DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 1 June 1984 at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. GBEHO (Ghana)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

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

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives may recall that at its 2nd meeting, held yesterday, 31 May 1984, the Committee of the Whole approved the reports of the Commission's subsidiary bodies on agenda items 4 (a) and (b), 5, 6, 7 and 8 (A/CN.10/1984/CRP.3-7), as amended in the course of their consideration. The Committee of the Whole also approved the draft report of the Disarmament Commission (A/CN.10/1984/CRP.2), as amended in the course of the deliberations.

Now that the Committee of the Whole has approved all the components of the draft report of the Commission, I should like to propose that the draft report of the Commission as a whole, as described, be adopted by the Commission. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Disarmament Commission adopts its report.

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

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Once again the Disarmament Commission has concluded its annual session without reaching agreement on any of the substantive items on its agenda. For my delegation, and I am sure for many others also, this is a source of great concern. We have all seen how much time and effort have been devoted to the search for texts that could command consensus, in an exercise which in general terms did not overcome the basic differences that exist on many important issues in the sphere of disarmament.

Everything indicates that devoting more meetings to it or redoubling the efforts - on the assumption that such would be possible, although I do not think so - would not produce more positive results. Therefore there are two possible conclusions: either the Disarmament Commission is intrinsically incapable of formulating specific measures relating to the issues within its sphere of competence or the procedures and objectives that guide its work are not in the present circumstances the most appropriate for achieving useful results.

I believe that the second possibility deserves more thorough consideration. Paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament stipulates that the Disarmament Commission is
"a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, the function of which shall be to consider and make recommendations on various problems in the field of disarmament" (resolution S-10/2, para. 118 (a)).

To that end, the Final Document goes on to say, it shall function under the rules of procedure relating to the committees of the General Assembly but it "shall make every effort to ensure that, in so far as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus" (para. 118 (b)).

In actual fact, what was a recommendation designed to bring about a maximum effort to act by consensus has become an absolute rule that decision-making should be by consensus, just as is the case with the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, with the difference that in the latter case the need for consensus is reflected explicitly in its rules of procedure, which is not the case with the Disarmament Commission. Furthermore, account must be taken of the fact that the competences of the two forums are completely different, one being a deliberative body and the other a negotiating body.

We all know that disarmament problems are complex and that the positions of countries are firm and divergent. Furthermore, these are questions that are decided at the highest government levels. If the objective of the Commission's work is to produce substantive recommendations on these problems and if these recommendations always have to be adopted by consensus, it can come as a surprise to no one that the balance sheet is often negative.

Since the Disarmament Commission is a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, which in turn is also a deliberative body, we do not see why the Disarmament Commission cannot adapt itself in the decision-making process to the procedural rules operating in the Assembly and why in fact it has to work under the same rules as the Disarmament Conference, which is a negotiating rather than a deliberative body. The result of this situation is that normally the Commission cannot achieve consensus among its 158 members on substantive issues or else that, if it does reach agreement, the agreement is on the basis of the lowest common denominator, resulting in texts that are insignificant or innocuous or ones that constitute no progress over the documents adopted earlier.

The purpose of these comments is not, at least on this occasion, to call in question the principle of consensus in the Disarmament Commission but rather to make it clear that its use, applied to the drafting of texts that are not treaties, represents certain frustration and an exercise in a vacuum.
In fact, the Disarmament Commission seems to have turned into a gigantic drafting committee in which each of the 158 members has the right of veto. In this case no one can be surprised that the results of its work are almost always negative. Therefore I wonder whether it would not be appropriate to emphasize the deliberative nature of the Disarmament Commission instead of making the search for texts, on which it is often completely impossible _ab initio_ to reach agreement, the essence of its work.

The General Assembly is the deliberative body _par excellence_, but it is a fact that on disarmament issues there is rarely a specific and substantive debate. In the so-called general debate that takes place every year in the First Committee the statements are all-encompassing, usually dealing with most, if not all, of the main problems in this field. They are statements that attempt to reflect the thinking of each country on a vast range of issues, none of which is dealt with separately and thoroughly. Since the General Assembly devotes the rest of its session to the discussion of draft resolutions, the number of which increases every year, the issues, in spite of their importance and complexity, never form the object of an individual, specific and organized debate.

I believe that the Disarmament Commission could fill that vacuum. Every year it could consider a small number of items which would be referred to it by the General Assembly, and the basic purpose would be to conduct a wide-ranging debate on each of the items. If some general conclusions capable of commanding consensus were to emerge from that debate, so much the better, but the task would be accomplished with the mere holding of that debate and its appropriate reflection in the annual report of the Commission. There should be verbatim records of such debates, which would form a supplement to the report.

Furthermore, it should not be the task of the Disarmament Commission to deal primarily, as is the case at present, with the drafting of texts of considerable length, concerning which it could be predicted in advance that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to reach consensus. Precisely as a result of that impossible task, these exercises are endless and have to be repeated year after year, perpetuating the items on the agenda.

In other words, it would be a matter of using the Disarmament Commission to carry out its basic function as "a deliberative body, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly", to use the words of the Final Document. In the view of my delegation, that should be the thrust of the work of the Commission, instead of its
working as a drafting committee under rules which guarantee in advance the futility of its efforts.

I am aware that it is not possible for us to take a different approach at this time to the Commission's working methods, but I believe that we should all reflect on the way in which the Commission has been working and on whether fruitful use is being made of this body's potential. The experience of recent years seems to indicate the contrary and it would be unfortunate if the lack of concrete, positive results over a period of time eventually were to lead to a serious questioning of the Commission's usefulness.

I do not want to conclude, Mr. Chairman, without expressing my delegation's gratitude for the efficient way in which you have guided the Commission's work. I do not need to use a large number of adjectives; the facts speak for themselves. Therefore I extend to you my delegation's sincerest congratulations. I also extend congratulations to the Chairmen of the four Working Groups, whose work was intensive and difficult and deserves our recognition. We also extend our gratitude to the secretariat of the Commission for the very efficient work done at all levels.

Mr. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation is addressing the Commission today in order to put forward our view on the results of the Commission's work at this session.

From the earliest days of the existence of the Soviet State the limitation of the arms race and disarmament have been among the fundamental objectives of its whole foreign policy. There is not a single important disarmament question on which the Soviet Union has not presented important proposals for international agreements. It has taken part actively and constructively in the work of various international forums on disarmament. In other words, we wish to see the most important matters of our day - the prevention of war and the achievement of disarmament - settled round the negotiating table. But we desire serious and honest negotiations aimed at the important goal of creating a world without war and without weapons.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Konstantin Chernenko, recently said in discussions with the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Genscher:
"It is the Soviet Union which speaks out in favour of constructive dialogue and puts forward concrete proposals aimed at reaching practical agreements."

At the same time, we resolutely oppose negotiations for the sake of negotiations, which would merely mislead world public opinion. The Soviet Union does not intend to take part in negotiations of that kind. When taking part in the work of the Commission, as in the work of other international bodies, we base ourselves first on the fact that in the present tense situation it is essential to take decisive measures to prevent a nuclear war. That has been the cornerstone of all the activities of the Soviet delegation at the present session. We came to the session with a whole series of important documents, large-scale initiatives directed at restoring a climate of international trust and leading relations between States back to the path of lessening the military confrontation and ensuring détente, as set out in the statement of Konstantin Chernenko and in the letter of the First Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Andrei Gromyko, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, on the question of the interdependence of disarmament and development. Together with other socialist countries, we put forward a working document on the question of the prevention of nuclear war and a proposal by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty addressed to the member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization concerning negotiations on the freezing and the reduction of military expenditures.

The Soviet delegation has taken a most active part in the work of all the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, has spoken many times on all the items on the agenda and has introduced documents in the Commission as a whole and in its Working Groups. We have stated our views on proposals put forward by other delegations, some of which we took into account when deciding our position.

