



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/CN.10/PV.69
15 June 1983

ENGLISH

DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 2 June 1983 at 3.00 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil)

- Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session
- Concluding statements

This record is subject to correction.

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS
THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: As representatives may recall, at the seventh meeting the Committee of the Whole held this morning, the Commission adopted the reports of its subsidiary bodies as contained in documents A/CN.10/1983/CRP.3-7 on agenda items 4 (a) and (b), 5, 6, 7 and 8, as amended during the course of consideration. The Committee of the Whole also adopted the draft report of the Disarmament Commission as contained in document A/CN.10/1983/CRP.2, as amended during the course of deliberations. In this connection, I would propose the formal adoption of those reports.

First of all, we shall take up the reports submitted by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission. If there is no objection I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission adopts the reports of its subsidiary bodies as contained in documents A/CN.10/1983/CRP.3-7.

The reports were adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up the draft report of the Disarmament Commission as a whole, as contained in document A/CN.10/1983/CRP.2. If there is no objection I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission adopts the draft report.

The draft report of the Commission as a whole, as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Under-Secretary-General, who will make a statement on behalf of the Secretary General of the United Nations concerning the organization of our work.

Mr. MARTENSON (Under-Secretary General): Mr. Chairman, I wish to refer to the statement concerning conference facilities and services you made at the 68th meeting of the Commission on 24 May. I do understand and appreciate the concerns expressed by the Chairman and by members of the Commission, and I believe it might be of interest to you as well as to the members of the Commission, if I very briefly explained the situation as to the question of conference facilities.

According to the information provided to us by the Department of Conferences Services, the Commission was offered the services as authorized by resolution 36/117, which approved the draft calendar of conferences and meetings for the period 1982-1983. In addition, it might be pointed out that the services envisaged for the 1983 session of the Commission were similar to last year's. Such arrangements were based also on the fact that in previous years, the Commission, for various reasons, did not fully utilize the services envisaged and that neither the second special session nor the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly asked for increased conference services to be provided to the Commission for its present session. Therefore no corresponding financial implications were approved by the Assembly or the Committee on Conferences.

(Mr. Martenson, Under-Secretary-General)

Consequently, in the course of the current session of the Commission, when the need for additional facilities and services arose, these facilities could have been provided only on an as available basis. It is correct, and I regret it, that the Commission could not always and immediately be given all the services requested as its activities developed. The Secretariat did not always have spare capacity available in view of the fact that the number of meetings scheduled at Headquarters at that time was equal to and at times surpassed the number during the peak period of the General Assembly. The situation was aggravated further by the session of the Commission partly overlapping the resumed session of the General Assembly itself and an extended period of intense Security Council activities.

Nevertheless, additional facilities and services have been secured on an ad hoc basis and were utilized by the Commission.

In preparing the calendar of conferences and meetings for the forthcoming period, the Secretariat will undoubtedly duly reflect the requirements of the Commission on the basis of its experience at this very session. However, the decision on those matters rests of course squarely with the General Assembly.

In addition to the information provided by the Department of Conference Services concerning the availability of facilities and services to the Commission, I should like very briefly to clarify the question of the resources available to the newly established Department of Disarmament Affairs. As you noted, Mr. Chairman, the United Nations has indeed been given an enhanced role in the field of disarmament, with a corresponding assignment given to the Secretariat, in particular to the Department of Disarmament Affairs. The Department is to the best of its abilities engaged in the implementation of its enhanced responsibilities and increased mandates, including, inter alia, substantive conference services, not least to the Committee on Disarmament, the Publication and Studies Programme, as well as the world-wide implementation of the World Disarmament Campaign.

(Mr. Martenson, Under Secretary-General)

All this is done with the existing human and material resources. The enhanced resources, as referred to in paragraph 14 of the draft report (A/CN.10/1983/CRP.2), are still being considered in the competent bodies of the General Assembly, such as the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC). Provided that the General Assembly approves the recommendations of these bodies at its thirty-eighth session, any resulting additional resources will thus be available to the Department only as of January 1984.

In conclusion, may I assure you, Mr. Chairman, and through you the representatives, that the Department will continue to do its utmost in providing the necessary substantive services to the Commission, as well as to all other disarmament bodies for which it is responsible.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Under Secretary-General for his statement, and, through him, on behalf of the Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his concern in making this statement and for the assurances that the facilities for the next session of the Commission will be provided according to the needs of the Commission.

Mr. BEESLEY (Canada): Canada has only this month become, and therefore for only a few days has been, Chairman of the Western European and Others Group. Nevertheless I am in a position to make a statement which some delegations have asked me to deliver in order to clarify the situation and avoid any misunderstanding concerning document A/CN.10/54 of 1 June 1983, presented by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of a number of Western countries.

I wish simply to make clear what is already known, I think, from the discussion, that the document is not a Western European and Others Group document. It has not been discussed in the Group. There has been no meeting of the Group held to consider it and it did not emerge from the Group as such. I think that was already known, but I wished to make this quite clear in order to protect the position of all concerned.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): This matter of the lack of resources, just raised by the Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Martenson, is very important, because one cannot be held responsible for not having the resources. But this brings out the point that although billions are spent on the arms race, we are too stringent in providing the means for the small disarmament effort that we are making here in the United Nations. I think it is very important that this question has arisen so that in the future we may have all the facilities and, I hope, more effectiveness in the disarmament effort.

The CHAIRMAN: Since no other delegation wishes to speak concerning the adoption of the report, I shall consider as concluded our consideration of the report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly.

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

The CHAIRMAN: To begin the last phase of our session, the concluding statements of delegations, I call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. IMAI (Japan): As this year's session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is coming to a close, I should like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, for the great diplomatic skill and leadership with which you have guided this session to a meaningful conclusion. We all appreciate that it has not been an easy task, involving many difficult and sensitive steps. Our appreciation is, of course, extended to all the officers of the Commission for their untiring efforts which made the past four weeks' deliberations a meaningful exercise.

