a State. As is known by all, Taiwan is a part of China's sacred territory. The whole Chinese nation, including our compatriots in Taiwan, are now striving for the return of Taiwan to the motherland and for the reunification of our country. Any act or speech propounding the erroneous talk of one China and one Taiwan, or two Chinas, will be strongly opposed by us. It is therefore regrettable that the erroneous reference I have mentioned just now should have occurred.

Mr. Espeche Gil (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish):

Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Your personal abilities and your experience have been revealed with great benefit to the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva and previously here in New York as well. Moreover, your election is well-deserved recognition of the distinguished role played by Brazil in the field of disarmament negotiations. I would request you to extend Argentina's congratulations to the members of the Bureau and to the Secretariat of the Commission.

The agenda of the present session contains five substantive items. On this occasion, my delegation wishes to refer to some particular aspects of one of those items, that pertaining to the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, which is item 4 on our programme of work.

The principles applying to negotiations on nuclear disarmament and generally to efforts to end the nuclear-arms race have been best expressed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That document was reaffirmed by consensus nearly a year ago.

The essential facts of the analysis of the arms race are reflected in the study by the Secretary-General entitled "Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons", which was published as document A/35/392. That study is referred to in General Assembly resolutions 33/91 D and 35/156. Other important aspects
pertaining to the nuclear weapons dimension can also be found in the study on nuclear-weapon-free zones, referred to in resolution 3473 (XXX). An updated version of that study is now being carried out in conformity with General Assembly resolution 37/99 F.

If we look at the facts of the international reality concerning the arms race and compare them with the noble aspirations expressed in the documents I have mentioned, the contrast could hardly be more striking. These sessions are taking place against a background of five years of meetings during which, as you yourself, Sir, so rightly said in your introductory statement, the Committee on Disarmament has not succeeded in producing a single disarmament agreement.

Moreover, we can now perceive adverse trends which it would be dangerous to try to ignore: first, the continued escalation in the geographical deployment of weapons of mass destruction; secondly, the development and spread of the neutron bomb; thirdly, the use of nuclear energy with a view to consolidating racism and all forms of discrimination, domination and colonialism; fourthly, the strengthening of military budgets with a view to speeding up the nuclear-arms race and the military uses of nuclear power; and fifthly, the concern expressed by the members of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-aligned Countries with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy when it met recently in Havana.
They considered
"the most serious implications of the military and naval manoeuvres
and other operations being carried out by the nuclear weapon countries
in which nuclear power is being used for non-peaceful purposes and
in which nuclear weapons are being deployed in proximity to States that
do not possess nuclear weapons, endangering the security of non aligned
countries."

My delegation has mentioned some tendencies that need to be rechannelled
before it is too late. But it is also necessary to refer to certain specific
events that are extremely grave and that are closely related to such nuclear
aspects of disarmament as nuclear-weapon-free zones and the security guarantees
provided by the nuclear Powers - events that, we hope, will not grow into a
trend.

The unjustified attack against the nuclear-power plant in Iraq is one such
event. The adoption of effective measures for the protection of nuclear-power
plants is a necessary response to that incident. It is to be hoped that the efforts
being exerted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Committee
on Disarmament and the United Nations in general will lead to concrete results
in this regard.

Almost exactly a year ago however another event occurred that, in my
delegation's judgement, was extremely grave and has yet to be satisfactorily
resolved. I am referring to the most recent occasion on which nuclear power
was used for military purposes, causing with premeditation the loss of more
than 300 human lives. That event occurred in a geographical area created by
countries that had committed themselves to use nuclear facilities and materials
exclusively for peaceful purposes within it. The nuclear Power responsible
for that crime was committed not to use nuclear power for military purposes in
that area of Latin America. However, it violated its commitment. It did so
by invoking the British doctrine according to which

"promises against first use of this or that kind of military weapon ...
can never be dependable amid the stresses of war."

These are the words of Mrs. Margaret Thatcher as they appear in
My delegation, like other delegations that have framed these charges before the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament, is fully aware of the grave implications of this infringement by the United Kingdom. I am referring specifically to the statement by Ambassador Carassés in the Committee on Disarmament on 8 March of this year.