We say this not in self-praise but in order to illustrate by the example of the present session the Soviet Union's interest in achieving progress in disarmament talks, an interest that is not just declared but real, that is a matter not of words but of deeds. This is our line, and it is certainly different from the clearly passive attitude and, frankly, the lack of interest of certain other delegations, including those of the militarily most important States, with regard to the work of the Disarmament Commission, or their spasmodic activity when it becomes necessary to block adoption by the Commission of important
recommendations. The attitude of those delegations is also eloquent confirmation of their lack of real interest in disarmament matters.

What has this session of the Disarmament Commission shown? What are the main political conclusions that can be drawn from its work? If one takes the broad, long view one sees that the session showed above all the real concern about the possibility and the threat of nuclear war felt by the overwhelming majority of States. This has been mentioned by many representatives here in this room and outside it, and even at the level of Heads of State. I have in mind the appeal of the Heads of six States to the nuclear Powers.

True, there were lone voices saying that things have become quiet in the world and that international security has been strengthened. That is completely speculative; it has nothing to do with reality. The qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and the movement of such weapons closer to national borders are certainly not regarded by peoples as symptoms of increasing security and international co-operation.

On the contrary, this is why they have protested in various forms against the policy of increasing the build-up of armaments. In the work of the Commission, in the statements of delegations and in the results themselves, they can see that the situation in the world today is most alarming, that the world is confronted with the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

During the work of the session, differences of principle have become apparent with regard to fundamental problems of national politics. To be honest, one could not fail to recognize that the work of the Commission has not produced any results and it has been carried out amidst profound contradictions and differing viewpoints. The Commission has been unable to settle a single one of the questions before it. It would be self-delusory on the part of naive people to adopt reports of working groups which, in fact, take note of the divergencies of viewpoints and approaches, and, let us be frank, of increasing divergencies between States.

Let us take as an example the central problems of our time: the prevention of nuclear war, the limitation of the nuclear arms race and the attainment of nuclear disarmament. In various ways, that question has been touched upon by all the subsidiary bodies of the Commission. This is easy to understand and quite normal.

The session of the Commission clearly showed that the United States of America and some States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) cannot conceive of a world without nuclear weapons and the possibility of using them.
They do all they can to block the adoption of any substantive recommendation on the part of the Commission aimed at not using nuclear weapons first, the limitation of stockpiles and then full liquidation of them. Sometimes the very mention of the need to take measures for nuclear disarmament gives rise to strong reactions on the part of the Western countries. This is what happened, for instance, in the Working Group on confidence-building measures. It was enough for a group of socialist States to propose that the text of the report of the Working Group should mention their position - I stress that, their own position - namely, that they would not be the first to use nuclear weapons, and to suggest other measures to prevent nuclear war, when suddenly the delegations of the Western countries added to the report a sentence, and I should like to say in passing that the addition to the report was one and one half times longer than the part stating the position of the socialist countries, which is not fair play. The delegations of the Western countries added a passage that does not set forth a quiet and lucid position on the part of these countries, but rather, violent attacks on the position of the socialist countries. Whether they wanted it or not, that same part of the report only confirmed our statement that as far as confidence-building measures are concerned, there are still very wide conceptual differences. The Western countries did all they could, but without success, to state their position in the Working Group. I should like to tell our colleagues from the Western countries that confidence-building measures presuppose respect for the opinion of other participants in the talks. Yet, this elementary position, in our view, was not evident on the part of the Western countries, which created additional difficulties for confidence-building measures in the future, another question which should also be stressed, in our view.

The Soviet delegation has sincerely tried to achieve serious, important results. It would be ideal if the Commission could have come to an agreement on important fundamental problems. But even simple, positive steps would also be useful. However, in our opinion, it would be self-delusory and dangerous if we tried to replace real results by the adoption of vacuous proposals that would not advance the cause of disarmament at all. Even the quotation from the final document of the first special session should not be presented as a great achievement on the part of the Disarmament Commission.

What is the reason for the situation that exists in the present session? The reason for the impasse in all disarmament matters is quite clear. The Commission,
like other international forums, does not work in a vacuum. If the United States and its allies try to obtain military superiority, if they impose their will on other peoples, and if relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are based only on a position of force, this would have a very negative effect on international negotiations, including the work of the Disarmament Commission.

The Soviet people knows full well the price of peace. Our State is doing all it can to prevent a nuclear war. We will continue our constructive and resolute initiatives in the field of disarmament. We will not be frightened by threats and new rearmament programmes. We shall not accept any military superiority, and we shall never stop saying so until the others who have to understand that finally do understand it. The work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission can be effective and fruitful only if there is a common will to reach agreement on the basis of equality and security for all. That is the view and that is the position of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union and its polity are against threats and increasing tensions. We still consider that peace must and can be strengthened.

In conclusion, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, a great son of Africa, for the excellent way you have guided the Commission's work in this complicated and tense situation. We also thank the Rapporteur, Comrade Martynov, and the Vice-Chairmen of the Commission, as well as the Chairmen of all the Working Groups, for their sincere and tireless work. Of course, we are also very grateful for the assistance of Mr. Martenson, the Assistant Secretary-General, and all the other members of the secretariat of the Centre for Disarmament.

Mr. de la Gorce (France) (interpretation from French): I am speaking now on behalf of the ten countries members of the European Community.

Speaking on behalf of those same delegations at the beginning of our work, I stressed our shared desire to participate actively in the Commission's work, in the hope that constructive solutions could be found on the various agenda items. We note that serious efforts have in fact been made in that direction, but we must acknowledge that our hopes have been only partially fulfilled.

First, the drawing up and adoption by consensus of a document on item 4, on nuclear and conventional disarmament as a whole, posed the same difficulties as last year. It is not surprising that the results have been modest. In spite of the remarkable contribution that you, Mr. Chairman, with the assistance of
Mr. de Queiroz-Duarte, have made to the work, the Commission - once again this year - has been unable to arrive at agreed wording on many questions relating to agenda item 4. It has, however, taken note of the provisions generally considered to be acceptable as a basis for its future work. The delegations of the Ten stress once again the importance they attach to the problems covered by agenda item 4. They are prepared to make every effort to ensure progress, in the spirit of the Final Document of 1978, at next year's session.

The item on the reduction of military budgets has been on the Commission's agenda since 1981. The delegations of the Ten felt that the working paper prepared this year by the Chairman on the basis of last year's discussions would make it possible for agreed solutions to be found. They regret, in this respect, that a few delegations persist in maintaining positions that do not make a consensus possible. This attitude has complicated the already difficult task of the Chairman of the Working Group, Mr. Diaconu, to whom we pay a tribute for the skill and patience he has unceasingly shown.

Bearing in mind the importance of this issue for the entire disarmament undertaking, the Ten firmly hope that its consideration will continue and that it will be kept on the Commission's agenda. They reaffirm their conviction that a progressive reduction of military expenditures on a concrete and objective basis, mutually agreed, without prejudice to the security of any State, would contribute to curbing the arms race and would make it possible to reallocate the resources now used for military purposes to economic and social progress, especially that of the developing countries.

In the view of the Ten, the reduction of military budgets should be based on adequate comparability and verification procedures. In this respect, the use of the international standardized reporting instrument should make possible transparency and comparison of military expenditures by States. None the less, the goal can be achieved only if a larger number of States agrees to participate.

The Working Group on agenda item 6 - the substantive consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capability - did not succeed in preparing a consensus document. The delegations of the countries members of the Community regret this, especially since a solution seemed to be in sight, thanks largely to the remarkable efforts of the Chairman of the Working Group, Mr. Hepburn, and to the good-will shown by most delegations.
Using as a basis the documents submitted last year by the African States, the Working Group was able to arrive at compromised formulas on many items. Several obstacles, some of which are not directly related to the nuclear aspect of the question, have not been overcome, but they are now limited in number and clearly identified. Lastly, and above all, the Commission is unanimous on the basic objectives: the rejection of anything that might contribute to the acquisition or increase of a nuclear capacity by South Africa, which would jeopardize the peace and stability of Africa as well as the non-proliferation régime in general.

It would be of the utmost importance for a document adopted by consensus to reflect the will of the international community on this issue, and thus to establish on that basis the political commitment of States. The Ten firmly hope that the General Assembly's deliberations on the matter will have that aim.

