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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 8 May 1984 at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:
later:

Mr. GBEHO
Mr. HEPBURN
(Vice-Chairman)

(Ghana)
(Bahamas)

- General statements and exchange of views

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

GENERAL STATEMENTS AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

The CHAIRMAN: At the close of our plenary meeting yesterday I announced that this morning would be devoted to hearing general statements by delegations which had inscribed their names on the speaker's list. I said yesterday, and I should like to repeat this morning, that it is the Commission's intention not to indulge in a general debate but, rather, to provide an opportunity for delegations that wish to avail themselves of it to make short statements on the work of the Commission as they see it. It was with that purpose in mind that the officers of the Commission, at their meeting yesterday, decided to address an appeal to all delegations to make their statements as short as possible, preferably lasting about 10 minutes.

I understand that many delegations have expressed disapproval of that appeal. None the less I wish to renew it this morning, because I consider that some discipline in the use of our time is essential for the early completion of our work. I wish therefore to remind representatives again not to indulge in a general debate and to reserve statements on the substantive issues for either the Committee of the Whole or the Working Group to which the item is related.

I should like to inform representatives that we are devoting today and tomorrow to plenary meetings to hear general statements and that we have nearly 40 speakers on the list. It is quite clear that if we are to listen to long statements, we shall not be able to complete the list by the end of tomorrow, particularly since, as in all such cases, delegations prefer to speak at the last meeting thereby overloading that meeting with speakers. For example, we have 17 speakers for our last plenary meeting but only six for this morning.

I appeal to those who already have their statements ready to endeavour to move forward their positions so that we can distribute the speakers evenly among the meetings scheduled. If there are delegations which can do so, I appeal to them to remove their names from the list of speakers so that we may conclude this phase of our work as quickly as possible. To set an example, the representative of Ghana will remove his name from the list.

(The Chairman)

I think that I have said enough. There is a beautiful English saying about a word to the wise being sufficient. I am sure that all representatives are wise and will heed my appeal and that there will be no need for the Chairman to interfere.

Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia): It is always a pleasure to see you, Sir, in the Chair of the Disarmament Commission. We have grown accustomed to seeing you discharge the important duties of chairmanship and missions. Your country, Ghana, is one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement and you have applied the principles of non-alignment on many occasions in order to promote the non-aligned concepts of disarmament and security for the benefit of us all.

We live in a complex and difficult era in which the policy of force and pressure and different forms of foreign domination are manifested most strongly. The increase in armaments has not brought increased security but has introduced the possibility of overall destruction; it has increased the lack of mutual trust; it has increased the great insecurity and inequality and has meant ever greater waste of the human and material resources that are so much needed for development. However, some hope still exists and we cannot but continue to believe that the constructive efforts by the majority of the international community will yield results in halting the arms race and launching negotiations.

Opposition to negative developments has become more resolute and is manifested in the concrete political actions of a growing number of countries. The overwhelming majority of countries rightly demand to be spared consequences for which they are not responsible.

At their New Delhi summit the non-aligned countries pointed out that the renewed escalation of the nuclear arms race had heightened the risk of the outbreak of nuclear war and led to greater insecurity and instability in international relations. The Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries particularly underlined that measures for the prevention of nuclear war and for nuclear disarmament must take into account the interests of nuclear-weapon and nuclear-weapon-free States alike. Moreover, they launched an appeal to the big Powers to enter into a constructive dialogue. They also called strongly for the rejection of the policy of force and offered a basis for international dialogue and

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

co-operation in solving crucial international problems, thus proving the readiness of the non-aligned countries to shoulder their share of the responsibility in the overall efforts.

We believe that no one can avoid these responsibilities, although peace and security do not depend on all of us equally. That is why the big Powers must bear their share of the responsibility.

The only way to halt the arms race is through negotiations. There is no alternative to negotiations, and political will and mutual trust must be displayed and applied in order to achieve results. However, any attempt to lessen tensions solely on the basis of deals between the big Powers and blocs and at the expense of smaller and weaker countries would inevitably give rise to new aspirations to domination and hegemony.

If negotiations are to be entered into and developed, détente is indispensable.

I would recall that when there was some trust between the big and the powerful there was agreement within the framework of the United Nations on the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons, and other instruments.

In that brief period of time the super-Powers negotiated agreements bilaterally and outside the framework of the United Nations on SALT I, on the reduction of the risk of the outbreak of nuclear war, on the "hot line" and on the prevention of incidents on and over the high seas. Some may say that that is too little, but I think it is enough to prove that mutual trust and political will are needed to move ahead.

However, the lesson can be drawn that détente cannot be the only process regulating relations between super-Powers and blocs. International questions can be resolved in a constructive and lasting manner only through negotiations and with the participation of all interested members of the international community.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

In this context it is worth recalling that talks are being held currently in Stockholm, Sweden, on confidence and security-building measures and disarmament in Europe within the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. That is a hopeful development which shows that various questions of European security can and should be solved only through serious negotiations. Yugoslavia attaches great importance to this Conference and considers that progress in Stockholm would have a positive impact on the global level.

The Disarmament Commission is a particularly important component of the United Nations system for the consideration of disarmament. We attach great importance to this body, since we believe that the United Nations should play a central role in the field of disarmament. The Commission is a universal forum established to deal with a universal problem. It is incumbent upon us to promote its effectiveness and to provide for the adoption of recommendations which will have a positive impact on disarmament negotiations. That was the position taken by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and it is not less but more important today.