Within a few days, the eighth General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL) will be held in Jamaica, from 16 to 19 May. The States parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty will have an opportunity to adopt, within the specific framework of the machinery set up by that Treaty, appropriate measures to confront this unprecedented situation: the perpetuation of which must at all costs be avoided.

Aware of the implications of those events, the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, meeting at the Havana Conference to which I referred earlier, stated:

"The massive military and naval presence and activities of the United Kingdom within and around the Malvinas Islands and the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands are cause for grave concern to the countries of the region and adversely affect the stability of the area which constitutes the Latin-American nuclear weapon-free zone."

In addition to the illegal use of nuclear energy for military purposes by the United Kingdom, there is its responsibility for the introduction of nuclear weapons into that zone, which is also a violation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but, as I have stated earlier, more thorough consideration will be given these questions next week at the OPANAL Conference.
In any event, given the fact that a certain sector of the British press is being used to spread malicious rumours, I wish to reiterate here once again the formal commitment of the Republic of Argentina in connection with the Treaty of Tlatelolco made at the Seventh General Conference of OPANAL. On that occasion, the Argentine representative, Mr. Jose Maria Otegui, stated:

"My country's accession to the International Convention on the Law of Treaties - the Vienna Convention - and its authentic and firm political stand against the military uses of nuclear power, guarantee to the international community as a whole and to Latin America in particular, Argentina's absolute fidelity to the spirit of the basic commitment undertaken in signing the Treaty of Tlatelolco."

Later in his statement, he said:

"The Argentine Government is firmly convinced of the imperative necessity of preventing the proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, of nuclear weapons and of the urgency of nuclear disarmament; it is therefore a firm supporter of the spirit and the letter of the Treaty of Tlatelolco."

In addition, the Republic of Argentina does not wish to have, does not need and does not possess nuclear arms, and it is fulfilling the letter and the spirit of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, whereas the United Kingdom is making a mockery of it.

Ambassador Theorin of Sweden stated yesterday that

"The world does not need more nuclear weapons: it needs less."

(A/CN.10/PV.66, p. 28)

I would add that the world does not need any.

Fortunately, the events and trends we have observed have not all been negative. It is only fair to point out that at least one encouraging sign has emerged out of the growing awareness by the world's population of the dangers emanating from the very existence of nuclear weapons.
I refer in particular to growing trends of public opinion in favour of the adoption of measures leading to a nuclear-weapon freeze. That English word "freeze" has indeed become a byword which has already led to the adoption of some resolutions in the United Nations. At the same time various sectors of public opinion are mobilizing within the countries that have opted to possess nuclear weapons.

It is also encouraging to note that the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, meeting in New Delhi in March this year, stated the following:

"The non-aligned countries, speaking for the majority of the world community, want an immediate halt to the drift towards nuclear conflict which threatens not only the well-being of humanity in our times but of future generations as well. The nuclear-weapon Powers must heed this voice of the people of the world. From all indications, 1983 may be a crucial year for nuclear disarmament. We urge the nuclear-weapon Powers to adopt urgent and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war. They should agree on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances and stop further production and deployment of nuclear weapons. It is also essential that they observe existing arms limitation agreements while seeking to negotiate broader and more effective programmes leading to general and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, under international supervision." (A/38/132, p. 55, para. 4)

Mr. Chairman, I should not conclude my statement without expressly mentioning my delegation's satisfaction at the effective and skilful manner in which you have organized our work. With regard to the remaining agenda items, we shall make our contribution during the deliberations in the respective Working Groups, with a view to the adoption of specific recommendations whenever possible.
Mr. ERDENECHULJIN (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, the Mongolian delegation first would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Disarmament Commission for 1983 and to wish you success in carrying out your important functions. We should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Commission.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission is considering important items on its agenda. The mandate for our work is clearly spelled out in the six relevant resolutions adopted at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. There are also new items among them which the Commission will be taking up. These include the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues - entitled 'Common Security' - and the item on conference-building measures. The Mongolian delegation expresses the hope that the Commission, pursuant to the appeal made by the General Assembly, will be more active in its work in considering the various disarmament items on its agenda and submit specific recommendations to the thirty-eighth session in order to promote the solution of outstanding issues.