As for confidence-building measures, the Ten are pleased at the substantial progress recorded by the Working Group. They feel that the drafting efforts conducted very seriously and thoroughly by Ambassador Wegener led to further progress as regards both the conceptual approach to confidence-building measures and the more precise provisions. A large number of hitherto controversial questions have thus now been solved. The Ten are convinced that the results achieved will considerably facilitate the future drawing up and implementation of confidence-building measures. They deplore the fact that, in spite of the undeniable progress achieved in the Working Group, consensus has not been obtained on the preparation of guidelines. They regret, in particular, that difficulties which arose rather late in this session compromised the results which had been hoped for.

The Ten firmly hope that, in accordance with a Commission recommendation, the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session will adopt appropriate decisions for the continuation of the task undertaken.

They remain convinced that decisive progress can be made in the preparation of confidence-building measures on the basis of the results achieved, as reflected in the working paper submitted by the Chairman, which is annexed to the report of the Working Group.

Finally, the Commission has considered its new agenda item on the link between disarmament and development. This task was undertaken in Working Group IV, chaired with great competence and dedication by Mr. Bhatt, the Permanent Representative of Nepal. While noting the lack of agreement on the proposals submitted by some
delegations, including one by a member of the Community, the Ten do note with satisfaction that the Commission did succeed in reaching a positive general recommendation. They hope that the efforts reflected in that recommendation will lead to the adoption of conclusions by consensus at the next session of the General Assembly.

The delegations of the members of the Community wish to reaffirm their commitment to the idea underlying the link between disarmament and development - the transfer of resources released by disarmament measures to economic and social development efforts, especially those of the developing countries.

In conclusion, I wish to express the sincere appreciation and congratulations of our 10 delegations for the remarkable way in which you, Sir, have conducted our work. In this difficult task you have shown once again the authority and competence, the spirit of conciliation and the courtesy that we have appreciated so much in you on other occasions and we shall always be grateful to you. I also sincerely thank the officers of the Commission, especially the Chairmen of the Working Groups, the Secretary of the Commission, Mr Alem, the Secretariat staff, the interpreters and translators and all those who have contributed to our work.

Mr. OTT (German Democratic Republic): The delegation of the German Democratic Republic has participated in the session of the Disarmament Commission with the serious intention of submitting to the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session concrete and purposeful recommendations on the prevention of a nuclear war, on halting the arms race, on achieving nuclear disarmament and on all the other agenda items.

This objective fully corresponds with the policy guidelines pursued by my country, now that the deployment of new United States nuclear missiles has begun in NATO countries of Western Europe, namely to do more than ever before to preserve peace and prevent the world from slipping into a nuclear catastrophe.

Regrettably, however, this session did not make the expected contribution towards averting such a danger and bringing about a change for the better.

Despite the great efforts made by the majority of the delegations, the personal efforts made by you, Mr. Chairman, and by the other officers of the Commission and the valuable assistance given by the Secretariat, it has not been possible for the Commission at this session to achieve progress on the major issues before us.
The reasons for this lie with those forces which, in accordance with their policy, persistently aggravate the international situation and trigger new conflicts in many parts of the world.

The beginning of the deployment of new nuclear first-strike weapons in Western Europe has ushered in a new stage in the imperialist policy of superarmament and confrontation, aimed at gaining military superiority over the USSR and the States of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

As was underlined by the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany at its recent session and as the developments that have taken place since then have made entirely clear, the dangers to peace have increased through this unrestrained policy of deployment. Now there are more missiles in Europe but there is less security.

By deploying its missiles the United States Administration has removed the basis for the Geneva negotiations. A prerequisite for resumption of the talks is a readiness on the part of the United States to desist from stationing further missiles and to dismantle those that have already been deployed. Despite all the demagogical talk about peace - which has also been heard at this session - the United States Administration has prevented the achievement of new agreements on arms limitation and disarmament and has violated and undermined existing agreements and treaties. In feverishly pursuing its course of superarmament it does not miss a single military field. Now even outer space is to be included in the arms race.

Particularly when considering agenda item 4 it became obvious that the socialist States had proved their good will and realistic approach to progress in this field. The measures and recommendations they proposed, as contained in documents and working papers submitted by them to the Disarmament Commission, are a clear expression of the socialist policy of peace and disarmament and, together with proposals made by other States, they indicate a way out of the existing situation.

They have, however, been completely rejected by those who persistently talk about their readiness to negotiate. In this connection, my delegation deems the joint statement by the Heads of State and Heads of Government of India, Mexico, Tanzania, Sweden, Greece and Argentina to be a valuable initiative.
They made an extraordinarily topical appeal to all nuclear-weapon Powers "... as a necessary first step ... to halt all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, to be immediately followed by substantial reductions in nuclear forces" (A/CN.10/66, annex).

If all sides would follow this appeal, a change in the fateful development of the international situation could be brought about. This would not only call a halt to the nuclear-arms race and open up the road to nuclear disarmament, but at the same time it would constitute a fresh basis for building mutual confidence and calculability. Moreover, the military budgets could be reduced and substantial resources could be made available for economic and social development. Unfortunately, such a point of view was not made the starting-point for joint consideration in the Contact Group and in Working Groups I, III and IV.

The deliberations of the various Working Groups showed the close interrelationship of the issues dealt with. It became particularly obvious that the prevention of a nuclear war, the halting of the nuclear arms race and the achievement of disarmament are tasks of the highest priority.

The open attempt made by one group of States not to permit any progress on those major issues and to resort to other fields and undertake activities there without taking into account the new situation and the requirements arising out of it made success impossible.

Just as the socialist States will not permit the existing approximate military balance to be destroyed, so they will not stop urging the necessity of achieving nuclear disarmament, which is the most crucial task of the disarmament process, and proposing constructive solutions towards that end.

The German Democratic Republic will remain ready to co-operate in the struggle to ensure mankind's survival, the most crucial task of our time, in a broad coalition of reason with all the forces interested in safeguarding peace.

Thus, the German Democratic Republic is meeting its responsibility arising out of its location at the dividing line between socialism and capitalism, between the Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and its historic duty to do everything possible to ensure that never again will a war be unleashed from German soil. Numerous statements, documents and working papers, as well as consultations and meetings on the sidelines at this session, have proved the possibility and necessity of finding a common language, despite all the differences, in the endeavour to avert a nuclear inferno and to achieve disarmament.
Through its constructive peace policy the German Democratic Republic will contribute in the future also to the achievement of this end.

Mr. QIAN Jianrong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): As the 1984 session of this Commission is drawing to an end, may I take this opportunity, Sir, to express to you and to the Chairmen of the Working Groups my appreciation for your efforts and adroitness in organizing and guiding our work. I should also like to thank the members of the Secretariat, including the interpreters and translators, for their excellent service.

Before the opening of this session, Mr. Chairman, you said on one occasion that the international atmosphere does not lend itself easily to spectacular results at this time and that you thought that the present climate for disarmament is the grimmest in the last 10 years. The proceedings of this session have vindicated your assessment.

In the face of the incessant escalation of the arms race and the continuous intensification of tension and confrontation, no one, indeed, has placed any extravagant hopes in this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission or expected, for instance, that the divergences on agenda item 4, relating to all the fundamental issues of disarmament, would be overcome.

One would be well satisfied if only some results had been achieved, such as completing the consideration of one or two of our agenda items. But the outcome of the four-week session is so disappointing that no consensus has been reached on any of the five substantive agenda items.

It is often said that the reason for the lack of progress in disarmament in past years lies in the lack of the necessary political will on the part of the two super-Powers. What we have experienced at this session once again tallies with that viewpoint. Item 8, on the question of the relationship between disarmament and development, for example, is in essence one of a procedural and organizational nature. Under this item, some delegations proposed the convening of an international conference, which, even if of little practical significance in the present circumstances, could in no way be detrimental to the interests of any country. Given clear-cut, objective and appropriate preparations, it might be conducive to the promotion of both development and disarmament. While widely supported by many delegations, this proposal nevertheless failed to obtain a consensus as a result of quite unexpected opposition voiced only in the latter part of the session.
A somewhat promising start was seen this year on the deliberations on agenda item 6, on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability. Thanks to positive efforts on the part of many of the African States and co-operation by some other countries, we were once very near a consensus on this item. The efforts, however, were met with unjustifiable obstacles at the final stage, and were eventually rendered futile.