I stress this particularly because the problems brought about by the arms race are more complex and more exacerbated than those of 1978. Since then, the disproportion between measures of disarmament and the accumulation of arms has grown. We must admit that the Conference on Disarmament has failed to submit to the General Assembly a single draft agreement although the talks in Geneva have been going on for six years. The bilateral negotiations on medium-range and intercontinental missiles have been interrupted, and there are no signs of improvement in the qualitative limitation of nuclear weapons in spite of the clear obligations emanating from the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Furthermore, the deployment of new missiles is threatening a growing number of countries, and a growing number of them are opposing so-called measures and counter-measures.

The Commission itself is not isolated from negative trends. However, if we genuinely wish it, the work of the Commission can contribute to the improvement of the situation in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

It is therefore of the utmost importance to work out recommendations pertaining to the most urgent problem - the prevention of nuclear war and nuclear disarmament. That should be our first objective, as defined in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. At the Commission's previous session the non-aligned countries submitted a list of proposals, and today these seem even more important. We submit that they should be considered with ever greater resolve in order to make the adoption of concrete recommendations possible. It is to be hoped that all participants will invest their best efforts and display goodwill to that end.

It is important that general approaches to nuclear and conventional disarmament be elaborated and general principles be formulated within the United Nations, and that these be adhered to in all negotiations on disarmament.

For years now the Commission has been postponing the adoption of recommendations pertaining to the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability and its apartheid régime, which holds a racist grip on the majority of the population and maintains the illegal occupation of Namibia. The international community should not allow the nuclear capability of the racist régime to become a threat to the security of Africa and of the world in general. We hold that such a threat should be resolutely eliminated. We shall continue to give our full support to every action to that end based on the Charter of the United Nations, relevant United Nations resolutions, the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other instruments.

The reduction of military budgets has our full support. It is very difficult to define ways and means of reducing the military budgets of States. However, no effort should be spared to achieve this important goal, and in this nuclear-weapon States and other militarily significant countries should play a leading role.

We also fully support the consideration of confidence-building measures. The lack of trust among some countries should certainly be included among the causes underlying the present escalation of the arms race. Confidence-building measures are welcome and can to a certain extent prove valuable in cutting down mistrust among countries. The more these measures tend to limit massive military activities and manoeuvres and movements of forces of an offensive character, the better the effect they will have, especially if they hold good as measures in regions of

(Mr. Golob, Yugoslavia)

crisis, regions adjacent to State borders and so on. None the less, it is equally certain that disarmament is the only real remedy for the arms race. Even the smallest measure of genuine disarmament will have a multiple effect compared to any other confidence-building measure which does not involve existing military stocks.

That is why confidence-building measures should be combined with the process of disarmament and not be treated as if they had precedence over disarmament.

Finally, an issue will be considered at this session which deserves our full attention. The United Nations has on several occasions and in several ways dealt with the issue of the relationship between disarmament and development. The conclusion has left no dilemma: there is a close interrelationship between lagging development and the arms race.

We submit that the possibilities of investment in development of resources released by disarmament should be carefully considered and modalities for international action studied, including the suggestion by France concerning the possibility of convening an international conference on this subject.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): At the outset let me congratulate Mr. Gbeho most heartily on his election as Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). His long experience in multilateral diplomacy, together with his well-known abilities, are an assurance that he will guide us safely through all the difficulties ahead of us in the weeks to come.

The Disarmament Commission meets at a time when the failure of more than two decades of negotiations to result in meaningful agreements on disarmament are dramatically highlighted by an unbridled armaments race between the two super-Powers. New and even more destabilizing nuclear weapons are being deployed and developed at an accelerating pace. The illusion that a limited nuclear war can be waged and won has added a new dimension of danger. The two major nuclear Powers go on racing for the unacceptably dangerous goals of supremacy and invulnerability. No negotiations are taking place in the nuclear field and there are no indications of when, how and even if such negotiations will start.

The responsibility for this frustrating situation lies with the same Powers as hold the world under the threat of annihilation, which constitutes the spine and backbone of the doctrine of nuclear deterrence. The major nuclear Powers -

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

self-appointed guardians of nuclear peace - not only are unwilling to discuss any restrictions on their capacity for devastation with the non-nuclear States but also seem unable to reach agreements between themselves or even to negotiate agreements on limitations or reductions of their nuclear-destruction power.

The inability of the nuclear Powers to extricate themselves from the entanglement of the ever increasing demands of deterrence is extremely alarming. Fifteen months from now most of us will take part in the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The outcome of this Conference will be crucial for non-proliferation efforts in a world where the technical capacity to go nuclear is spreading. In this perspective, the absence of negotiations on nuclear disarmament is a matter of deep concern to my Government.

An agreement on a comprehensive test-ban treaty is essential for a successful outcome of the Review Conference, as well as for a future extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It is obvious to us that some States give priority to the continued development of new types of weapons instead of honouring their commitments under the limited test-ban Treaty and the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This is a dangerous and shortsighted attitude.

We are now seeing an entirely new technological breakthrough on the horizon. This cannot fail to upset completely what the nuclear Powers themselves think of as the security of the balance of power. The development of anti-satellite systems is a new area of arms competition, which consequently threatens to change fundamental aspects of international security. Negotiations are urgently needed on an international treaty banning all space weapons, including weapons directed against targets in space. Time presses.

The rapid development of new technologies of warfare is obviously destabilizing. The risks of uncontrollable military conflict are increasing further. Against this background we must welcome the fact that this Commission has been requested 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.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

At the UNDC meeting last year a comprehensive discussion was carried out concerning confidence-building measures and related issues. The debate was very interesting and enlightening, in particular as regards definitions and the general characteristics of the subject. A considerable variety of views were expressed and on some crucial points convergence of views was established.