We believe that the present world situation requires a redoubling of efforts in all directions. The situation is extremely complex and tense. The arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race whipped up by the imperialist circles in the West, primarily the United States, has become much more dangerous. New defense concepts are being invented, such as the large-scale, highly effective anti-missile defense concept. Activities are being stepped up to turn outer space into an arena for the arms race.

That the effectiveness of agreements and treaties previously concluded in the disarmament field is being questioned is extremely dangerous. In a word, the trend towards overarmament is pushing the world to a nuclear chasm from which there is no return. That is why the Government of the People's Republic of Mongolia welcomed the unilateral undertaking by the Soviet Union not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. It is unnecessary to stress the importance of the adoption of a similar commitment by the other nuclear Powers that have not yet given such a commitment. That was the appeal made at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.
The many constructive initiatives taken by the socialist countries, provide, we feel, a realistic basis for resolving vital disarmament problems and promoting international co-operation in the maintenance of peace and security. An obvious demonstration of this has been the Political Declaration of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty adopted in January this year in Prague. It reflects the resolve of the countries of the socialist community to do everything in their power to bring about a turning-point in the world situation so as to promote international détente and the maintenance and strengthening of universal peace and security.

In the present acute situation we stress in particular the exceptional importance of the proposal on the conclusion of a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations between the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the members of NATO, which would be open to all other countries. A mutual commitment not to be the first to use either nuclear or conventional weapons against each other and, hence, not to use military force against each other at all would create the necessary political and legal basis for the adoption of specific measures to limit and reduce both nuclear and conventional weapons in Europe. Doubtless this would have a highly positive impact on the international climate as a whole.

In its statement dated 17 January 1983 the Government of Mongolia totally supported the proposals of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty as being a realistic alternative to a thermo-nuclear catastrophe which threatens human life and civilization.

An important contribution towards promoting efforts to prevent a nuclear war is being made by the Non-Aligned Movement. The Seventh Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries was undoubtedly an important milestone in these efforts. Today the anti-war movement is gaining ground in world public opinion and it encompasses the broadest strata of society. An important example of this is the growing movement to bring about a freeze of nuclear weapons. All this attests to increasing concern of the peoples of the world at the ever-growing threat of a nuclear catastrophe and the need to take concrete measures to halt the arms race and bring about disarmament.
The negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons and also nuclear medium range weapons in Europe are of exceptional importance, because they affect the vital interests of all peoples of the world. One must be seriously concerned at the manoeuvres such as the 'zero option' or the recent so-called interim solution, which disregard the basic principles of equality and equal security and constitute the main obstacle to achieving mutually acceptable agreements.
Apart from questions of nuclear disarmament, the Commission has other important questions on its agenda. One of them is the reduction of military budgets. Every year they increase and, according to some calculations, they have exceeded $600 billion. A further exacerbation of the arms race would inevitably lead to a continuation of this dangerous trend. It is urgently necessary to achieve agreement on this question.

The proposals of the socialist countries are well known to representatives. The most recent was that of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty to States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to embark, as soon as possible, on direct negotiations on the question of the non-increase of military budgets and their subsequent reduction in percentage or absolute terms. All one needs is the demonstration of political will and a willingness to reach agreement.

Mongolia attaches great importance to enhancing the atmosphere of confidence among States. Measures undertaken in this direction promote détente and the development of mutually advantageous co-operation in various fields of creative activity. That was precisely what guided the People’s Republic of Mongolia when in May 1981 it put forward a proposal to conclude a convention on non-aggression and the non-use of force in relations among the countries of Asia and the Pacific. The purpose of that proposal was to outlaw the use of force in international relations, and to strengthen mutual understanding and confidence, so that all controversial issues be resolved by peaceful means.

The Mongolian delegation highly commends the delegation of Sweden for its initiative to consider the recommendations and proposals contained in the report on common security, prepared by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. We view that report as a positive contribution to the over-all effort to lessen the danger of nuclear war, to curb the arms race and to achieve disarmament.

An important place in our work is to be given to consideration of the item on the nuclear capability of South Africa, whose activities constitute a serious threat not only for peoples of Africa but also for
the world at large. We cannot allow the racist régime to have the nuclear weapon in its hands.

In conclusion, the Mongolian delegation intends to speak on other items in the appropriate Working Groups.