It seems to have become customary, on occasions like this, to declare and deplore the fact that disarmament is making such slow progress, or even no progress at all. It goes without saying that the international atmosphere which surrounds us is, unfortunately, such that it is not conducive to making rapid progress in the field of disarmament, particularly in the highest-priority domain of nuclear disarmament. I am quite sure that those States possessing formidable arsenals of nuclear weapons are keenly aware of the situation, as well as its causes, and I trust, are aware of the great responsibility they bear in having to bring about changes to this atmosphere.

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

We are observing a continued escalation of the arms race throughout the world, one in which so many of the precious resources of the world - human, financial as well as natural resources - are tied up. Arms races, as we all know, do not just happen, and the armed conflicts throughout the world have deeper and more complicated roots than meet the eye. This argument is true for both nuclear and conventional weapons. We would refer to the unique experiences that Japan had 38 years ago unfortunately, that was the starting point of the era in which the spectre of nuclear weapons always accompanies any major confrontation around the world. Needless to say, the number, destructive capability and level of sophistication of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems have become so elevated that the consequences of nuclear exchanges are literally incalculable. I should like to remind representatives that many authoritative reports on this subject, including the Secretary-General's report on the comprehensive study of nuclear weapons in 1980, point out that the most significant damage to society would be in domains which are not subject to numerical calculation. Nuclear war would inflict irreparable damages on the most fundamental fabric of modern society as we know it today - on the economic, financial, industrial, political and other interdependent systems and, most of all, on the minds of people.

Much as we regret the current situation, we are, at the same time, made painfully aware that in the present-day atmosphere disarmament can make meaningful progress mainly through the all-out efforts of the international community as a whole to improve the existing international atmosphere in a step by-step manner. Bold and sweeping steps to bring about nuclear disarmament and world peace would, of course, be the most desirable; and Japan, if it knew how, would be second to none in proposing such measures which would work in this real and, I would say, very complicated world of ours. Although we all hope that such a day will come - and, of course, the sooner the better - we know, and we have said repeatedly, that high ideals and noble words are in themselves not the equivalent of real disarmament. We have, for instance, to make step-by-step efforts to establish a world-wide interconnected seismological

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

observatory network so that reliable verification mechanisms can be installed to enable the comprehensive nuclear test ban convention to become a reality. In the view of my delegation, a comprehensive test ban treaty on which all interested parties can agree is a matter of urgent priority and no efforts should be spared to achieve this end. An international atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence will grow as such negotiations proceed and will grow along with the negotiating processes.

In this sense, my delegation considers that the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has for the first time taken up confidence-building measures represents an important step forward. In addition to the individual measures that will continue to be considered in this and various other forums, the fact that all the Members of the United Nations had opportunities to take up this subject and expressed their views regarding how best to build confidence among nations, especially among the major nuclear Powers, is extremely important.

I welcome the achievements of the Working Groups, apart from their deliberations as set forth in the individual reports, and particularly in the context of providing further opportunities for the exchange of views regarding important background measures which, it is hoped, will lead to major disarmament agreements. In this context, it seems to me that international verification is another domain that could be looked into with somewhat more care. Verification of international disarmament agreements is one of the key issues. Verification has various legal, technical and other details which need to be worked out before agreements can be brought into being. Although it is very true that, as stated in the Final Document,

"The form and modalities of the verification to be provided for in any specific agreement depend upon and should be determined by the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement." (Resolution S-10/2, para. 31),

it may be useful to look into the common features, especially if this is done in parallel with and at the same time as negotiations on the priority disarmament items.

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

Although I have emphasized the positive side of our work and the important role the United Nations Disarmament Commission plays as the deliberative arm in the disarmament efforts, it is clear that real progress in meaningful disarmament is obviously our goal, and any amount of ground work would be of no avail unless such progress could be achieved. Japan has said time and again that realistic disarmament can be achieved through maintaining a proper balance of power while at the same time bringing it down step by step to the lowest possible level where the outbreak of hostilities would become less likely. Indeed it is to no small degree due to such realistic efforts that the precarious peace in the nuclear age has been maintained so far. We are second to none in our willingness to work towards the ideal world of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. From our past experiences we know that the road to such an ideal state, in a world in which foreign dominance and nuclear threats are not unheard of, is to be found not in words but only in gradual and steady improvement.

Mr. PERM (Sweden): I should like to begin my brief remarks by expressing to you, Mr. Chairman, the heartfelt gratitude of my delegation for your efforts to make this session a productive one and expressing my admiration for the skill with which you have conducted our work. Our appreciation goes also to the Chairmen of the four Working Groups, the contact group and the Rapporteur. I should like also to thank the members of the Secretariat for their assistance in our work. Their efforts have greatly contributed to the progress we have achieved during this session.

We regret that on some of the items on the agenda no agreement has been reached for specific recommendations. This is notably the case concerning the question of nuclear disarmament. In this context I should like to stress that Sweden, for its part, could in no circumstances accept recommendations that represent a step backward in comparison with what was agreed at the first special session on disarmament. Instead our aim should be to go forward.

(Mr. Fern Sweden)

We regret that once again no agreement could be reached concerning the item on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. We believe that discussions on this item in the future could be greatly facilitated if more countries were to participate in the ongoing work regarding the reporting of military expenditures and the comparability of military budgets. The question of openness is indeed an important one. We believe that it should be possible to agree on the necessity for reliable and comparable data to enable negotiations for an agreement on the freezing and reduction of military budgets to go forward.

(Mr. Fern, Sweden)

The question of the nuclear capability of South Africa has been discussed in Working Group II. Despite all efforts, sufficient agreement in substance could not be reached. We have studied with great interest the working paper presented by Mauritius on behalf of the African Group. Sweden considers the issue of the nuclear capability of South Africa serious and important. Sweden has desisted from all collaboration in the nuclear field with South Africa and will continue to do so. On behalf of the Swedish Government, I wish to repeat our call on those States that are collaborating with South Africa in the nuclear field to terminate such collaboration.

As regards item 8, concerning confidence-building measures, we consider the discussion that has been carried out enlightening and interesting. The exercise has been useful as a basis for future work. My delegation attaches great importance to the continued endeavours in this field. We feel that the results achieved in the Helsinki Final Act were important and we would strive for continued progress within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe process, in particular, within the framework of a European disarmament conference devoted to promoting confidence-building and security-building measures in Europe in the first phase.