We find it gratifying to note that delegations representing different security situations agreed on the need for increased confidence. The potential of confidence-building measures for promoting peace and stability was recognized. This fact is of fundamental importance for the progress of our work.

It is furthermore of great significance that all delegations agreed that confidence-building measures must be neither a substitute for nor a precondition of disarmament. Confidence-building measures are useful for creating favourable conditions for disarmament and for promoting détente and friendly relations between States. Such measures must not, however, be seen in isolation. They should always be placed in the wider context of the disarmament process.

As a European country, Sweden is actively engaged in the work on confidence-building measures in the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Already, at the initial stage of the Stockholm Conference, some interesting developments can be noted. The efforts to move a step beyond the first generation of confidence-building measures - embodied in the Helsinki Final Act - are of particular significance.

In accordance with its mandate, the Conference will begin a process in which the first stage will be devoted to the negotiation and adoption of a set of mutually complementary confidence-building and security-building measures designed to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe. This will include measures of increased openness and constraint of military activities and a reaffirmation of the obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force.

The measures discussed at the Stockholm Conference are designed primarily to suit the European situation. We believe that to a considerable degree they can be applied to other regions of the world. In our efforts to deal with confidence-building measures on a global scale it would therefore seem advisable to take into account developments at the Stockholm Conference. Conversely, the conceptual clarity that the UNDC may achieve can contribute usefully to the efforts in the CSCE process.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

There are some obvious limits to what can be achieved at the Stockholm Conference. In dealing within the UNDC with confidence building on a global scale it will be necessary to take a more comprehensive approach than is at present possible at the Stockholm Conference. Such an approach could include such measures as renunciation of the use or deployment of certain types of weapons within designated zones.

The UNDC has been requested to consider confidence-building measures on a global and regional level, and it is suggested that this would include confidence building in general. A comprehensive approach to confidence building should involve consideration of all aspects of relevant military issues - conventional as well as nuclear. It is also important to take into account the economic and social aspects of the confidence- and security-building process.

In the long term perspective it would make little sense to deal with conventional forces in isolation from nuclear issues. In military doctrines and operational planning, conventional and nuclear forces are closely interrelated. The same approach should apply in the efforts to reduce the risk of military conflict.

The reduction of military budgets has been on the United Nations agenda for a long time, and the subject has been dealt with along different lines. The problems of defining, evaluating, reporting, comparing and verifying military expenditures have been treated by successive groups of experts, which have achieved some substantial and important results.

In this forum attention has been devoted mainly to the question of the political principles that should govern future negotiations between States in this field. Progress has, unfortunately, been less significant in so far as no agreements on such principles have been reached. The discussions have, however, been useful, as they have helped to develop new ideas and to clarify the different positions of Member States.

I urge all Member States, and in particular the militarily significant States, to create the necessary conditions for fruitful negotiations on agreements to reduce military expenditures. In such negotiations a reasonable availability of statistical data would be required.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

A halt in the increase of military expenditures and subsequent reductions would strengthen the security of nations on both global and regional levels. Such reductions could, furthermore, release resources from military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

Food, clean water, health, a life in peace - these fundamental needs are denied to hundreds of millions of people all over the world. Permit me to mention just a few figures to illustrate how scarce resources are wasted on an ever-escalating arms race: every minute 30 children die because of lack of food or vaccine; every minute \$1.3 million are used for military purposes: the cost of one modern nuclear submarine corresponds to the education budget of 23 developing countries with 160 million children of school age.

The relationship between armaments and lack of development is also very much a reality felt in the industrialized countries. Even in some of the world's richest countries, poverty and social misery are increasing in parallel with military spending.

The arms race bears part of the responsibility for the prolonged global economic crisis. It breeds inflation, encroaches on resources available for productive investments, generates less employment than the use of corresponding resources for civilian purposes and has adverse effects on world trade and monetary stability. Disarmament will benefit the economic prospects of all countries.

The enormous resources spent on the military have not given us more security. On the contrary, the world is buying less and less security at an ever-increasing price.

In recent years a number of important studies have given us good opportunities to assess the relationship between disarmament and development. The United Nations expert study on this subject, completed in 1981, is of particular interest. The studies give us a good basis for political action.

A report is about to be presented to the Swedish Government describing our own defence efforts, in economic and social terms, and giving examples of how our defence resources could be redistributed to other purposes, in the event of various degrees of international disarmament. It will also analyse the problem of defence-sector conversion and how such a conversion could contribute to our international development co-operation. It is important that other States also carry out national investigations of this kind.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

My Government very much welcomes the fact that the question of the relationship between disarmament and development will remain on the United Nations agenda. We are ready to consider favourably the proposal by France to convene a United Nations conference on this issue. The conference should have a broad political character and allow for a continued and deepened assessment of the impact of military expenditure on the world economic situation and development. It should have as its aim the preparation of further action at the international and national levels. //

We are also interested in the idea of establishing an international disarmament fund for development. It should primarily be considered not as a mere means of transferring resources, but as a political instrument aimed at focusing attention on the link between disarmament and development and the urgency of promoting both objectives. One of the purposes of such a fund would be to mobilize additional resources for peace and development. //

Finally, the nuclear arms race is the concern of all peoples of the world. Today we are saying this with even stronger emphasis than before. Leading scientists in the United States as well as in the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden warn of the serious threat to the survival of all people caused by a nuclear war. I refer to the scientific findings on the risk of a nuclear winter seriously damaging or destroying the very conditions for human life on earth. The knowledge that the nuclear winter would descend upon all countries - nuclear-weapon-free or not - should lead to a popular outcry against the major nuclear Powers and their unwillingness to negotiate seriously.