Mr. BALVE (India): It gives me great pleasure to offer you, Sir, the sincere felicitations of my delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I have no doubt that with you at the helm we shall be able to achieve important results during the course of our work in the next few weeks.

I should also like to congratulate all the other officers of the Commission who have been elected to assist you in your difficult assignment. My delegation pledges its full support and co-operation to you and the Bureau in the discharge of your responsibilities.

It is imperative that the present session of the Disarmament Commission adopt concrete and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war. The peril we face is immediate. We cannot afford to wait, since in this age of nuclear weapons every day is in fact a borrowed day.

If the consequences of the arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspect, are not of the utmost relevance to the community of nations, we wonder what else can have the same priority. It is for that reason that my delegation is of the view that agenda item 4 (a) and (b) must continue to occupy the priority attention of a deliberative body such as the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

The case for a total prohibition on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons rests on very strong moral and legal grounds. It is morally and ethically abhorrent that a State or group of States should seek to pursue its national security by means which constitute a threat of mass annihilation. Often it is said that, as a result of the nuclear threat, mankind is on the brink of self-extinction. This kind of statement erroneously conveys a sense of inevitability of the nuclear threat and the meek submission of all nations to this threat. The fact is that it is a handful of nations armed with nuclear
weapons which threaten the world with mass destruction. The majority of the nations of this world are not perverted participants in some kind of multilateral suicide pact. They are the involuntary intended victims of a strategy of mass annihilation.

If two nations or two groups of nations are at war, the consequences of that war should be confined to the belligerents. If any nation as a matter of policy decides not to be involved in a conflict among other States, it has the right to be spared the consequences of such a conflict. No one questions this principle. In fact, it is applied almost routinely to matters relating to relations among States in contemporary international life. Why is it that this principle is suspended when we come to deal with nuclear weapons? After all, in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament the entire membership of the United Nations stated collectively and unanimously that a nuclear war would have "devastating consequences for belligerents and non-belligerents alike". Can any nuclear-weapon State or any State allied to it guarantee that the effects of the use of nuclear weapons would be strictly limited to national or regional boundaries of States possessing nuclear weapons or those protected by their so-called nuclear umbrellas? A vast number of studies have been conducted in this field, and the unanimous verdict of these studies is that such control over the effects of the use of nuclear weapons is not possible.

The Commission itself has recognized that "among destruction as a result of nuclear war" and that "the increase in weapons, especially nuclear weapons, far from helping to strengthen international security on the contrary weakens it". In the Declaration adopted by the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit Conference - which my country had the honour to host in March this year - it was emphasized that the renewed escalation in the nuclear arms race, both in its quantitative and qualitative dimensions, as well as reliance on the doctrines of nuclear deterrence, has heightened the risk of the outbreak of nuclear war and led to greater insecurity and instability in international relations. Nuclear weapons are more than weapons of war; they are instruments of mass annihilation. The Heads of State or Government
therefore found it unacceptable that the security of all States and the very survival of mankind should be held hostage to the security interests of a handful of nuclear-weapon States. The Commission must therefore urgently try to identify ways and means for dealing with the most critical issues facing the international community. The Commission should not only recommend specific courses of action for dealing with the threat of nuclear war but also give an impetus to negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Another substantive item on which the Commission will be deliberating this session relates to the reduction of military budgets. The views of my delegation on this issue are well known. We are not in favour of formulating a document containing principles on which a reduction of military budgets may be undertaken by States. The security situation facing various States in different parts of the world is not similar and, in addition, may vary over time in response to several important causal factors. How can we reduce this wide spectrum of differences to a set of common principles with respect to military budget applicable to all?
The freezing and reduction of military expenditures must be conceived of in the context of a global approach to disarmament, taking into account established objectives, principles and priorities. In addition, the international community must work out a practical programme for the reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of developing countries.