It is with great satisfaction that we note that agreement was reached, by consensus, on the item concerning the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues (ICDSI). This is the first time that Governments have systematically studied the report by the ICDSI and commented on it officially. This has resulted in a positive evaluation as the recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission show.

My delegation appreciates that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has devoted so much time to consideration of the ideas and recommendations contained in the report of the ICDSI. Even if the time available has permitted only a general discussion, we have found the comments constructive and positive. In the report that we have just adopted the United Nations Disarmament Commission says that the proposals and recommendations should be duly taken into account within on-going and future disarmament efforts. My delegation believes that one of those efforts is the World Disarmament Campaign which is now under way, and I hope that the report by the ICDSI will be duly taken into account in that Campaign. We trust that the report of the ICDSI will serve as a source of inspiration from which ideas and proposals could be taken to promote and stimulate

efforts to arrive at concrete disarmament results, both within and outside the United Nations system. The Swedish Government has supported the report of the ICDSI and intends to work within the United Nations system and in other forums for the basic concept of the report, namely, to reverse the present trend in international relations from one of tension and disputes to one of co-operation and negotiation in order to make this world a safer one. My Government, furthermore, intends to work for the implementation of various proposals in the report in our continued policy of actively contributing to disarmament efforts. In our opinion the report of the ICDSI is balanced and its programme, with proposals and recommendations, is both practical and constructive. Moreover, it is politically feasible.

Among the concrete disarmament proposals, we feel the following ones are of greatest importance: the reduction of nuclear stockpiles; a comprehensive test ban treaty in order to stop the qualitative arms race; denuclearization in Europe; a total ban on chemical weapons; regional arrangements, including nuclear-weapon-free zones, and adequate verification procedures. It goes without saying that also the need to strengthen the United Nations is of vital importance. The ICDSI has proposed a first step to implement the collective security system of the United Nations Charter. My delegation has repeatedly stressed that we attach particular importance to the concept of common security. We do this because we believe the notion offers a new approach to solving the vital security issues facing mankind. We must respect the right of all States to security and to self-defence, however, to avoid tense political relations and a reduction of security for all, States must show mutual restraint and proper appreciation of the realities of the nuclear age. The balance of terror, mutual deterrence, is a very fragile foundation for peace. In the long run, the risks of confrontation and war only increase. The future cannot be built on fear. A concept of common security must replace the present expedient of deterrence through armaments. International peace must rest on a commitment to joint survival rather than on a threat of mutual destruction.

To conclude, the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has been able to come to an agreement proves that the report of the ICDSI is balanced and viable and the report shows that progress is possible, even in the field of disarmament, if there is political will and political courage.

Mr. LIANG Yufan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): The current session is now drawing to a close. During this session the various delegations have had opportunities to exchange views on all the agenda items. Such an exchange of views is helpful to our future work. However, it has to be admitted that no progress has been made on substantive issues. Naturally, one cannot but regret that such is the situation.

The current session has taken the checking of the arms race, especially the nuclear-arms race, as the key issue for consideration and by so doing it has reflected the legitimate aspirations of the people of the world. The non-aligned and other small and medium-sized countries have made efforts to promote nuclear disarmament. Some delegations have pointed out that, in respect of nuclear disarmament, the two countries which possess the largest nuclear arsenals have a special responsibility. This demands proceeds from the actual realities and is therefore reasonable. It is between the two nuclear Powers that an unrestrained nuclear arms race is going on at the present moment. Only these two nuclear Powers have the strength to launch a nuclear war, which would bring unprecedented destruction to the world. Their nuclear forces not only form a significant component of their military power, but also constitute the basis of their strength for outward expansion and the scramble for spheres of influence. Their rivalry for military superiority, including nuclear superiority, has all along been linked with their rivalry throughout the world. At present the nuclear-arms race between these two countries has been stepped up along with the intensification of their rivalry. Not only has this race extended from strategic arms to theatre and battlefield nuclear arms, from the so-called conventional triad nuclear forces, consisting of missiles, aircraft and submarines, to space nuclear arms, but moreover, both of these two Powers are making the actual deployment and preparations for a nuclear war. It is precisely the global rivalry and arms race between these two countries that poses the main threat of war to the whole world. People are fully justified in expecting these two nuclear Powers to heed the voice of the people of the world and do one or two things in real earnest to show that they are sincere enough in undertaking their special responsibilities for the creation of favourable conditions for nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

But, contrary to the wishes of the people of the world, the pace of their arms race has quickened and their deployment of nuclear weapons has been stepped up. At the negotiating table, each of them has submitted proposals with the sole aim of strengthening itself and weakening the other. Some of these proposals even attempt to prejudice third parties.

People had hoped that the documents adopted at this session could give expression to the objective facts as stated above. But this hope remains to be fulfilled.

We are also of the view that, while promoting nuclear disarmament, we must not overlook the real threat of conventional war. Many non-nuclear countries, especially third-world countries, are subjected to occupation, aggression, interference, subversion and the threat of other violations of State sovereignty carried out directly or indirectly by the super-Powers with conventional weapons.

The super-Powers for their part, in their arms expansion and war preparations, are attaching greater and greater importance to the strengthening of their capacities of fighting all types of conventional war. And once a conventional armed conflict occurs that directly involves the super-Powers, there is the possibility of the conflict escalating and becoming a nuclear war.

Some people think that stressing conventional disarmament will divert attention from nuclear disarmament. But, actually, these two are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, only by enabling conventional disarmament to move forward simultaneously and in conformity with progress in nuclear disarmament, thus eliminating the threat of nuclear war and all wars of aggression, can world peace be effectively safeguarded.

This Commission has in the past done useful work in promoting conventional disarmament. It should continue to concern itself with this issue.

With regard to the agenda item on the nuclear capability of South Africa, once again no agreement has been reached owing to the obstruction known to all. China will, as always, firmly support the African States in their just struggle to oppose the South African racist régime's obtaining nuclear weapons and their just demand for comprehensive economic sanctions and a strict arms embargo against South Africa, especially their demand for the

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

prohibition of any form of collaboration in the nuclear field with the South African authorities.