We demand of the major nuclear Powers that they start the process of nuclear disarmament and negotiate in good faith.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): This year's session of the Disarmament Commission takes place at a time of aggravated international relations. The danger of a nuclear war, with all its catastrophic consequences for mankind and for life on earth, has increased extraordinarily - as you rightly emphasized in your opening statement yesterday, Mr. Chairman - as a result of the further escalation of the nuclear arms race. An immediate change of course is imperative.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic
Republic)

The thirty-ninth anniversary of the liberation of the German people from fascism, which we commemorate today, is an occasion for us to reaffirm the principle laid down in the constitution of the German Democratic Republic that a war must never again be unleashed from German soil. The Chairman of the Council of State of the German Democratic Republic, Erich Honecker, replied to the appeal made by leading representatives of the Socialist International as follows:

"Irrespective of different opinions in other fields, there is no more important task facing all responsible statesmen and politicians than to do everything possible to avert the danger of a nuclear catastrophe and to secure a peaceful prospect for mankind".

There is no doubt that the Disarmament Commission is also faced with such a task if it is to fulfil the expectations of it. In this regard, my delegation wishes you, Sir, every success in the discharge of your responsible office.

I wish to assure the Chairman of my delegation's continued support and readiness to co-operate. At the same time, we should like to congratulate the other officers on their election.

The Disarmament Commission can rely in its forthcoming work on the determination of the majority of States to take resolute measures aimed at the prevention of a nuclear war, halting the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament. That determination was expressed in numerous resolutions of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

At the same time, my delegation is aware of the difficulties which exist in connection with the implementation of those and other resolutions, endorsing the relevant recommendations of the Disarmament Commission. While the majority of States show the political will to lessen the nuclear danger, the leading imperialist nuclear-weapon State, the United States of America, is undertaking efforts in the opposite direction. For instance, during the negotiations on the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe, medium-range nuclear weapons were deployed in Western Europe, with the result that those negotiations ended in failure.

The Warsaw Treaty member States clearly reaffirmed their basic position at the meeting of the Committee of their Ministers for Foreign Affairs held recently in Budapest. Above all, they do not consider the present course of events in the field of nuclear armament to be irreversible. They stress that the reduction of

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both medium-range and tactical nuclear weapons in Europe down to their complete elimination, can be achieved through constructive and productive talks. They demand in this context

"that an end be put to the deployment of American medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe, and declare that, should such measures leading to the withdrawal of the missiles already deployed be taken, steps will be simultaneously taken to cancel the counter-measures. This will lay the groundwork for the resumption of talks for reaching appropriate agreements on freeing Europe from nuclear weapons, both of medium range and tactical ones."

(A/39/209, p. 4)

In addition, the Committee of Ministers for Foreign Affairs refers to the validity of the proposals already submitted by the Warsaw Treaty member States in Prague in January 1983. These proposals are especially suitable for promoting consideration of agenda item 4, since they are directed at conducting negotiations with the aim of effectively eliminating the danger of a nuclear war and at facilitating the elaboration of a general approach to the negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament.

Yesterday the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty launched an official appeal in which they called once again upon the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to conclude a treaty on the mutual renunciation of the use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. They called upon those States to enter now into multilateral consultations on the treaty which they proposed in their Prague Political Declaration. In the present complicated international situation, when the tensions between States, particularly in Europe, are on the increase and the danger of war is rising, this would constitute an important contribution to the lessening of tensions, the improvement of the political climate and the strengthening of confidence and peace, for the benefit of all peoples.

Great importance also attaches to the proposal recently submitted by socialist States at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, that the relations between nuclear-weapon States be subject to certain norms. Agreement on and respect for such norms would simultaneously contribute to preventing the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States.

(Mr. Ott, German Democratic Republic)

Agenda item 6 acquires particular importance in the light of the facts which have been revealed on the nuclear capabilities of South Africa, the oppression of the majority of the South African people by the racist régime and the threat posed by that régime to neighbouring States. A suitable basis for further consideration, which should be brought to a conclusion at this session, is provided by the conclusions and recommendations proposed by the African States members of the Disarmament Commission at the Commission's 1983 session.

The proposals made by socialist States which are relevant to this session of the Disarmament Commission include the commencement of negotiations between the Warsaw Treaty member States and the NATO States on the non-increase and the reduction of military expenditures. This proposal, already contained in the Prague Political Declaration of the Warsaw Treaty States, was further elaborated in March of this year. The socialist States intend thereby to achieve the earliest possible concrete agreements on the non-increase and the subsequent reduction of military spending.

The proposed measures should be taken into account in our consideration of agenda item 5 and the identification and elaboration of principles in this context for freezing and reducing military expenditures. They are useful also in the consideration of agenda item 8, since the main problem of the interrelation between disarmament and development is the achievement of a genuine reduction of military spending as a result of agreed disarmament measures and their implementation, which would release financial means and material and intellectual resources that could be used to support developing countries.

The measures proposed by socialist States at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe are also relevant to the consideration of agenda item 7. In the elaboration of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures my delegation will be guided by the principle that confidence-building measures fulfil their purpose only when they are directed at lessening the danger of war, reducing military confrontation and making relations between States once again politically calculable.