The adoption of measures for the freezing and reduction of military expenditures must be inter-related with other measures of disarmament within the context of progress towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Another substantive question to be dealt with by this session of the Disarmament Commission concerns the nuclear capability of South Africa. The massive build-up of South Africa's military machine, including its frenzied acquisition of a nuclear-weapon capability for repressive and aggressive purposes, has given another diabolical dimension to an already volatile situation. The racist régime's nuclear programme has enabled it to acquire a nuclear-weapon capability, and that capability has been enhanced by the continued support of its collaborators. This has presented a challenge and an increasingly dangerous obstacle to a world community which has the urgent need to disarm, and also poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

At the present session we have two new items on the agenda, namely, the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, and the item pertaining to guidelines for confidence-building measures. With regard to the agenda item on the report on disarmament and security issues, my delegation would like to reiterate at this stage its view: when we joined in a consensus on a draft resolution on the subject at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, it was without prejudice to our position of principle that the General Assembly should not be called upon to recommend reports of independent groups or commissions or be requested to take follow-up action thereon. It was our understanding then that the adoption of that draft resolution did not necessarily constitute an endorsement of all the observations and conclusions contained in the report of the Commission. It is on this basis that my delegation views the consideration of this agenda item by the United Nations Disarmament Commission.
Regarding confidence-building measures, we recognize the role that such measures can play in promoting disarmament. However, confidence-building measures cannot be a substitute for the negotiation of disarmament measures, and a lack of confidence among States cannot be allowed to become a pretext for avoiding or delaying negotiations on disarmament. Another aspect of the relationship between disarmament and confidence-building measures that perhaps needs to be highlighted is that the cessation and reversal of the arms race and the achievement of genuine measures of disarmament would themselves lead to greater trust and confidence among States. That is clearly recognized in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In conclusion, I should like to state that in the course of our work at this session of the Disarmament Commission, it is important for us not to lose sight of the priorities that should govern our approach to the disarmament process. These priorities have been clearly set out in the Final Document adopted at the first special session on disarmament, which represents a collective commitment by all States Members of the United Nations.

We should not embark on any activity on the basis of loosely-formulated ideas, but should rather draw clearly and in a comprehensive manner the contours of our work and place the responsibility for concrete measures squarely on the shoulders of those who bear the main responsibility for the continuing deadlock in disarmament negotiations. Above all, we must remain firm in our determination to summon up the required political will to address the basic problems that concern the security of States and the very survival of mankind.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I wish to convey my congratulations to you, Sir, and to say how happy we are that you are presiding over this Commission at this time when the Disarmament Commission has a particular role to play in world developments. It is of truly great importance that a person of your ability, experience and judgement should be heading this Commission. I wish also to congratulate the other officers of the Commission on their election.

One of the characteristics of this session of the Disarmament Commission is that recent events in the world have rendered the Commission more important than it has usually been considered to be. This is because we are on the threshold
of a new escalation of the arms race and because of the fact that the Committee on Disarmament - which has so far centred its attention on agreements for the regulation or reduction of armaments without any regard for the circumstances that would make such agreements possible - has produced very little in the way of agreements. It is, therefore, very beneficial that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament provided for the Disarmament Commission as the deliberative body on disarmament, leaving the negotiating process to the Committee on Disarmament.

We must be careful, therefore, not to duplicate the work of the Committee on Disarmament by focusing on questions such as which disarmament measure the Commission should pursue. Rather we should prepare the way for making the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament productive.

The primary requirement for the achievement of agreements on disarmament is that the arms race must be halted; and to halt the arms race there are certain requirements that the Disarmament Commission must bring out, namely, that there be provision for alternative needs of security for nations, other than mere armaments. If we rely on armaments for national security, without any concept of international security - that is, collective security in accordance with the Charter - it will be impossible to achieve agreements on disarmament, for no nation is prepared to disarm in a vacuum. There must be alternative security: that is the gist of the whole problem of halting the arms race; and it is on halting the arms race that disarmament depends.

The recent events to which I have referred earlier are related not only to the dangers of the escalation of the arms race, but also to a world of insecurity and anarchy, made manifest in the fact that decisions of the Security Council remain unimplemented and ignored, as in the recent case where nine repeated and unanimously-adopted decisions of the Security Council were bypassed and ignored. This situation arises from the fact that there is no order in the world. And in a world without order and security we cannot proceed to disarmament: anarchy invites an arms race, and an arms race leads to anarchy - in a vicious circle.
It is, therefore, a happy development that we have before us the report on Common Security by the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues -- the Palme Commission, as it is called. That Commission has done tremendously important work, and to a certain extent we must follow along the lines of that Commission, because it arrived at various means to promote international security, and without security, as we know, there can be no disarmament.
Surely, Sir, there will be time to deal with particular issues, but I should like to point out that in a world where the decisions of the Security Council are not implemented, in a world where the Charter is violated, the United Nations is, to a great degree, vulnerable to criticism.