As regards the reduction of military budgets, we are of the view that the fundamental principle should be for the super-Powers to take the lead in making drastic cuts. Their military expenditures account for more than 50 per cent of the aggregate military expenditures of all the countries of the world, exceeding by far the military expenditures of any other individual country. Therefore, it is reasonable that they should carry out drastic reductions first. After that, the other countries can join them in reducing their military expenditures by stages according to appropriate ratios and procedures. The reduction of military expenditures should be carried out in conjunction with measures for nuclear, conventional and other disarmament. Only thus can the reduction be real and so contribute to the elimination of the threat of war.

The measures for reducing military budgets must in no way prejudice the capabilities of self-defence and the security of the third world countries, whose defence capabilities are still inadequate at present.

We hope that the afore-mentioned fundamental principles will be reflected in concrete measures for the reduction of military budgets.

With respect to the formulation of guiding principles as regards confidence-building measures, meaningful deliberations have been conducted during the current session and both convergent and divergent views have emerged. We are of the opinion that confidence-building measures require the solution of certain matters of principle. In order to build confidence, all countries concerned must act in accordance with the purposes of the United Nations Charter and the basic norms governing international relations, that is, respect fully the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries, put an end to all aggression and to interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and check all efforts to seek and establish hegemony and foreign rule in whatever form in any part of the world; also, the countries with the largest arsenals should be the first to reduce their armaments and armed forces, thus eliminating the threat they pose to other countries.

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

Only when these principles are observed can concrete confidence-building measures truly contribute to the relaxation of tensions and to progress in disarmament. Otherwise, contrary to our hopes, some measures might be utilized by potential aggressors and thus produce a negative effect.

In conclusion, please allow me to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our deep appreciation. Your outstanding abilities and efficient work style have left a deep impression on us. We should also like to thank the other members of the Bureau, as well as all those who have contributed to the work of the current session.

Mr. de LAIGLESIA (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): We have reached the conclusion of our work, and on this occasion I should like to make a few brief comments on the work that has been accomplished.

First of all, I should like to put on record our opinion that the adoption of resolution 37/70 II at the previous session of the General Assembly has made an effective contribution to improving the working conditions of our Commission, constituting a first decisive step towards the strengthening of the role assigned to it in the Final Document in the complex system which, within the United Nations, deals with disarmament questions. The identity crisis of the Disarmament Commission discernible at previous substantive sessions is now being overcome. Indeed, as a second deliberative body whose working methods are eminently different from those of the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission complements the work of that Committee.

Indeed, the thorough analysis of the items on the agenda of the Commission and consensus which is its basic rule make it possible for items to be submitted to the General Assembly subsequently, so as to allow the Assembly to take decisions with full background information, thus in a position to attach due importance to each of the items involved. It may seem sterile that there is a wide divergence of views on most of the items dealt with in this forum. But even when differences are most profound the texts adopted reveal a desire to narrow the gap between the various points of view expressed.

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

For all these reasons, and although at the present substantive session which is coming to a close it has been possible to obtain total consensus only on the agenda item on confidence-building measures, on the other agenda items we do see clear interest on the part of delegations in achieving a certain level of compromise, which can bring disparate views closer together on the items we have discussed, which for most delegations here, involve extremely sensitive issues.

The five items before the Commission in recent days are of extraordinary importance in the field of disarmament.

In connection with agenda item 4 it must be recalled that the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament are the greatest concern of mankind; for this reason it is absolutely essential that progress be made in this area. To this end, the possible achievement of a complete prohibition on nuclear tests is an objective of the greatest importance to all. This question has quite rightly been given attention by many delegations. Together with nuclear disarmament, which is the first priority, we must bear in mind the problem of the conventional arms race, which unfortunately continues unbridled and to which the greatest percentage of military expenditures is allocated. Measures which are adopted to halt the arms race must always take into account the legitimate security concerns of all States.

Ultimately, the concern which must guide our efforts is the prevention of nuclear war and of all types of armed conflict.

The reduction of military budgets is another item to which we have given our attention and, in our view, it is desirable that we continue our consideration of an item which could make an effective contribution to the promotion of a climate of confidence, which should prevail in the international community. The possibility of having reliable information about the military expenditures of States is undoubtedly a basic element in comparing the potentials of States and would make a positive contribution to negotiations in this area.

The delegation of Spain has always supported initiatives relating to the adoption of confidence-building measures. For this reason we are pleased that a high level of consensus has been reached on this very item. The group entrusted with studying that item has worked intensively, and the exchange of views on the concept of confidence and on guidelines for confidence-building measures has

(Mr. de Laiglesia, Spain)

been very enlightening and positive. While such measures cannot be a substitute for disarmament measures, the establishment of an atmosphere of trust would have a positive impact on the decrease of tensions among States and on efforts in favour of disarmament. In sum, the implementation of confidence-building measures in the military and security spheres would constitute an aspect of the broader field of improving relations among States.

In conclusion, I should like to express the appreciation of the Spanish delegation to you, Mr. Chairman, for the way in which you have guided this Commission's work. Thanks to your tact and intelligence we shall be able to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session a very useful report containing interesting suggestions. We are also indebted to the Chairmen of the four working groups, Ambassadors Hepburn, Werenner and Lidgard and Minister Diaconu, as well as to Ambassador Duarte, who presided over the contact group on agenda item 4. They all fulfilled their responsibilities with notable effectiveness and skill, and their contributions were extremely valuable.

I should like also to express our thanks to the other Commission officers and to the members of the Secretariat staff, whose co-operation is essential in the successful accomplishment of the work entrusted to us.

Mr. DUARTE (Brazil): Before I begin my statement, I should like to rectify an omission I made when I presented the reports of the contact group on agenda item 4. I should like to thank the members of the Secretariat staff who worked with the contact group, especially Miss Aida Levin, whose outstanding assistance was invaluable to the work of the group.

My delegation would like to make some comments on the work of the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission for 1983. This is the first time the Commission has met since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 37/78 H, which set guidelines aimed at streamlining our work in an objective and action-oriented manner. It is in the context of those guidelines that we must take a critical look at the results achieved and, particularly, at the difficulties encountered, so that next autumn the General Assembly can take the necessary complementary steps to enhance the effectiveness of this body.