As for the other agenda items, it is even more clear why little or no headway was made on them.

While the outcome of this four-week session cannot but be regretted, it does however, help to highlight further the key to disarmament, namely, that the two countries which possess the largest arsenals and which are fiercely engaged in the arms race must truly shoulder their special responsibilities with regard to disarmament, in accordance with paragraphs 48 and 81 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Their readiness to fulfil those special responsibilities should be manifested not only by those two countries taking the lead by reducing drastically their arsenals of nuclear and conventional armaments, but also by the adoption of a co-operative instead of an obstructive attitude towards all disarmament-related discussions. Only in this way can real progress in disarmament and success in the future work of this Commission be expected.

China consistently strives for genuine disarmament. In his report on the work of the Government submitted on 15 May to the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Zhao Ziyang, Premier of the Chinese Government, reiterated that China is for disarmament and against the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race. It stands for the total prohibition and complete destruction of all nuclear, chemical, biological and space weapons and for a substantial reduction of conventional weapons. China hopes that all nuclear States will unconditionally undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States and nuclear-free zones and will reach agreement on a commitment not to use nuclear weapons against each other.

China believes that only the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons can really eliminate the threat of nuclear war and that the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess more than 95 per cent of all the nuclear weapons in the world, should take the lead by drastically cutting back their nuclear weaponry.
Such is the fundamental position of China concerning disarmament. On the basis of this position we shall continue to join all peace-loving countries and peoples of the world in efforts to seek progress in disarmament.

Mr. STEPHANOU (Greece) (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the attention of the Commission to the document distributed today under the symbol A/CN.10/66, which contains the text of the Joint Declaration issued by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, Mr. Miguel de la Madrid, President of Mexico, Mr. Julius Nyerere, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mr. Olof Palme, Prime Minister of Sweden, Mr. Andreas Papandreou, Prime Minister of my own country, and Mr. Raul Ricardo Alfonsin, President of Argentina.

The aim of that initiative is the establishment of a general climate of awareness of the dangers threatening mankind with regard to the nuclear holocaust towards which we are being propelled at a dizzying speed. This, of course, concerns the citizens of all continents, and the big Powers must understand that they are not resolving their problems alone but are in fact determining the destiny of mankind. That is why efforts must be redoubled and continued until the essential goal is achieved, that is, the reduction and ultimate elimination of the danger of another war among nations.

I should like to make a brief statement, but I wish to say first that my delegation completely supports the views expressed a short while ago by the Ambassador of France on behalf of the 10 members of the European Community. I wish also to associate myself, Mr. Chairman, with the thanks and congratulations that he addressed to you personally, to the Chairmen of the Groups and to the members of the Secretariat.

On behalf of my own delegation, I should like to reiterate the position of the Government of Greece concerning the prevention of nuclear war, and all related issues. Greece fervently hopes that the nuclear arms race between East and West will soon give way to the mutual, progressive reduction of such weapons through the search for balance at ever lower levels, as a result of substantive negotiations.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, please allow me, as an officer of the Commission, to thank you personally and to congratulate you sincerely for having been such a source of inspiration and for the efficient manner in which you have conducted the work of the Bureau, of which it has been my privilege to be a member this year.

Mr. DUARTE (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, let me at the outset thank you on behalf of my delegation for your wise and competent leadership of the Commission at
this session and also to thank your fellow officers and, in particular, the Chairman of the Working Groups.

Since my delegation did not take part in the general exchange of views at the beginning of the session, I should like now to express a few thoughts on the work of the Commission this year. For the second consecutive session the United Nations Disarmament Commission has worked under the guidelines provided by resolution 37/78 H. Paragraph 118 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, which was reinforced by that resolution, directs the Commission to make specific recommendations on the items inscribed on its agenda. This means that the agenda items should be formulated as precisely as possible and that work on them should have a specific focus, so that concrete recommendations of substance can be achieved. Reports by the Working Groups to the Commission should be prepared with that objective in mind. The old practice of merely recording opposing views in the body of the reports, in lieu of formulating operative recommendations on substance, must be abandoned if this Commission is to fulfil correctly and usefully the mandate it received from the General Assembly.

My delegation regrets that on some agenda items this year such a practice has again been utilized. On questions such as item 5, on the reduction of military budgets, and item 6, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, which have been on our agenda for a number of years, little, if any, substantive progress has been achieved. As for the former, the rivalry and confrontation between the super-Powers was once again, in the view of my delegation, the main reason for the deadlock. We note with satisfaction, however, some procedural progress in the recommendation adopted, which calls on the Disarmament Commission to continue work next year "with a view to finalizing" the principles on this question. We hope that this task can be completed at the 1985 session. Otherwise the Commission should re-examine the convenience of perpetuating on its agenda an apparently fruitless discussion. As for item 6, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, a consensus text once again eluded us. The restraint and flexibility displayed by the non-aligned group, and particularly the African countries, were, unfortunately, not matched by certain other delegations - a very small number. My delegation hopes that the General Assembly, to which the Commission referred the item for further consideration, will be able to agree on an appropriate format for the continuation of work on this question. It is indispensable, however, that a more constructive spirit prevail.
The Commission should also have finished at this session the consideration of two other items: namely, item 7, on confidence-building measures, and item 8, on disarmament and development. Again the situation of confrontation between the super-Powers was the main factor responsible for the lack of consensus. The adoption of consensus guidelines on confidence-building measures was not possible; nor was the Commission able to formulate clear-cut recommendations on disarmament and development, despite the keen interest of the developing countries in the latter issue. The Commission decided, however, to refer both reports to the General Assembly for further action. My delegation sees wisdom in that procedural decision, which implies that those two questions — unlike certain other items in the past — will not be automatically included in our agenda for next year.

Confrontation and rivalry between the super-Powers was also the chief element in the lack of substantive progress on item 4, which my delegation and many others consider the most important on our agenda. The work started last year under the guidelines contained in resolution 37/78 H pointed very clearly to the formulation of concrete recommendations on the substance of the issues covered by item 4. The complexity of those issues and their obvious interrelationship should not be used either as a pretext for the endless repetition of extreme positions or as an excuse for reverting to the expedient of simply recording opposing views. In previous years such a practice did nothing to facilitate consensus on substance. The application, this year as well as last year, of the guidelines contained in resolution 37/78 H, on the contrary, has served to provide adequate focus for the work of the Commission on item 4. My delegation is heartened now that the contact group has at least managed to identify different levels of agreement among the existing formulations and hopes that work can be pursued next year with a still more operative objective in mind. At the same time, we deplore the fact that some delegations continue to approach that work with the apparent purpose of avoiding any commitments, even those that may emanate from a deliberative body such as this Commission. They are the same ones who studiously avoid the use of the word "negotiations" in any operative decision of the Conference on Disarmament. They are also the same ones who accepted special responsibilities in the field of disarmament and who have appointed themselves the guarantors of peace by the might of their ever-increasing arsenals.
(Mr. Duarte, Brazil)

Confrontation and rivalry between the super-Powers, bred of the lust for supremacy of power, have been responsible for the dismal record of multilateral effort in the field of disarmament over the past few years. This Commission, which is made up of all the Member States of the Organization, has an important role to play in the advancement of the process. It must not allow itself to become yet another forum for the rehashing of super-Power bickering. The procedural instruments for it to discharge its functions are in place. They must be utilized in the same spirit of commitment to a common purpose as that in which they were created. Only thus can all Members of the Organization, regardless of the level of their arsenals, remain truly faithful to their commitments to the human race.