These basic remarks will be elaborated upon by my delegation in the various sub-organs of this Commission.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The present session of our Commission has been convened at a time when the international situation is extremely complicated. That situation, unfortunately, is not improving, but continues to remain exceedingly dangerous. The responsibility for that is borne by those in the ruling circles of the United States of America who rely on military force. The deployment of new American missiles in Western Europe, of Pershing II and cruise missiles aimed at the USSR and other countries of the socialist community, has greatly increased the threat of nuclear war.

More than ever in the past, the situation in the world today dictates a need for decisive steps to prevent nuclear war and to get to the very core of this problem. We need to clear the way for productive negotiations on nuclear weapons and to work with persistence for practical results on every aspect of disarmament where there is the slightest glimmer of hope of achieving balanced agreements.

As noted by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Comrade Chernenko, the complexity of the situation obliges us to double or even triple our efforts to bring about a policy of peace and international co-operation. The Soviet Union recently put forward a new, large-scale initiative aimed at restoring a climate of international confidence and achieving a return to inter-State relations geared to a lessening of military confrontation and détente.

On behalf of our State, Constantine Chernenko put forward a broad range of measures and proposals dealing, inter alia, with specific norms for relations between nuclear Powers, which are today of particular significance. The norms proposed are the following: the prevention of nuclear war should be considered the major objective of foreign policy; situations fraught with the threat of nuclear conflict should not be countenanced; in the event of such a danger arising, consultations should take place with urgency to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear conflagration; propaganda in favour of nuclear war of any kind, whether global or limited, should be renounced; a commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons should be undertaken; in no circumstances should nuclear weapons be used against non-nuclear countries on whose territories such weapons do not exist; the status of existing non-nuclear zones should be respected and the formation of new non-nuclear zones in various areas of the world should be encouraged; the spread of nuclear weapons in any form should not be allowed and nobody should be given such

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weapons or control over such weapons; such weapons should not be deployed on the territories of countries where they do not exist and the nuclear arms race should not be extended to new spheres, including outer space; the step-by-step reduction of nuclear weapons, on the basis of the principle of equal security, up to the total elimination of all forms and types of such weapons, should be steadily pursued.

The Soviet Union has laid down these principles as the basis of its policy. It is ready to reach agreement at any time with other nuclear Powers regarding joint recognition of such norms and to make them binding. This would be consonant with the interests not only of States possessing nuclear weapons but also of the peoples of the entire world.

Recognizing that nuclear weapons represent the most serious threat to the existence of mankind, the Soviet Union has consistently favoured giving the highest priority to consideration of the problem of halting the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament - one of the major problems on the agenda of the Commission's present session. The position of the USSR with regard to this issue, which is crucial for the peace and security of the peoples, is clear. We are against competition in accumulating nuclear arsenals. We have been and we continue to be advocates of the prohibition and destruction of all types and forms of such weapons. A reliable course towards the achievement of that objective would be the commencement at the earliest possible date of negotiations on the cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and the gradual reduction of stockpiles until their total elimination. Our concrete proposals in this regard have for a long time been on the negotiating table of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

A decisive turn of events in the world would also be promoted by the imposition by all nuclear Powers of a qualitative and quantitative freeze on their nuclear arsenals, as a first step towards the subsequent reduction of those arsenals. A reliable barrier to the creation of new types and systems of nuclear weapons would be the achievement of an agreement on the complete and comprehensive prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. The Soviet Union, as is well known, put forward a draft treaty on this question in 1982.

Another serious threat to peace would be the emergence of nuclear weapons in countries in areas where exacerbated military threats exist, and particularly in countries which are trying to acquire nuclear weapons for aggressive purposes. We


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share the special concern of the African States with regard to the South African régime, and we consider the Commission's work with regard to the nuclear potential of that country to be most important.

The achievement of the aim of preventing the creeping spread of nuclear weapons throughout our planet could be greatly assisted by the creation of non-nuclear zones in various parts of the world, as well as by giving reliable security guarantees to non-nuclear States that renounce the production and acquisition of such weapons and do not allow them on their territory. We believe that the Disarmament Commission would be acting correctly if, in its report to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, it were to come out firmly in favour of increased efforts to arrive at concrete measures designed to eliminate the danger of nuclear war, to curb the nuclear arms race and to promote comprehensive nuclear disarmament. We are ready to support any constructive proposals to that end.

The Commission has also been entrusted with consideration of questions dealing with confidence-building measures. The Soviet Union actively favours work on such questions and has, as is well known, put forward a series of concrete proposals designed to promote a strengthening of confidence and understanding between States. We believe that the best way of preventing any kind of war, including a war that might be triggered accidentally, is by bringing about a cessation of the arms race and a return to orderly relations of equality among States and to détente. One important confidence-building measure that would be a genuine turning-point in the creation of an atmosphere of trust would be the adoption by all nuclear-weapon States of a commitment not to be the first to use such weapons. Another would be the adoption by States of mutual agreements not to be the first to employ either nuclear or conventional weapons against each other - in other words, not to employ military force at all.

Our position is clear. In January of last year the Soviet Union, together with other countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty, put forward a proposal to conclude a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations. Events that occurred last year on a bilateral basis - namely, the consultations between States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and many States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), as well as several other




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countries - promoted better understanding of our proposal. At the same time, during the course of those consultations various views and opinions were expressed which attested to the need for intensification of dialogue on this important proposal. In the light of this, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty took a new step. On 7 May they proposed to States members of NATO that they engage on a multilateral basis in consultations on both the idea of the proposed treaty and its principal components. An important role in the strengthening of confidence and security not only in Europe but in the world as a whole must be played by the Stockholm Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe.