In the Chairman's opening statement on 9 May, he described the present session of the Commission as a transitional period necessary for the implementation of the guidelines of General Assembly resolution 37/78 H. The Commission worked

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

this year with an agenda very similar to that of previous sessions with the exception of two items on which the Assembly requested it to report within a specific time-frame. On one of those items, concerning the report of the Palme Commission, we have adopted a final report, and on the other the Commission has agreed to present final recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty ninth session. The three remaining agenda items were carried over from the previous session of the Commission, and on these the Commission, in pursuance of the guidelines set by resolution 37/78 B, took an action-oriented approach, attempting to formulate concrete recommendations. My delegation believes that the transitional period should be completed at the organizational session next December, after the General Assembly has considered our report and has laid the guidelines for the continuation of the work of the Commission.

Let me now examine briefly the results of this session in the light of the preceding remarks.

For the first time since the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament established the Commission as the deliberative body on questions of disarmament an effort was made to formulate concrete recommendations relating to agenda item 4. As we all recognize, the broad formulation of that item and the deep differences of view over its substance have led the Commission in the past to adopt declaratory statements which merely recorded the divergency of views on "various questions in the field of disarmament".

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

Unfortunately, it was not possible this year to formulate concrete recommendations. Once more, to our regret, some of the nuclear-weapon Powers and their allies have adopted a negative attitude towards a meaningful discussion of questions of nuclear disarmament in the multilateral deliberative body. My delegation has repeatedly called the attention of the international community in this Commission and other relevant forums to the dangers inherent in the position of those who attempt to justify their exclusive possession of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and the continuing escalation of the nuclear arms race to the detriment of the legitimate interests of mankind as a whole. I shall not dwell further on this point here, except to put on record once again that the Brazilian delegation cannot condone behaviour which negates in practice the very essence of this international body, which is the bona fide recognition of the legitimate interests of all nations represented here.

Despite the limited and disappointing results of our discussion on item 4, my delegation is convinced that the effort to break away from the excessively broad scope under which the Commission has worked in the past represented at this session a promising avenue which must be pursued further. The Disarmament Commission therefore should, in our view, strive in the future to devote its attention to specific questions within the framework of item 4 and to report on such questions in the form of concrete recommendations. The Brazilian delegation cannot think of a more pressing and urgent item for such a concentrated effort than the timely problem of the prevention of nuclear war. We strongly urge the Commission, on the basis of the experience at this session, to continue working in this direction at the organizational session under the guidelines to be further refined by the General Assembly.

On item 5 of our agenda, which deals with the reduction of military budgets, the experience of the Commission has shown that the nuclear-weapon Powers, which are responsible for the largest part of resources devoted to armaments and whose military-related expenses continue to increase at an accelerated rate, do not seem prepared to accept their special responsibilities for their reduction. As is the case in other aspects of the arms race, they

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

are concerned primarily with the confrontation between their two rival alliances. Proposals examined at this session under item 5 reflect the deepening one-sidedness of such an approach - a situation which does not augur well for the continuation of work on this question. Perhaps the Commission would be well advised to afford Governments some time for reflection, and in this regard the Assembly may wish to wait one or two years before requesting us to take up this question again.

The rewording this year of item 6 on the nuclear capability of South Africa reflects more accurately the substance of the problem at hand. One would believe that agreement on a new formulation could have permitted serious and dispassionate consideration of ways and means to stop practices that run contrary to the deep sense of responsibility of the overwhelming majority of nations which have not exercised their nuclear military option even in the face of continuing vertical and geographical proliferation by the nuclear-weapon Powers. The inability of some nuclear-weapon Powers and their allies to recognize the real issues at stake, and their insistence on utilizing the question of South Africa's nuclear capability as a pretext for winning international approval for instruments that have failed to deal adequately with the problems of the proliferation of nuclear weapons are the real reasons for the lack of progress on item 6. Here, the Assembly might also profitably reflect on the experience gained from the treatment of this item when it considers the report of the Commission next fall.

At this session the Commission started preliminary work on the formulation of guidelines on confidence-building measures, under item 8, and agreed to submit a final report to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The debate is accurately reflected in the progress report adopted by the Commission, which rightly recognizes that the confidence-building process cannot replace concrete disarmament measures, nor can it be considered as a pre-condition or prerequisite for disarmament measures. The report further stresses that the adoption of agreements in the field of disarmament, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons, would in itself greatly improve and strengthen confidence among States.

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

Finally, it points to the relationship between the global dimension of confidence and the need to distinguish between measures which may be important in one particular region but are not necessarily those that apply to other regions of the world. Any attempt to shift the emphasis of the final report to address only the situation prevailing in one part of the world would, therefore, impair the achievement of a balanced and truly representative set of guidelines.

My delegation hopes that the thirty-eighth session of the Assembly will provide an opportunity for a substantive debate on the continuation of the work on this item so that the 1984 session of the Commission may adopt guidelines on confidence-building measures that adequately reflect the concerns of all States.

The examination of the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues was undertaken pursuant to resolution 37/99 B, which requested the Disarmament Commission to make suggestions on the appropriate follow-up to that report. My delegation views the so-called Palme report as an important contribution from personalities who addressed the issues of disarmament and security on the basis of their experience and in their private capacities. We do not agree with all the conclusions arrived at in the report of the Independent Commission and, although we recognize its high academic value, the Disarmament Commission could certainly have done no more than not that contribution and leave to States the task of determining individually the import of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein. Having concluded the consideration of this item, the Disarmament Commission will turn its attention at its next session to other matters to be decided from among the questions to which it should be devoting its time because of their priority character.

Let me conclude these remarks with some thoughts on the role of the Disarmament Commission and its function within the multilateral machinery dealing with disarmament.

We deem it essential that the entire membership of the Organization continue to have at its disposal a deliberative body in which questions of priority interest to all nations can be discussed, and that these discussions

(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

lead to formulating specific recommendations for submission to the General Assembly. But we must recognize that this is not a negotiating body and that the value and efficacy of our recommendations are necessarily predicated on the degree of consensus that they achieve. Negative attitudes and inflexible positions based on narrow conceptions of national security interests, however, render consensus impossible and undermine the very foundation of our deliberations.