Mr. Wegener (Federal Republic of Germany): It gives me pleasure, Mr. Chairman, to have an opportunity before the Commission concludes its session to express my delegation's gratitude for the fairness and wisdom which you have displayed in presiding over our work.

Earlier this morning the representative of France, speaking for the 10 member countries of the European Community, gave the perspective of the Ten on our endeavours of the past four weeks. Clearly, he also spoke for my delegation, which obviates the need for me to address all the topics on our agenda; I can be selective.

In adding a few observations from the viewpoint of my delegation I shall try to avoid merely giving a critical assessment of the past four weeks, and attempt to make my remarks more forward-looking in winnowing out from our work some possible lessons for the future improvement of our work in various fields.

We regret that the full elaboration of a body of guidelines for confidence-building measures and their adoption by consensus has not proved possible. Even though a large majority of delegations had worked intensively to reach that objective and had shown readiness to attain it in the time available, the decision of the Soviet Union to deny that any progress had been achieved and that any consensus on any point should be registered at this time prevented its accomplishment. The Commission will therefore not be in a position to reach the target set by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

Despite this note of regret, however, there is reason for considerable satisfaction. Objectively, nobody can contest that substantial progress, including progress in the conceptual field, has been achieved. An intensive drafting process has taken place, with broad participation by a great number of delegations. This
is the first time that on this item of the disarmament agenda, in accordance with
the demands of the Final Document and of a number of consensus resolutions of the
General Assembly, detailed and concrete texts have been elaborated in a body with
full United Nations membership. It is also the first time a United Nations study
in the disarmament field has been fully translated into action by a United Nations
body.

The drafting process has shown to what extent the concept of
confidence-building measures can accommodate various regional interests. It has
demonstrated that European and non-European perspectives on confidence-building are
fully compatible and can be incorporated into a common approach. My delegation has
no doubt that the work accomplished, notwithstanding the lack of a full consensus,
as noted in the report of the session, and pending the formal conclusion of
guidelines, will develop momentum and facilitate the wider application of
confidence-building measures in many regions as well as on the global level.

During the debate we were given a number of important examples of countries of
a region already undertaking to include confidence-building measures in the conduct
of their international relations. Reference was made in particular to the present
effort of the so-called Contadora Group and to the Stockholm Conference on
Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament. My delegation is
confident that already at this stage the work accomplished by the Commission will
be of assistance and benefit to these regional exercises.

It is difficult to accept that the work of the Working Group on the question
of the nuclear capability of South Africa has not come to fruition, despite earnest
efforts by many delegations. The constructive and serious atmosphere in the
Working Group encouraged us to believe until we were far into the Group's work that
a result would be possible. In my delegation's view this Commission has a unique
potential for generating forcefully formulated recommendations on this subject,
demonstrating the international community's determination to do everything possible
to discourage South Africa from embarking on destabilizing and unacceptable
military policies. Each year in which the United Nations system fails to take
appropriate action in this sense is a success for the other side, and may encourage
South Africa to proceed further on its sinister path. From this year's session,
despite its lack of success, we can derive at least the conviction that our shared
intention to bring the item to an early conclusion has been strengthened.
The sense of urgency about putting greater international pressure on South Africa along the lines of some of the draft recommendations one year ahead of the Third Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference has undoubtedly grown. It seems to my delegation that only a few formulations in the draft document of Working Group II remain controversial. In these circumstances, it would be highly desirable for delegations not to file these papers away but to maintain a fruitful dialogue in order to prepare the next stage. My delegation is confident that a creative exchange of views between some of the key delegations in this endeavor between now and the convening of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly may help eliminate a good number of the remaining problems.

In the Working Group on the reduction of military budgets my delegation was surprised by the extremely rigorous position of the Soviet Union as regards the issues of verification, comparability and transparency. I should like to share with members a reflection which should be of assistance to all delegations when they return to a discussion of these principles. Verification, comparability and broader information on military activities are not concepts that can be brushed aside. The disturbing fact, however, is that some delegations have refused to discuss them at all, denying their relevance to the subject. However, paragraphs 29 and 31 of the Final Document, among others, cannot be brushed aside in that way. Our assignment is to discuss these and other concepts in full and arrive at a rational definition of the meaning and scope of these principles in their application to the subject of military budgets.

The Soviet Union and others have invoked the necessity to provide the political will to make progress in the reduction of military expenditure. My delegation fully agrees with that proposition and strongly endorses the idea that political will indeed of the essence. However, it must pertain to all aspects of the problem, all elements which the Final Document specifies as elements of the disarmament process. Political will cannot be invoked selectively. It must also pertain to paragraph 31 of the Final Document. It is not enough to pay lip-service to the principle of verification but then declare that it is irrelevant to certain areas of disarmament and go on to refuse to discuss it. My delegation hopes that the next round of our discussion of this important topic will show the readiness of all delegations to participate in a detailed, argumentative debate on the precise
pragmatic meaning and extent that we should attribute to the aforementioned principles in their application to the reduction of military expenditures.

By way of summing up, I should like to reflect the conviction of my delegation that the United Nations Disarmament Commission, despite its failure once again to do full justice to its agenda and arrive at definitive recommendations on many important problems, has proved its worth. There is no other organ in the United Nations system which allows for such a detailed, serious consideration of a limited number of specific items in the security policy field, especially if our work is contrasted with the hectic atmosphere and sequence of monologues at the sessions of the First Committee.

I would wish the potential of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to be more fully recognized and utilized by all delegations. The representative of Argentina made a number of particularly interesting suggestions in this respect earlier this morning.

Our session under your guidance, Mr. Chairman, has been marked by very intensive and serious work. There is yet, of course, more to do. Our assignment is important. My delegation hopes that when the Commission reconvenes for its substantive session in May of next year all delegations will co-operate in an earnest attempt to meet the challenge which this unique forum provides.

In conclusion, I would like to refer to an extraneous event. Yesterday the Foreign Ministers of the Atlantic alliance concluded a meeting in Washington at which they commemorated the thirty-fifth anniversary of the alliance. Their meeting was devoted to an appraisal of East-West relations with a view to achieving a more constructive East-West dialogue. Their communiqué is contained in today's press. We are living in a free information system so we can all look at these papers when they appear in the press. There is therefore no need to burden our report with additional solemn communiqués and pronouncements. But, by way of inviting representatives to study this important document, as it is in their hands, I should like to cite a few phrases from it which I feel are most relevant to our work. The Foreign Ministers said, among other things:

"the most appropriate long-term policies are the maintenance of adequate military strength and political solidarity and, on that basis, the pursuit of a more stable relationship between the countries of East and West through dialogue and co-operation. These elements are complementary: dialogue can
only be fruitful if each party is confident of its security and is prepared to respect the legitimate interest of others: military strength alone cannot guarantee a peaceful future."
The Ministers proposed forcefully that particular efforts be devoted to: "dialogue, co-operation and contact at all levels on the full range of questions between East and West - including political and security problems, human rights and bilateral matters - aimed at increasing mutual understanding, identifying common interests, clarifying objectives, expanding areas of agreement and resolving or isolating areas of disagreement".
They equally recommended that efforts should be devoted to: "achieving security at the lowest possible level of forces through balanced, equitable and verifiable agreements on concrete arms control, disarmament and confidence-building measures."
They concluded their communiqué with the following words:

"The purpose of the Alliance is exclusively defensive: none of its weapons will ever be used except in response to attack. The Alliance does not aspire to superiority, but seeks a stable balance of forces. Defence and arms control are integral parts of the security policy of the Alliance.

"Peace and stability require a united effort: The Allies look to the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries to join in an endeavour which would be of benefit to the world at large. The Allies are prepared to do their part and are ready to examine any reasonable proposal. A long-term, constructive and realistic relationship can then be brought about." (The New York Times, 1 June 1984, p. A7)

Mr. KEISALO (Finland): As we have reached the end of the Commission's four weeks of work, my delegation considers it appropriate to share some of its impressions of this session. We make this brief assessment with mixed feelings. On the one hand, the session was characterized by an atmosphere of hard work and a sincere exchange of views; on the other, there was a very pronounced lack of agreement, and the results were meagre. In spite of this, we believe that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has a role as an important and universal deliberative body in the field of disarmament. Careful attention will have to be paid in the future to the content of the Commission's agenda and the timing of various items.
The Commission's work in the field of recommendations regarding disarmament measures did not yield many new results. This is regrettable. However, it may have been inevitable in view of the overall stalemate in disarmament and arms control talks and against the background of the difficult international situation. Disarmament is integrally linked to general political developments. Progress or the lack of it in disarmament negotiations is dictated by political realities.