It is important that the experience of implementing a number of measures to increase mutual confidence, which has been shown to be justified in Europe be extended to the Far East. The Soviet Union is prepared to discuss this question, on a practical level, with the participation of the People's Republic of China and of Japan. It would obviously improve the political climate in that area if we could bring about the implementation of the Mongolian initiative on the conclusion of a convention on mutual non-aggression and the non-use of force in relations between the States of Asia and the Pacific Ocean, as well as other initiatives by socialist countries aimed at creating a calm and stable situation in that area.

In our view a substantive contribution to the development of confidence-building measures could also be made by their extension to the seas and oceans, particularly the busiest sea lanes.

The Soviet Union is ready to support other measures also - confidence-building security-building measures that would promote a real decrease in military confrontation and a genuine improvement in relations between States. In this connection, we are aware, of course, that there can hardly be model measures that will be applicable at all times and to all areas.

 The Commission will also be discussing the reduction of military budgets and the relationship between disarmament and development. We have traditionally attached great importance to those questions. Bearing in mind that growing military expenditures are directly linked with the intensification of the arms race, the Soviet Union, together with its friends and allies in the Warsaw Treaty, put forward in March of this year an extensive proposal regarding negotiations to

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achieve practical agreement between the countries of the Warsaw Pact and NATO on the freezing of military expenditures and their subsequent reduction in percentage or absolute terms. We continue to believe that in such efforts to ensure the freezing and reduction of military budgets a role must be played by all States, and primarily by States possessing major military potential. At the same time the implementation of such measures by States parties to the Warsaw Treaty and States members of NATO would be of particular significance in view of the large proportion of total military expenditure for which they are responsible.

As for the proposals concerning the comparison of military budgets and the reporting machinery, these cannot be regarded as anything but an attempt to evade the reduction of military budgets. We are convinced that, if States have the political will to reduce military expenditures, the achievement of agreement will not take long. But, if that will does not exist, the most detailed reporting machinery will be used only for the purpose of increasing mistrust and suspicion and dragging out the entire matter.

The problem of the reduction of military budgets is closely linked to the problem of releasing funds for development purposes in, inter alia, the developing countries. The Soviet Union is aware of the link between disarmament and development and takes this into account in its foreign policy activities. Both within the United Nations and outside it the Soviet Union has put forward a number of concrete proposals providing for the implementation of real measures to curb the arms race and promote disarmament to make possible the release of additional funds for development purposes in, inter alia, the developing countries. Among these is the proposal that such funds as may be released as the result of a reduction in the production of nuclear weapons and of stockpiles be used not for other types of military expenditure under the military budgets of nuclear States but rather for peaceful purposes, including development, and many other proposals. Moreover the Soviet Union has always favoured and continues to favour the distribution of such funds on a just basis, taking into account the most pressing needs of the developing countries, and without discrimination of any kind.

I should like to stress that in considering the problem of the relationship between disarmament and development we cannot overlook the fact that the question of the transfer of the funds released for development purposes is only one element,

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which cannot exist in isolation from the most important element, namely disarmament. Only real measures to curb and end the arms race can create a practical foundation for redirecting the funds released for use in the interest of the social and economic progress of mankind.

There is not a single question relevant to the limitation of the arms race or disarmament on which the Soviet Union has not come forward with a constructive initiative. Moreover, in doing so we have always tried to ensure that we are taking into account the security interests of all States so as to observe the principle of equality and equal security, for only on that basis can negotiations be conducted with hope of success.

However, it is clear that the wishes and readiness of one side alone are not sufficient to ensure the success of negotiations. It is necessary for the other side too to demonstrate interest in constructive negotiations and in solving problems overdue for solution, and to sweep aside the obstacles to international dialogue in the area of disarmament that have piled up or been artificially created in recent times.

I should now like to make a few comments in connection with some statements that have been made.

We are decisive foes of rhetoric. We also protest at attempts to lay equal responsibility for the deadlock in disarmament on both so-called super-Powers - a term that we do not recognize. I should like to deal with the facts in connection with the absolutely unfounded assertions made by a number of delegations both today and on other occasions.

We have heard quite a few high-flown words regarding the desire of the Government of the United States to prevent nuclear war. However, the fact is that the United States has been blocking even a beginning of negotiations on the prevention of nuclear war. A great deal has also been said in Washington regarding a readiness to get down to the reduction of nuclear arsenals, but in fact it is the United States that is to blame for having wrecked the most important negotiations on limiting and reducing nuclear arsenals. For the first time in recent decades negotiations are not taking place on this burning problem of our time.

It was in the multilateral negotiating body, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, that the United States and its allies obstructed even the beginning of negotiations on limiting the nuclear arms race and discussions on nuclear disarmament.

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The same can be said concerning another urgent disarmament problem: the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In a number of international treaties the United States has undertaken the commitment to take part in negotiations aimed at such a ban. Here too, however, it is not the Soviet Union but the United States that is to blame for breaking off the trilateral negotiations on this question. The solution of this problem has been postponed indefinitely.

Many bombastic phrases on the need to preserve peace in outer space have from time to time been uttered in the American capital, while in fact it is the United States, not the Soviet Union, that is rendering impossible the beginning of businesslike negotiations genuinely aimed at the prevention of the militarization of outer space. If some widely-touted proposals are being made in negotiating bodies on disarmament questions, they have only one goal: to lead to a dead end those negotiations that are continuing with from time to time, a certain degree of success. All of this rhetoric is merely to conceal a clear aspiration to military supremacy and indicates that those who are wrecking the negotiations, who in terms of their real actions continue to increase ever further the military danger in the world, would like to prevent anyone - including those present in the Disarmament Commission - speaking of the reasons for the present alarming world situation.