The few delegations which adopt a defensive and negative posture in the debate, showing utter insensitivity to the legitimate concerns of the majority of nations, ought to ponder carefully the consequences of their action or, rather, their self-oriented action. For they will be responsible, in the end, for the failure to utilize the Disarmament Commission as an effective tool to lift the current debate from the level of generality so that specific topics might be usefully reviewed and problems might be understood in a proper context. Those delegations should refrain from the practice of negotiating every word of the recommendations of the Commission as if they were internationally binding treaties that would irrevocably compromise their position. The results of our work are to be seen for what they really are -- recommendations from a subsidiary organ of the Assembly which the parent body will in turn examine and pronounce itself upon in the form of a resolution.

My delegation is convinced that the new approach introduced by resolution 37/78 II must become firmly established in the practices of the Commission so that this body may fully discharge the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament.

Mr. DIACONU (Romania) (interpretation from French): I should like to associate my delegation with those which have congratulated Ambassador Souza e Silva of Brazil, the Chairman of the Commission, for the exemplary way in which he has organized and guided the work of this session.

We also extend our congratulations to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the contact group to the Commission's secretariat, and the Department of Disarmament Affairs for contributing to the success of this session's work.

(Mr. Diaconu, Romania)

While expressing regret that it was not possible for the Commission to conclude its work with substantive progress, we do note that its work was accomplished in an atmosphere that was free of political confrontation. This session provided the opportunity for us to reaffirm the undeniably high priority that all States attach to nuclear disarmament issues and to consider on the basis of proposals submitted by the non-aligned and other States, specific recommendations whose adoption and implementation would be likely to contribute decisively to the prevention of the danger of war, to stem the nuclear arms race and to move on to nuclear weapons reductions.

It is regrettable that the adoption of these obviously urgent recommendations was not possible this year. We consider that the consideration of these recommendations at the 1984 session of the Commission, and before that at the General Assembly, in conditions which we hope will be better, and through the responsible efforts and action of all States, will be crowned with success and will lead to their adoption. The document, which includes a compilation of all the proposals made by delegations, constitutes a good basis for work. It requires that all States pool their efforts at the next session of the Commission.

The Romanian delegation, as everyone knows, has always attached, and will continue to attach, particular importance to the problem of the reduction of military budgets. Concrete measures in that direction would have highly favourable consequences on the increase of confidence among States and on the reduction of military rivalry. It would thus facilitate the efforts of States for their economic and social development. We welcome the fact that at this session the representatives of a large number of States reaffirmed, in the clearest possible terms, the need for concrete action for the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

As is known, Romania has made specific suggestions in this connection over the years and has suggested practical ways and means to reallocate the funds thus released for the economic and social development of States -- not only those that make those reductions, but also, of course, the developing countries.

(Mr. Diaconu, Romania)

In December 1982 Romania decided to freeze its own defence expenditures up to 1985 at 1982 levels. Our country also made a proposal that the countries of the two military blocs, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, should agree to a 20 per cent reduction of their military expenditures until 1985 under their 1982 expenditure levels.

We consider it significant that the statement adopted in Prague in January 1983 by the Warsaw Pact countries appealed to NATO members to begin direct negotiations for the freezing of military expenditures as soon as possible, and for the subsequent reduction of such expenditures, in terms of percentages or in absolute figures. This is a specific measure which, if implemented, could have a decisive impact on the improvement of the international climate and the fostering of confidence among States. It is a measure which would create the necessary conditions for more radical measures: the cessation of the arms race and disarmament under appropriate international control.

The work on which our own Commission has embarked to establish principles that should guide States in the freezing and reduction of military budgets is aimed at bringing the positions of States closer together and at facilitating the speedy adoption of specific agreements on the reduction of military budgets. The work of the Commission this year clearly underscored the urgent need to reach agreement on such principles and to overcome the differences that still exist among States. We hope that 1984 will be a year in which delegations will all demonstrate the necessary flexibility and political will to overcome the points of disagreement. This is essential if such principles are to be adopted.

We consider the debate which the Commission just began this year concerning confidence-building measures particularly enlightening and politically significant. The discussions that took place demonstrated the importance attached by a large number of States to confidence-building measures, to the strengthening of international peace and security and to genuine disarmament measures.

We would like to stress once again that there can be no confidence without strict respect for the principles of international law, which have been and continue to be the central concern of the United Nations, principles that have been reaffirmed in numerous international documents, and without which it is impossible to work within the United Nations system and to enjoy good relations among States: that is, the equality of all States, respect for sovereignty of States,

(Mr. Diaconu, Romania)

non-interference in the internal affairs of States, prohibition of the threat or use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes among States, and respect for the right of peoples to decide their own destiny. It would be illusory to think that confidence among States, détente and international co-operation can be achieved without respect for such principles. Recognizing the link between confidence and disarmament, we stress the decisive importance that measures to stem the arms race - especially the nuclear arms race - followed by genuine disarmament negotiations would have in the building of confidence among States.

This year our Commission has considered once again the increasing threat posed to the security and independence of African countries by South Africa's possession of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the United Nations and all its Member States must attach particular importance to this problem. Having observed that this year again the Commission has not managed to prepare recommendations for the General Assembly in this connection, we feel that this problem requires particular attention in the years to come in the Commission.

(Mr. Diaconu, Romania)

The Romanian delegation would have hoped for more specific recommendations by the Commission concerning the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues. We feel that that report contains new ideas and concrete disarmament proposals which could make a very valuable contribution to the understanding of problems of peace and security as well as to the development of the efforts made by all States to halt the arms race and to achieve disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament. The fact that the Disarmament Commission was reestablished in 1978 as a subsidiary deliberative body of the General Assembly reflects the importance attached by all States to disarmament questions and highlights the central role in this field given by States to the United Nations. It is true that for many sessions now it has been impossible for the Commission to reach agreement on substantive issues and that its contribution to establishing the climate necessary for genuine disarmament measures on different aspects has been modest.

However, this lack of results does not apply to the Disarmament Commission alone. For many years now disarmament efforts have been blocked in spite of the will expressed by the overwhelming majority of States and by world public opinion. The lack of specific results in this Commission can in no way call into question its importance and its role within the framework of the United Nations Disarmament machinery. Our feeling of frustration is due to the lack of political will on the part of certain States to use more effectively the universal framework which the Commission provides for disarmament efforts with the participation of all States.