Yet the international community must not cease the determined efforts to give substance and direction to disarmament endeavours. Without new agreements and constraints the arms race will continue, producing tension and instability. Particularly urgent are measures to curb the nuclear arms race. Nuclear weapons have become a source of infinite insecurity for all nations, including the nuclear-weapon States themselves. Security will increase not with the acquisition or deployment of new and even more destructive nuclear weapons but rather through the limitation and reduction of their number. The world expects - and it has the right to expect - nuclear-weapon States, which have an enormous responsibility in this regard, to pursue the greatest efforts to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race.

On the question of South Africa's nuclear capability, my delegation, like many others, believes that there was a sincere effort to reach a meaningful consensus document this year. This was in stark contrast to the virtual standstill at which this issue has remained for years. Towards the end of the work, however, the open questions that it had seemed possible could be solved proved insurmountable. The effort failed. The progress that has been made on separate paragraphs may not have solved well-known substantive differences for good. Yet my delegation believes that a lot worth preserving was achieved. The Working Group actually agreed upon a number of formulations, which may be very helpful in further discussions on this matter. We should take those results on their own merit and build on them in the same spirit of co-operation as prevailed in the Working Group.

My delegation spoke on an earlier occasion at some length on the question of confidence-building measures and their role in strengthening peace and security in various regions as well as globally. We also had occasion to expound our views on this issue in the form of a working document, which is attached to the Commission's report. Finland maintains that the elaboration within the United Nations framework of guidelines for appropriate types of such measures is an important and necessary endeavour. It is regrettable that the work initiated last year could not be
completed as originally outlined. Considerable divergencies among delegations prevail as to the concept of the measures themselves, and their primary purposes and functions. Yet there are also important similarities of approach. Many of the objectives and goals of the confidence-building measures seem to be shared by all.

The Commission's report regarding guidelines for confidence-building measures seems to convey to an outsider a rather negative account of our labours. It points to extensive divergencies among the participants. However, my delegation does not think that the conclusions on this item need be negative. Therefore, we would have preferred a more factual report. Finland hopes that the work will be pursued in an appropriate framework, in a spirit of mutual understanding, so as to arrive at commonly acceptable results as soon as possible.

In conclusion, my delegation has greatly appreciated the way in which you, Mr. Chairman, have conducted the business during this session. Equally, I congratulate the other officers of the Commission and also, and in particular, the Chairmen of the Working Groups, on their performance. Finally, I commend our secretariat, guided by Mr. Jan Martenson, for its efficient co-operation.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): Now that we have come to the concluding stage of the work of the current session of the Disarmament Commission, I wish, on behalf of the Nigerian delegation, to place on record our general satisfaction with the conduct of the various deliberations during the session. True, there have been no breakthroughs in any of the substantive issues to which we all have addressed our minds during the session, but it was significant that an effort was made.

The problem of the arms race remains as intractable as ever, and we may be dangerously close to the outbreak of a major war which would involve the use of nuclear weapons, what with the current state of play in the bilateral relations between the two super-Powers, the mutual mistrust in inter-State relations, the worsening of the international situation and the ready recourse to the use or threat of use of force in the settlement of international disputes. The existing situation demands that we should leave no stone unturned to avert the danger of a nuclear holocaust, from which unfortunately there would be no survivors.

Nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war must remain the priority concern of the international community. To this end, the Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body must find itself able and willing to discuss substantively possible measures that would make possible the achievement of that objective. But, more importantly, the Commission should seek to reach agreement on substantive
issues not only to justify its raison d'être but in fulfilment of the expectations of the international community.

The building of confidence among States assumes that, in exercise of their sovereignty, they will recognize the legitimate interests and aspirations of other States and refrain from any action which will be prejudicial to the pursuit of such interests and the realization of such aspirations. As a collateral measure of disarmament, confidence-building measures must be dynamic and subject-specific, and provide the appropriate climate for negotiations leading to the adoption of concrete disarmament measures and instruments. The development of confidence among States must recognize the disparities in the level of development from region to region, the variation in security perception and the current inequities in the structural economic relations between the various countries or groups of countries, and seek to provide appropriate remedies.

Military expenditures not only are reaching dangerous levels but are imposing heavy burdens on the economies of all States. This situation is unacceptable particularly from the perspective of developing economies. There is therefore a compelling need to reduce such expenditures in the interest of socio-economic development. In addition to the exercise of self-restraint in military expenditures on the part of States, particularly the militarily significant States, as a first step, it is desirable in the long run that enabling principles be elaborated for the freezing and reduction of military budgets on a global basis. In this connection, it will be a major step forward if all States accept the merit of the concept of reduction of military budgets without prejudice to their right to undiminished security, self-defence and sovereignty.

The issue of South Africa's nuclear capability was discussed once again without success during this session of the Commission. It was significant, however, that for the first time an international consensus was developed which accepted the fact that South Africa's nuclear capability constituted an international problem that needed to be solved. Besides, the unique nature of the racist régime was recognized. But then, when justified expectations were raised that some accommodation could be reached on this vexed question, divergencies of a fundamental nature were suddenly interposed to block efforts at arriving at a common understanding of the measures to be adopted in order to combat the evil which the apartheid régime of South Africa represents, and of the danger which its nuclear weapon capability and its possession of nuclear weapons poses to the
security, peace and stability of Africa, and more generally to international peace and security. More ominously, the competence of the International Court of Justice to provide an advisory opinion terminating South Africa's Mandate over Namibia in 1966 was called into question by certain States. Those same delegations questioned the right of the people of Namibia to dispose of their natural resources for the benefit of their socio-economic development. In the circumstances, it was clear that the primary concerns of those countries that stood in the way of reaching a consensus were the political, strategic and economic implications that a condemnation of apartheid and the adoption of concrete measures against the apartheid régime had for them, rather than the merits or the substance of the question, which is the nuclear capability of South Africa and the effect of nuclear collaboration by certain States on that capability.

The credibility of the United Nations system must be protected, particularly its capacity to constitute and represent the international conscience. For the developing countries the United Nations represents a bastion of hope. That hope must not be dashed.

One other comment is pertinent. At present Mr. Pieter Botha, the Prime Minister of the apartheid régime of South Africa is visiting Western Europe to consolidate the fortunes of that régime in the political, diplomatic, military, economic and other fields. It must be made clear that any welcome extended to Mr. Botha by any Western country is in contradiction to that country's vaunted posture of opposition to apartheid, which has been described and remains condemned as a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind. Apartheid cannot be reformed; it can only be eradicated.

The issue of disarmament and development retains major interest for many countries, in particular developing countries. In our view, disarmament should represent a benefit to development.//Although it was not possible to reach agreement on every aspect of the question, we wish to underline that all countries stand to gain from the release of real resources through actual disarmament measures. We also believe that the holding of an international conference can help give clear political direction to the ways and means of achieving the goal of development through disarmament. Conceived thus, an international conference on disarmament and development is only a means to an end. It is therefore our hope that the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly will pronounce itself in favour of such a conference.
Finally, Mr. Chairman, your efficient handling of the proceedings of the Commission during its current session does credit to you personally and to your country, Ghana, with which Nigeria enjoys the best of friendly relations.

Mr. BEESLEY (Canada): As we have made our position clear in the plenary meeting and in the Working Groups, I do not now propose to comment in detail on each of the items on our agenda, particularly since other speakers have brought out most of the points we would have wished to comment on.

I should like to express some views of a general nature, but directed to the subject-matter of this Commission as a whole and to our own functions as a deliberative body.