Those are some of the views of the Soviet delegation in connection with the beginning of this session of the Disarmament Commission.

Since I began speaking while you were out of the room, Sir, I have not had the opportunity to greet you and congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship. I now do so with great satisfaction, and wish you success in guiding the work of the Disarmament Commission at this session.

The CHAIRMAN: I take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Issraelyan of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Disarmament Commission, which I believe he is attending for the first time.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): I am making this statement today on behalf of the delegations of the 10 States members of the European Community.

I should like first of all to congratulate you, Sir, most wholeheartedly and to express our warmest and sincerest wishes for the success of your important mission. We are very happy to see at the head of the Disarmament Commission a most distinguished representative of a country of Africa, a continent with which the European Community has very close ties of friendship and co-operation. On many occasions, particularly when you presided over the First Committee of the General

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Assembly, we have been able to appreciate your competence, authority and courtesy and are convinced that under your leadership our work will progress in the best possible conditions.

Our Governments attach considerable importance to this work. Indeed, the Disarmament Commission occupies a very specific and necessary place among the institutions created under United Nations auspices to deal with disarmament matters. This is the only organ with universal composition which lends itself to a thorough and substantive discussion of disarmament problems.

Several of these problems are now on our agenda. Item 4 sets forth an ambitious task, since it deals with overall disarmament, both nuclear and conventional. At the 1980, 1981 and 1982 sessions the Commission succeeded in preparing substantive documents on this point which were adopted by consensus. Unfortunately, that was not the case at the previous session. We fervently hope that this year, despite the differences in approach of which we are all aware, the Commission will be in a position to reach agreement on conclusions and recommendations. Such a result would, in the circumstances - with which, again, we are all familiar - have an undeniable political importance.

The reduction of military budgets has been on our agenda for several years. The work done last year has not, unfortunately, led to any recommendation. The delegations of the 10 countries members of the European Community hope that the thinking that might have been done since then will help us achieve genuine progress this year. They hope that the reduction of military budgets will lead to the implementation of procedures that will allow verification and comparability. In this connection, they believe that the system of standardized presentation constitutes a first important measure to establish transparency and comparability of the military expenditures of various countries.

The item relating to South Africa's nuclear capability was the subject of intensive efforts last year, and to a large extent our colleague from the Bahamas, Ambassador Davidson Hepburn, should be given credit for that. The delegations of the 10 countries members of the European Community took an important part in that matter and felt deep regret at the fact that once again the Commission was unable to reach conclusions on that point.

They remain determined to participate actively in the quest for agreement. We hope that the presence of a representative of Africa - you, Mr. Chairman - at the head of the Commission will make it possible to achieve success. We are also happy

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to see Ambassador Hepburn present here. The discussions last year indicated that there are common objectives with regard to the main point: the rejection of anything that might contribute to the acquisition or increase of South Africa's nuclear capability that would threaten peace and stability in Africa as well as the non-proliferation régime in general. These common objectives must naturally result in clear and precise provisions. We are convinced that they will be accepted by all if we stick to what is essential.

Last year, for the first time in the Disarmament Commission, all States Members of the United Nations had an opportunity to take part in a debate on the question of confidence-building measures. Common solutions have emerged on numerous points. For the remainder of its work the Commission has a list of principles and general characteristics which is contained in the working paper submitted by two States members of the European Community, namely, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands. The States members of the Community express the hope that outstanding questions will be settled and a report adopted by consensus will be transmitted this year to the General Assembly.

The delegations of the Ten attach major importance to the success of this undertaking. Indeed, confidence-building measures constitute a major factor for security and make a significant contribution to the establishment of favourable conditions for the disarmament process.

There is a new item on the agenda of this session, "Consideration of proposals concerning the relationship between disarmament and development". The inscription of this item stems from the initiative taken by one of the countries of the European Community, France, at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The idea that disarmament will contribute to development is enshrined in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That idea has led to important documents, particularly the report of the Group of Experts presided over by Mrs. Thorsson.

The States members of the European Community will make their full contribution in the discussions on this point, which we hope will lead to the adoption by the Commission of appropriate recommendations to be transmitted to the General Assembly.

Mr. CARSALES (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): May I begin by expressing my personal satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over our deliberations. Two years ago I had the honour and pleasure of working with you when you headed the First Committee of the General Assembly; I had an opportunity to appreciate personally your brilliant efforts which led to a most effective performance by the First Committee. I am sure that those same qualities will assist in this session's work. You can rest assured of my complete co-operation and that of my delegation.

The Disarmament Commission is beginning its 1984 session in an extremely unfavourable political climate. This is a fact which cannot be ignored. The disarmament issue, with which this Commission has to deal, is at a low point in a process which has very seldom been characterized by positive elements. Bilateral and multilateral negotiations not only have been unproductive but are now to all intents and purposes non-existent. To dwell on matters of this kind would be to repeat the obvious. However, this situation in no way diminishes the responsibility of the Disarmament Commission; but, on the contrary, enhances it. In these circumstances, we must all tackle the challenge resolutely and energetically so as to make progress with respect to the items on the agenda.

There is no doubt that the question which is the very essence of the Commission's mandate and is at the core of our concern is agenda item 4, which includes such issues of major importance as the nuclear-arms race, nuclear disarmament and the elimination of the danger of nuclear war. The very survival of mankind hinges on the solution of these problems.