I should like to refer here to an article by James Reston, published in The New York Times of 13 April 1963, criticizing the fact that the Charter of the United Nations is continuously being violated. Under the caption "The Forgotten Treaties", Mr. Reston, referring to current debates on nuclear weapons and on other disagreements, underscores that debates are proceeding these days without even the slightest mention of international agreements and treaties that the nations have already signed. Quoting the text of the basic Charter principle in Article 2, paragraph 4, which prohibits the threat or use of force in international relations, he questions: how can we seek other agreements when the existing treaty commitment under the Charter is repeatedly defied and ignored?

That is my point, Mr. Chairman. We cannot proceed effectively to disarmament agreements if the treaties that exist, both on the question of armament and in other respects, are violated. Even the Non-Proliferation Treaty is being violated, because that treaty called for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries other than those which possess nuclear weapons on condition that the latter immediately proceed to disarmament measures. But on the contrary, soon after the signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the arms race escalated as never before.

In the light of such disrespect for treaty obligations, Mr. Reston asks: "What then should be done?"

He concludes that the major Powers "at least ... have an obligation to face the fact that they are in violation of their past treaty commitments while they go on quarrelling about new treaties nobody is likely to believe in until they redeem the commitments of the past."

Therefore, how can we be seriously proceeding to make agreements on disarmament or other agreements if we are violating at the same time the existing treaties? As Mr. Reston points out, how can the people believe in new treaties when the previous ones have been violated?
The reason I mention this is to point out that, through no fault of the United Nations, justified criticism has been levelled against it for proceeding towards treaties on which the governments do not even agree. And even when they do agree on them, there is no assurance that they will be respected. This is a forthright conclusion and I think that it should be taken into account.

I will say a few more words in regard to the Palme Commission. The Palme Commission has emphasized certain conditions: it insists that there should be provisions of security as provided for in the Charter. I should like to quote a few words which we should bear in mind concerning the weakness of the United Nations and the Security Council:

"At its founding, the UN's most publicized advantage over its predecessor, the League of Nations, was that it was an international organization 'with teeth'. The linchpin of its authority was Chapter VII - 'action with respect to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression'. Articles 39 to 51 of the Charter established the framework of collective security ... [through the Security Council] with authority for enforcement." (A/CN.10/38, page 127)

The Military Staff Committee was to proceed to the necessary measures for enforcement action. But nothing of this has taken place. And there is the original fault in the functioning of the United Nations. And with a United Nations not effectively functioning, the prospects of disarmament are very slight.

This Disarmament Commission has the duty to draw the attention of the Committee on Disarmament that they should proceed to the requirements of international security parallel to the disarmament effort. It should demand that the provisions of international common security through the United Nations proceed parallel to their effort at disarmament in order that disarmament efforts may succeed.

The Palme Commission points out the various aspects of the need for proceeding to measures of international security. In their recommendations, they believe that we should proceed as a first step toward arms control and disarmament, which is a very wise idea. But how can we proceed to arms control and disarmament in a world where there is no trust whatsoever and where there is no security other than that achieved by weapons? Consequently, we have to proceed to measures of international security parallel to the work of disarmament.
I shall not take more time - I know we are at the end of this meeting - but I reserve my right to speak on this item at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN: With that statement we have concluded the list of speakers in this general exchange of views. I have received a request from the United Kingdom representative to speak in exercise of his right of reply. May I recall that in accordance with the rule adopted by the General Assembly regarding the right of reply the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item.

The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to 5 minutes.

I call now on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. CROMARTIE (United Kingdom): I should like to exercise my right of reply to the statement made earlier this afternoon by the representative of Argentina.