In order to put my comments in context, I begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on successfully imposing on us a kind of voluntary discipline or constraint. You have caused us to focus on specific issues rather than indulge in wide-ranging monologues. You have also managed to establish a principle of avoiding polemics to the greatest extent possible and attempting to adopt a moderate and constructive tone. We have no doubt that this has contributed to the degree of success we have attained. You have also attempted, together with the Chairmen of our Working Groups, to ensure that we maximize our time and efforts by beginning our meetings promptly, organizing our work and sticking to our programme. We think all of this is very worth while and not to be taken for granted and it is for this reason that I have begun with these comments.

I also take the opportunity to congratulate the Chairmen of the Working Groups and to thank the Secretariat for their skill and perseverance in the face of real difficulties.

It has occurred to us during our deliberations that we may not be fully aware - and perhaps our delegation must plead guilty to this also - of how best to advance our work. A comment made in passing the other day by a colleague made this point very clearly. What was said was that this body, which is a deliberative body, tends to negotiate, whereas the Conference on Disarmament, intended to be a negotiating body, tends to deliberate. This is something to think about and I do not propose to say more than that. But it behoves us, I suggest, to give some careful thought before next we meet to how best to utilize our time - even better, perhaps, than we have managed to do on this occasion, with all the assistance and skill of our Chairman.
As for the results of our work, like others we have mixed feelings. We are particularly disappointed, for example, at the lack of agreement on the South African issue, especially so given the extent and the nature of the breakthrough achieved. Obviously no one can say that we have been fully successful on any issue. At the same time, though, no one can say we have made no progress on any issue, and in today's circumstances perhaps, some cold comfort can be derived from that. As others have pointed out, we really cannot go beyond decisions made in capitals or what those decisions will permit. Nevertheless, with only a few exceptions, there has on the whole been a commendable absence of mere passivity on the one hand or unduly vigorous polemics on the other. This has permitted us to achieve a certain measure of progress on almost every issue. Like you, Mr. Chairman, we are disappointed, but like you we consider that the progress made warrants further efforts.

It is in the light of our own statement in the plenary meeting that I take the liberty of making some brief references to a communiqué of the member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that has already been referred to by another speaker. I would not normally do so, but some of the extracts are so directly relevant that I will quote from them. One to which we attach particular importance, certainly in the East-West context, is the following:

"Notwithstanding continuing fundamental differences between countries in East and West, the Allies remain convinced that there exist areas where common interest should prevail. These include the need to safeguard peace, to build confidence, to increase security, to improve mechanisms for dealing with crises and to promote prosperity. To this end, the Allies remain determined to build upon these and other areas of common interest in pursuing their efforts to promote more constructive dialogue and co-operation with the members of the Warsaw Pact with a view to achieving genuine détente."

It will be recalled that I referred to some of these points in my own statement and quoted the closing phrase as having been contained in the Brussels declaration of last December. I repeat that phrase and quote other passages not in the sense of directing them against anyone but rather to emphasize our own very strongly held view that there exist, as I stated in quoting this passage, areas where common interests should prevail.
The second quotation, which is not relevant in the East-West context alone, but is particularly so there, is the following:

"Neither side must seek unilateral advantage, military superiority or dominance over other States. Mutual respect for each other's security on the basis of equality of rights, non-use of force as called for in the United Nations Charter and other current international agreements, restraint, and respect for international rules of conduct are essential for strengthening confidence and co-operation."

Once again I do not cite this passage as directed against anyone, but rather as directed towards the kind of path we should all be seeking to follow.

On another aspect, as much the North-South dialogue as the East-West one, the following passage is relevant and again reflects the position that my country has consistently taken:

"The Allies respect the sovereignty and independence of States everywhere and genuine non-alignment. This is reflected in their political, economic and aid relations with other countries." (The New York Times, 1 June 1984, p. A7)

I shall not give further quotations, but I wanted to cite these particular passages because they are relevant and timely, as indicated in my statement in the plenary meeting.

I shall conclude with a brief plea - not purely personal - for the resumption of the bilateral nuclear talks in Geneva and, since we may be unable to agree upon a wording, I leave it to you, Mr. Chairman, to try to sum up the sense of the Commission on this vital issue, which affects the fate of all of us.

Mr. Skogmo (Norway): The United Nations Disarmament Commission is just about to conclude four weeks of rather intensive debates and negotiations on a series of items related to disarmament and international security. At the end of our work we have to take note of the sad fact that we have not managed to reach consensus on any comprehensive recommendations on the five substantive items on our agenda.

This lack of agreement on disarmament issues is not particularly surprising given the present state of affairs in international disarmament negotiations. It could probably not have been expected that we should have managed, during the four weeks of our session, to solve problems which other disarmament bodies or forums have not managed to solve over much longer periods of time. In the present international climate, particularly between the two super-Powers, the ground is not
very fertile for international disarmament negotiations. My country particularly regrets that there is in some countries an unwillingness even to enter into serious negotiations in order to find mutually satisfying, balanced and verifiable disarmament agreements in the nuclear field.

Effective measures for nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have, since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, been accorded the highest priority by the United Nations. The report before us on the agenda item dealing with the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, as well as the question of a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament, is clear testimony to the fact that the consensus we reached in 1978 has now been shattered into an ever increasing number of separate recommendations, approaches, formulations and working papers.

Given the particular responsibility in this field of the major nuclear-weapon States, the Norwegian Government firmly holds the view that the most important step that could be taken in the disarmament field today would be to get the bilateral negotiations on nuclear weapons, between the United States and the Soviet Union, back on track as soon as possible. We are therefore among the authors of a working paper urging the early resumption of those negotiations. This does not mean that, in our opinion, other nuclear disarmament items are not as important. In this connection I shall mention particularly Norway's long-standing support for the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty on all nuclear explosions, which assumes particular importance in view of next year's Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

The gradual reduction of military budgets on a mutually agreed basis is another important approach in the efforts towards general and complete disarmament. The Norwegian Government continues to believe that the first concrete step towards the reduction of military expenditures must be the establishment of a satisfactory reporting system for military expenditure data as a basis for adequate measures of verification. The reporting instrument established in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 35/142 B of 12 December 1980 constitutes a necessary precondition and a good starting-point for this purpose.

My Government regrets that only a limited number of countries has so far participated in the reporting system and that some countries even seem to deny the usefulness of comparability in this context. It is, in our opinion, important to
keep the reduction of military budgets on our agenda in order to see whether the
problems and divergencies that have hindered progress during this session of the
Disarmament Commission can be overcome in a better international climate.

The question of South Africa's nuclear capability has been on our agenda for
several years. During this session, we have, in our opinion, probably made more
progress on this issue than during any previous year. The Norwegian delegation is
encouraged that we reached agreement on several of the most difficult problems in
the text before us, even if some problems remain to be solved. In our opinion,
there is basic agreement on most of the fundamental issues involved, namely, that a
nuclear weapons capability in the hands of South Africa would constitute a great
danger to African States and to international peace and security, and that the arms
embargo imposed by the Security Council, which, inter alia, calls upon all States
to refrain from any co-operation with South Africa in the manufacture and
development of nuclear weapons, should be strictly enforced. In our view, the
single best way to assure international supervision of South Africa's nuclear
capability would be for that country's nuclear installations to be put under
full-scope international safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency. We
look forward to further negotiations on how this can be achieved and to discussions
on any other aspect of the way in which the international community should face the
question of South Africa's nuclear capability. The progress achieved during this
session encourages us to believe that we should make a new effort to achieve
consensus during next year's session.

This year, the Disarmament Commission had a mandate to complete its
elaboration of the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building
measures. In spite of considerable efforts, it was not possible this year to
complete work on this urgent and important task. The approaches to the work and to
the concept of confidence-building measures advocated by various delegations have
differed widely throughout the work of the Commission. In certain respects there
was a development towards broader conceptual agreement this year. In other
important areas, divergencies seemed to persist and positions to harden. The
Norwegian Government firmly believes that the concept of confidence-building
measures is an important one, not only in a regional context but on the global
level as well.
Because the issue is relatively new in the United Nations system, and because it interlocks with several other difficult international issues, it was perhaps too much to hope for a breakthrough as early as this year. This should not discourage us from continuing our efforts next year.