Unfortunately, the possibility of achieving progress, even within the limited scope of the Commission, seems more remote than ever. In any case, so far in 1984 the development of the discussions on these items in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has been particularly discouraging.

As defined by the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament is the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament and has been given the task of negotiating international agreements on the fundamental questions in this field.

Against some resistance, the following questions have been included in its agenda: the prohibition of nuclear tests, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war and of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

So far the Conference on Disarmament has not even been able to begin negotiations on any of the items I have just mentioned, even though some of them have been on its agenda since its creation in 1979.

A cause of even greater concern, if not of alarm, is that the possibility of even beginning some of these negotiations seems increasingly remote. The intensive ongoing consultations that have been conducted in the Conference during the past few months have not led to any positive result. We must emphasize that these consultations did not, of course, touch on the substance of the items in question. They dealt merely with the establishment of machinery to channel the discussions and the terms of reference of various committees - terms of reference which in most cases do not contemplate immediate negotiations.

Even in this limited context it was not possible to secure any kind of progress. Worse still, a hardening of previous positions was noted. In certain cases, prior conviction of the uselessness of the entire effort and, at the same time, readiness to confess failure were apparent. That, without glossing over the facts, is the prevailing state of affairs with regard to the questions which largely make up item 4 of our agenda. We do not see how the situation can be any different in the Disarmament Commission. However, that does not relieve us of the obligation to do whatever we can within the framework of this agenda item to modify, if only slightly, this unfortunate stagnation.

In the face of this situation, it might be thought that the other items on our agenda are secondary or deserving of only superficial consideration. That is certainly not the view of the delegation of Argentina. These items are, indeed, subordinate when compared with the main issues, and we must recognize this. But, at the same time, each one within its own framework offers not negligible possibilities of progress and, were progress to be achieved, this would represent a perhaps limited but nevertheless meaningful contribution to the work of this Commission.

We must bear in mind the fact that, at a time when international effort with regard to disarmament and security is proving extremely unproductive and is therefore viewed with growing scepticism and lack of confidence by the world public, concrete and positive steps by the Disarmament Commission would, over and above their intrinsic value, provide an incentive to us to persist in our mission and show that the prevailing pessimism is not entirely justified.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

The question of the reduction of military budgets has a long history that demonstrates the complexity of this question. The general goal is widely shared, but the ways and means of achieving it still give rise to substantial differences of opinion. It is to be hoped that this session will lead to a closing of the gap between the various positions. The Government of Argentina - aside from the specific points of procedure on which there is no agreement in the Commission - is taking important steps fully in keeping with the substantive objective to which this item refers.

We must also hope that it will be possible to succeed in producing a document on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, on which there should be general agreement so that it would carry great moral weight on a subject which is quite rightly of great concern to the international community and particularly the African continent.

At last year's session considerable progress was made on the elaboration of guidelines on appropriate confidence-building measures. It should therefore be possible this year to complete the preparation of an appropriate document on this matter. I do not believe that it is possible to reach a consensus on general principles and specific measures. The latter are mentioned by way of example, but this does not mean that others in respect of which there is so far no consensus are excluded. Such a consensus might emerge in future or such measures might perhaps be implemented in certain regions. We must make it clear, however, that the regional approach to confidence-building measures, although it cannot be ignored, in no way constitutes the core of the problem. In a world becoming increasingly smaller and interrelated, threats to security seldom emerge from exclusively regional situations. The super-Powers and military alliances are carrying out activities that have universal implications, and the establishment of a climate of greater international confidence undoubtedly requires global measures.

The relationship between disarmament and development cannot be denied and has been the subject of many studies and declarations. We must now go beyond the framework of academic exercises and general principles, although this is certainly very difficult. We hope that it will be possible to consider this item in detail at this session, in which case it would be very useful to have the report that the United Nations Industrial Development Organization has just prepared. The Government of France has already presented an important initiative which my country has received with the utmost interest. We are prepared to take part in any meeting that may be set up to carry out a thorough analysis of this question.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

We are also aware that in the final analysis the success of this proposal will depend on the degree of receptivity it finds in the more developed countries and those that possess the largest arsenals. We hope that their attitude in this respect will become clear during this session.

In conclusion I should like to say that the work of this Commission is important in itself and should not depend upon unfavourable situations that we are all aware of. At the same time, we must fully realize we have possibilities for progress in areas outside the main purview of our task - disarmament. The measures we can agree on in this regard will not change the basic picture that is of concern to us and they will be meaningful and significant only if there is a change in the basic trend, which is extremely negative at present.

THE CHAIRMAN: As regards the meeting scheduled for this afternoon there are two developments: a number of countries have responded positively to my appeal and have therefore taken their names off the list of speakers for this afternoon; many others, however, have not heeded my appeal and are "hedging" until tomorrow. The result is that we have only three speakers for this afternoon and I think it would be a waste of conference resources to hold a meeting for so few speakers. With the permission of the Commission, I shall cancel this afternoon's meeting and shift the three speakers to tomorrow morning. This means that the list of speakers for tomorrow morning and afternoon will be heavily loaded - about 15 in the morning and about 19 in the afternoon. If there is no objection, I shall therefore start tomorrow morning's meeting at 10.00 a.m. instead of at 10.30 a.m. in order to permit us to get through the morning list, and I hope that many members will reconsider the decision to make statements or to make lengthy statements so that we can hear all the speakers by the close of the day tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.