In present conditions, when dialogue and co-operation based on an awareness of the immense dangers posed by the continuation and acceleration of the arms race for the very existence of mankind make it more necessary than ever for the Disarmament Commission to increase its efforts, its mandate must be fulfilled in the most effective way and States must act so as to allow the Commission to make its specific contribution to the adoption of the measures necessary to bring about the cessation of the arms race and the achievement of disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, who has asked to speak on behalf of the ten members of the European Community.

Mr. VEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): I am indeed making this statement on behalf of the ten member countries of the European Community. The delegations for which I speak have voiced their expectations and hopes for this session early in the proceedings of the Commission. Commenting on the new working format introduced by General Assembly resolution 37/70 II they expressed the hope that the present session would enable the United Nations Disarmament Commission to move closer to the model of a deliberative body which, in substantive support of the General Assembly itself, would contribute concrete and operational recommendations each year on a limited number of important and topical disarmament items. Those hopes have been only partially fulfilled.

Of the five working organs of the Commission, only two have fulfilled their tasks as planned while three have proved unable to agree on consensus recommendations and have had to content themselves with registering the divergent views expressed, forwarding working papers incorporating different perspectives.

We note that delegations have worked diligently and with remarkable dedication. There has been a genuine search for consensus and concerted achievement, under the leadership of the Chairman of the Commission. It would thus not be doing justice to the Commission to judge its accomplishments too harshly or to be discouraged as regards its future work. We hope that during the coming year the Commission will make further progress in streamlining its agenda and polishing its working methods.

In the view of the Ten, progress in our work could be substantially facilitated if delegations would seek to promote a spirit of mutual understanding, develop areas of agreement and strive for common positions. A gradual approach would undoubtedly contribute to the solution of current problems and would indeed provide support for the decision-making process of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

For the Ten, nuclear disarmament is one of the highest priorities. We must continue to seek means to reach that goal, with the participation of the nuclear-weapon States and in particular of those which have the largest arsenals. At the same time the Ten attach priority importance to the question of conventional weapons. They emphasize the importance of the subject-matter discussed under item 4 and the appropriately balanced approach towards nuclear and conventional disarmament which that item provides for. The Ten have therefore noted with regret that the contact group on item 4 was unable to achieve a consensus on concrete and substantial recommendations, despite the brilliant leadership and consistent efforts of the Chairman of the group.

The discussions in the working group on the reduction of military budgets has again made clear the importance of this item. The 10 member States of the European Community remain concerned about the arms race and the growth of military expenditure, its deplorable waste of human and economic resources and its potentially harmful effects on world peace and security. In their view, a gradual reduction of military expenditures on a mutually agreed basis, without detriment to the national security of any country, would contribute to curbing the arms race and increase the possibility of reallocating resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

In the view of the Ten, the endeavour to reduce military budgets should be based on a procedure which provides for adequate comparability and verification. The standardized reporting system constitutes an important first step in the effort to render the military expenditures of different countries transparent and comparable. The Ten recall that a number of States have submitted a paper relating to the principles of transparency, comparability and verification. They hope that all States will participate in the future in the discussion of these principles. The real goal of the reporting system cannot be achieved until more countries participate and until different regions, and above all different budgeting systems, are suitably represented. The Ten regret that an entire group of States has so far refused to participate in

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic
of Germany)

the standardized reporting system. They reiterate the urgent need for all States to continue the consideration of this item with new vigour, bearing in mind the possibility of embodying guiding principles to that end in a suitable document at an appropriate stage.

The Ten are disappointed that Working Group II, on South Africa's nuclear capability, did not succeed in bringing about consensus formulations. Despite earnest efforts to achieve consensus on essential recommendations in order to give a clear signal to South Africa that it must desist from any development of its nuclear technical capabilities in the military field, it has unfortunately proved impossible to find a consensus this year.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic
of Germany)

The Ten note with satisfaction that there was no disagreement as to the common rejection of any kind of racism, colonialism or apartheid policy, or as to strict adherence to the weapons embargo imposed against South Africa by the Security Council and the need for the international community to come out unequivocally against the possibility of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by South Africa.

This item, which has been considered by the Commission for the past four years, will thus remain on its agenda. The Ten express their hope that the agenda item will be concluded by the adoption of some effective recommendations during the next session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

As for the agenda item on the report of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, the Ten express their satisfaction that it has been possible to arrive at a shared view of the significance of the report. They consider that this report does offer useful elements with respect to ongoing and future efforts in the field of disarmament and they trust that the consensus recommendations of the group will contribute to this end.

The Ten welcome the interim results of the working group on confidence-building measures. In their view, the full discussion of the subject during the past few weeks has usefully prepared the ground for the final elaboration of guidelines for confidence-building measures during the Commission's next substantive session.

The Ten would also envisage that the catalogue of principles and general characteristics and recommendations as contained, inter alia, in the working papers submitted by two of its Member States - the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands - should as a next step be completed by specific guidelines for a number of especially suitable and important measures.

The Ten have noted with gratification that the working group on confidence-building measures has already at this stage been able to recognize and, to some extent, analyse the growing importance of confidence-building measures and to agree on a number of basic tenets and assumptions in their regard.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic
of Germany)

They also welcome the widespread feeling in the working group that the comprehensive study of a group of governmental experts on confidence-building measures should serve as an important point of reference for the further work of the Commission in this field.

We owe gratitude to you personally, Sir, for your excellent chairmanship and the vigour and clarity which you have instilled in our work. Whatever the accomplishments of this Commission, they are largely the result of your personal commitment to an invigorated, hard-working and action-oriented United Nations Disarmament Commission. We also note the efficient work of the Rapporteur.

The Ten would equally wish to express appreciation of the highly competent services of the various officers from the Department of Disarmament Affairs who have assisted our work, as well as of the work of the interpreters.

Mr. AYEWAH (Nigeria): Now that we have come to the concluding stage of our work during the current session of the Disarmament Commission, Sir, the delegation of Nigeria wishes to join with those other delegations that have complimented you on the effective manner in which you have directed the proceedings of the Commission and to place on record its general impressions on the work of the Commission during this session.