As the position of my Government on the events in question to which he has referred are already on the record in a number of places, including the First Committee, I shall be brief. The United Kingdom has always supported the Treaty of Tlatelolco and has long been a party to and has ratified the two Additional Protocols to that Treaty. Argentina, on the other hand, has not yet ratified the Treaty and is not a party to it, and it seems, therefore, surprising that the delegation of Argentina should invoke the Treaty and claim to interpret its terms.
The use of nuclear-powered naval vessels is not a subject that is covered by the Treaty, which is concerned with nuclear weapons. It is clear from the definition of nuclear weapons in Article 5 of the Treaty, which explicitly excludes instruments that may be used for the transport or propulsion of a device, that nuclear-powered submarines are not prohibited.

The actions of the United Kingdom forces in the events to which the representative of Argentina referred were not, therefore, in any way inconsistent with the obligations of the United Kingdom under the two Additional Protocols.

[Mr. ESPECHE GIL (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I have, indeed, asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply in connection with the comments offered by the representative of the United Kingdom.

Ambassador Cromartie states that it is Argentina that is interpreting the Treaty of Tlatelolco. I shall confine myself to reading out Article 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, to make it clear that there is no interpretation on my part but, rather, a literal reading; I shall confine myself to reading it out in English, to make it quite clear. I should like to ask the representative of the United Kingdom the following: Is it or is it not true that the Treaty of Tlatelolco states, in Article 1:

(speake in English)

"The Contracting Parties hereby undertake to use exclusively for peaceful purposes the nuclear material and facilities under their jurisdiction ..." (A/C.1/946, p.5)

(continued in Spanish)

Is it or is it not true that the United Kingdom is bound to respect the provision that I have just read out?
A third point I should like to make is the following: is it or is it not true that the British nuclear submarine, making military use of the nuclear power whereby it was powered — and this has nothing to do with nuclear weapons — which other vessels of the British fleet had or still have in the waters of the South Atlantic — sank the cruiser General Belgrado, bringing about the loss of over 300 human lives? Is it or is it not true that that submarine was raising the black flag of piracy when it returned to its base in England? Is it or is it not true that Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, stated at the second session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that promises pertaining to the non-use of a given type of weapon cannot be relied upon amid the tensions of war, thus toppling the United Kingdom's own commitment to the international community, particularly in regard to the Latin American countries and the Latin American nuclear-free zone?

These are facts — not interpretations.

Mr. CROMARTIE (United Kingdom): I should like to reply to two of the questions put to me by the representative of Argentina. First of all: Yes, it is true that he correctly quoted what the British Prime Minister said at that second special session of the General Assembly. The point, however, in this connection is that the undertaking that was given by the United Kingdom Government at an early stage in the Falklands conflict was in fact fulfilled. No nuclear weapons were used against Argentina.

Secondly, on the point that he made about Article 1 of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the undertaking given by the United Kingdom is in Article 1 of the Additional Protocol, where we undertake to apply the statute of denuclearization, including the Article quoted by the representative of Argentina, in territories for which, de jure or de facto, they are internationally responsible. The event in question did not, however, take place in the territory in question.
Mr. ESPEGHE GIL (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish) It is fortunate, in fact, that next week in Jamaica these matters will be given consideration. They will be given the thorough consideration they deserve and, as I said in my statement, States members of the Tlatelolco Treaty, either as full members, signatories or States that have acceded to the Protocols, will have an opportunity to examine the very serious and grave consequences deriving even from the formulations just offered by the delegation of the United Kingdom.

For what we are seeing is a unilateral and illegitimate interpretation on the part of the United Kingdom with respect to what its obligations are under the Treaty and under Protocols I and II.

It is for this reason that I welcome, as I said, the opportunity that we shall have this week to listen once again, perhaps, to this interpretation offered unilaterally by the United Kingdom – an illegitimate interpretation where the United Kingdom attempts to diminish the scope of its obligations under the Treaty as regards the Latin American nuclear-free zone and in regard to all the countries of the region. I hope that the lessons that are being learned by the countries of my region will, when it comes to analysing the advisability of establishing new nuclear-free zones in other parts of the world, serve as an example, so that, when it then comes to making decisions on verification and systems of inspection, the necessary guarantees for the fulfilment of obligations by the nuclear Powers will be adopted, particularly as regards the United Kingdom, which has violated its own obligations with respect to Latin America.

The CHAIRMAN: The date of the next plenary meeting will be announced in the Journal.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.