Earlier in this session the Norwegian delegation presented its views on the issue of disarmament and development. Norway had the honour of taking part in the small Drafting Group which attempted to draft a report which, we hoped, could constitute the basis for a consensus. A particularly important aspect of this report was the idea of convening an international conference on disarmament and development. We are pleased and encouraged that the recommendations of this text were supported by a great majority of delegations. We are disappointed that not all countries were able to support them. My country will continue to regard the interrelationship between disarmament and development as an important approach in international disarmament discussions. Together with other countries we will continue to seek ways and means to continue and further develop the important work done previously in this field within the United Nations.

Let me conclude with some more positive observations. We believe that the United Nations Disarmament Commission, after a somewhat uncertain start following its revival in 1978, has established an effective and functional organization of its work. If the substantive result of this session may seem meagre, that is certainly no fault of the Chairman of the Commission or of the Chairmen of the four Working Groups. The current session has been extremely well organized, and the Chairman and the other officers have done an outstanding job in their efforts to guide us to positive results.

In that work they have been very well assisted by the quiet efficiency of the Secretariat, including, of course, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, under its leader, Mr. Jan Martenson, the interpreters and the conference officers.

If and when the international climate for disarmament negotiations becomes better than it is at present, we think that the Disarmament Commission could be a very effective instrument in assisting Member States to get closer to our common goal of effective and balanced disarmament.

Mr. CESAR (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic wishes to make a few comments in regard to the end of the present session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. In the past four weeks, Sir, under your experienced and energetic leadership, we have
had an extensive exchange of views on most important questions concerning the curbing of the arms race and to disarmament. States Members of the United Nations have further clarified their views on the key question of our era: the prevention of the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

It is obvious from the report of the Commission on its work that the results achieved on the substance of the items on the agenda are extremely modest.

Our recent discussions have been characterized by the obvious unwillingness of one group of delegations to take part in any serious consideration, not to speak of solution, of the most urgent problem of all - nuclear disarmament and the adoption of measures to prevent nuclear war. We see in the position of these delegations, above all, a determination not to allow any obstacles to be put in the way of the implementation of the well-known plans to achieve strategic nuclear superiority over the socialist countries by means of, among other things, the delivery to Western European States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization of hundreds of new United States Pershing and cruise missiles targeted on countries of the socialist community. That is the reason for the highly unsatisfactory results of the work of the Commission and its contact group on the question of nuclear disarmament.

A similar situation has been created during consideration of other items on the agenda, including the item on confidence-building measures. Our approach, as reflected in the report, is based on the primary importance of dealing with such confidence-building measures as specific steps to prevent nuclear war and the commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons or to use force of any kind. Such key measures as these, which have been proposed by the Warsaw Treaty countries and which are in the interest of all countries, would be supplemented by further agreed measures of a military and technical nature.

However, this approach, as previously stated, is categorically rejected by a group of delegations which see in measures to strengthen confidence one more way of justifying the continuing arms race. Stress is laid not on realistic measures of a political and military nature but basically on the collection of information and, giving publicity to military activities and military questions in general. In practice that whole approach - thwarting the political will of States and obstructing the adoption of concrete measures to reduce the level of military confrontation by making unfounded and unrealistic demands - constitutes the reason
for the many years of stagnation also on the matter of the reduction of military budgets and the reallocation of resources to development.

It is obvious that if it follows this path the Commission will not achieve any constructive solution of the problems confronting it. Nevertheless, we hope that consideration of the report of the Commission at the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly will lead to wider understanding of the need to embark upon practical deliberation and concrete negotiations, in a constructive spirit and on the basis of respect for the principle of equal security for all States, on the matters touched on in the report.

Mr. DARMOSUTANTO (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, at the outset I should like to express my delegation's gratitude for your dedicated efforts and outstanding contributions during this session of the Disarmament Commission. I should further like to avail myself of this opportunity to pay a well-deserved tribute to the work of the Vice-Chairmen. We are especially indebted to the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the Chairman of the informal group for their unbounded energy and determination in the discharge of their tasks. It would be remiss of me not to express my appreciation also to the Rapporteur for his diligent and timely preparation of the documents.

My delegation approached this year's session fully aware of the difficulties encountered by all of us during the last session. Against this backdrop Indonesia looks at this year's deliberations with a certain amount of mixed feelings in view of the only partial results achieved, especially on priority items. It was the hope and expectation of my delegation that the Commission would henceforth confront and explore key issues in order to break out of the impasse of the past and thereby facilitate our common efforts through serious negotiations leading towards the adoption of specific measures. However, from our deliberations it is obvious that our strenuous efforts directed towards finding viable approaches and avenues towards achieving the firmly established objectives have met with increased resistance.

In this regard, in our consideration of item 4 we continued to be confronted with a divergence of views, which prevented us from achieving substantive results. Despite the differences among us on the modalities - such as, inter alia, broad-based multilateral negotiations - we are none the less further reassured by this year's session of our common commitment to avert the catastrophe of nuclear war. While all members of the Commission are on record as supporting the adoption
of concrete measures, we have as yet nothing substantive to submit to the General Assembly, which casts doubt on the veracity of the pronouncements of those who have primary responsibility in this regard. Furthermore, our concern is all the more heightened when our efforts on an issue of such immediate and universal importance continues to be thwarted by the reliance of the major Powers on irrational military and geostrategic policies. Such posturings, in my delegation's view, are wholly untenable as they constitute the central threat to human survival and civilization. In this light, we sincerely hope that the specific recommendations covering all aspects of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament which were discussed in detail during this session will be further pursued and that this matter will be brought to a successful conclusion next year.

Likewise, consensus on the reduction of military budgets floundered on technicalities which took precedence over substantive issues. It is essential that we all recognize the undeniable reality that, given the over-kill capacity that exists today, no one can argue against modest reductions that would not pose any credible threat to the security of the nuclear Powers and their allies. Failure to make progress in this area is all the more incomprehensible when one considers the unconscionable allocation of resources to the ever-increasing military budgets.

My delegation, together with many others, had hoped that an agreement could be reached on convening an international conference on disarmament and development which would not only serve to underscore the imperative need for significant reductions in military budgets but also include a comprehensive discussion at a high political level of the issues involved. The lack of a consensus on this recommendation by the Working Group is viewed by my delegation as a serious setback that we should all strive to overcome.

In the midst of these negative signs, my delegation had at the least expected a consensus on the question of South Africa's nuclear capability in view of the fact that it presents an increasingly dangerous obstacle not only to the security of African States but also to international peace. It is to be regretted, however, that, despite the ramifications inherent in the deteriorating situation in South Africa, and despite the serious endeavours of the African Member States, progress has continued to elude us.

While my delegation is in full accord with several aspects of the conclusions reached by the Working Group, we hope that, upon the recommendation of the General Assembly, the Security Council will impose a mandatory embargo on the transfer of
equipment, materials and technology effectively to emasculate Pretoria's nuclear-weapon potential and ambition.

In addition, my delegation has followed the efforts of the Working Group on confidence-building measures, since we place considerable emphasis on this approach in dealing with conflict-ridden regions such as ours. Although we must acknowledge that guidelines could not be finalized, the prospects for a new level of consensus, based upon new insights on many aspects of confidence-building, should contribute significantly to a heightened sense of expectation, which we regard as reassuring.

In conclusion, our assessment and appraisal must be tempered by the reality that, although progress has always been difficult to achieve, we must, none the less, remain committed to our mandate and place concrete recommendations before the General Assembly. My delegation remains convinced of the existence of possible areas which hold out the potential for further exploration, leading to the formulation of broad-based agreements. Ultimately, we cannot approach our work with the option of failure, since the questions before us impinge upon vital issues of mankind's very survival. Therefore, frustration and disappointment, setbacks and stalemate, must never be allowed to demobilize and dilute our will and commitment to secure a safer and more secure world for our generation and posterity.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.