In so doing, it takes as its starting point the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as a deliberative body and subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, is endowed with the political wisdom, moral authority and technical competence to pronounce itself on general issues of disarmament and the specific items which are brought before it. It would be inconsistent with the purposes of its creation if the United Nations Disarmament Commission were to fail to discharge its responsibility to the international community as an important contributor to the determination of the collective conscience of us all on matters which touch the very existence of the human race and the survival of our civilization.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

The nature and import of the various items before the current session of the Commission help to underscore the growing concern of the international community in relation to the continuing arms race and the singular lack of progress or quantifiable results in efforts to halt and reverse its course.

The most urgent task is to halt and reverse the arms race and to undertake concrete measures of disarmament, particularly in regard to its nuclear aspects. The continued spiral in the arms race, both in its quantitative and qualitative dimensions, with their implications for the military expenditures of States, has had the unsavoury effect of imposing a heavy burden on the economies of States, with the result that resources which should have been available for socio-economic development are now being wasted on an unproductive sector of the economy. It must be understood that the current economic crisis facing the world is also a direct result of the pursuit of the arms race, aside from the failure to structure and implement the new international economic order on the basis of equity and justice.

It is a matter for regret that multilateral efforts at negotiations on disarmament have not only not resulted in fruition but have in fact become predicated upon the individual sensitivities and the narrow security perceptions of a few militarily significant States. The point must continue to be made that all States have a right and duty to determine the course and content of their history, in particular the impact of security in the making of that history.

While bilateral negotiations between the two super-Powers are considered important within the context of general and complete disarmament because of their major responsibility for propelling the arms race, it is clear that in the final analysis the security of the entire world should not hinge on the United States-Soviet Union axis nor be dependent on the mood of those two countries.

That is why we continue to believe that disarmament efforts undertaken at the level of the United Nations stand the best chance of achieving a lasting peace and of ensuring a world order in which States do not have to rely on

(Mr. Ayevah, Nigeria)

armaments for their security. In this connection, the United Nations must continue and be enabled to continue to play its central role and to fulfil its primary responsibility in the field. In particular, the Committee on Disarmament, as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, must strive to fulfil its mandate to negotiate concrete disarmament measures, while the Disarmament Commission must complement those efforts by providing guidelines, political direction and possible elements for concrete negotiations. We must not fail to remind the Committee on Disarmament that nuclear disarmament remains its priority task. We expect it to acquit itself creditably of its assigned functions and responsibilities.

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

Of particular interest to my delegation has been the question of South Africa's nuclear capability. We have constantly maintained that it is the sovereign right of every State to seek to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes for its socio-economic development in line with its national needs and priorities. More importantly, we have drawn attention to the sovereign and inalienable rights of all peoples to self-determination and independence and their full enjoyment of basic freedoms. The racist minority régime of South Africa represents an aberration from the norms of standard behaviour, while its adoption of apartheid, an institutionalized form of racial discrimination, as an instrument of policy runs counter to the basic provisions of the United Nations Charter and relevant principles of international law. Apartheid remains condemned as a crime against humanity and a challenge to international conscience. South Africa thus represents a unique experience in international relations and politics and therefore fails to qualify to be considered as any other State.

The tenor and content of debate on this question during the current session showed that a few delegations retained a fundamental objection to the condemnation of apartheid as a misnomer in contemporary international life. Secondly, those same delegations in pursuit of their economic interests and geostrategic designs were prepared to continue to give solace and support to South Africa as their friend and ally, through a policy of so-called constructive engagement, even when it was made abundantly clear that South Africa was in defiance of the United Nations and posed a grave danger to international peace and security. Thirdly, an effort was made to draw a tenuous line between so-called peaceful nuclear collaboration and military nuclear collaboration, although it is clear that all that is needed is a political decision and or motivation to cross the Rubicon. Fourthly, even when an impartial expert group appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General had established the capability of South Africa to produce nuclear weapons, it was still impossible to get agreement that that capability frustrated the objectives of the

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

non-proliferation régime and the collective decision of the Organization of African Unity on the denuclearization of Africa. Fifthly, although it was recognized that the exploitation of Namibian uranium by South Africa provided South Africa with a nuclear base, a number of delegations did not find merit in the concept of a people's permanent sovereignty over its natural resources. Rather, it was adjudged by those delegations that any discussion of Namibian uranium in the context of South Africa's nuclear capability was prejudicial to the discussion on the independence of Namibia in the Security Council. And yet five years of prevarication, dilatory tactics and linkages have prevented the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) as a basis for a negotiated settlement of the Namibian question.

However, it is encouraging to note that there has been consensus that South Africa's nuclear weapon programme should be stopped in the interest of international peace and security. To this end, the international community bears a responsibility to take concrete measures to terminate the programme while those States which have any leverage with South Africa should exercise the potential of that option by prevailing on the régime to conduct itself responsibly and in line with the United Nations Charter and international law. On the basis of this general acceptance of the necessity to take concrete and enforcement measures against South Africa in relation to its development of a nuclear weapon programme, we retain the hope that, in the final analysis, reason and rationality will be brought to bear on South Africa's conduct. It is our hope that building upon the emerging consensus on some specific measures to be undertaken, the threat posed by South Africa's nuclear capability will be brought to rest.

My delegation has in a preliminary way welcomed the first steps which have been taken by the UNDC to discuss possible approaches to the elaboration of guidelines for confidence-building measures. We reiterate the view that the approach should be global and should take into account specific regional requirements. Besides, security must not be conceived of only in military terms. The necessity for the establishment of a new international economic

(Mr. Ayewah, Nigeria)

order must find an important reflection in any general formulation on confidence-building measures. We reserve our right to make specific proposals during the substantive debate on the issue during the next session of the Commission.

We have equally welcomed the Palme Commission's report, Common Security, as an important contribution to the disarmament efforts. While underscoring the importance of collective security as envisaged in the United Nations Charter, we do believe that the regional import to such security cannot be underestimated. In the case of Africa, the termination of the last vestiges of colonialism, the eradication of apartheid and the granting of independence to Namibia would be particularly relevant.

Finally, we retain the hope that the Commission will from now on build upon the modest gains which were recorded during the current session in the area of the effective use of time and address issues substantively and in a result-oriented frame.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.