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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 1 June 1984 at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. GBEHO

(Ghana)

- Concluding statements (continued)
- Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

CONCLUDING STATEMENTS (continued)

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): The statement made this morning on behalf of the States members of the European Community concerning the Commission's work on item 8 of our agenda (consideration of the relationship between disarmament and development) expressed views which obviously echo those of the French delegation. However, we should like to speak in greater detail about our conclusions with regard to a matter to which we attach particular importance.

This item was included in the agenda pursuant to General Assembly resolution 38/71 B, which was the result of a French initiative. It was to put into effect proposals made in the General Assembly by the President of the French Republic, Mr. François Mitterand. The resolution was adopted by consensus and the French delegation was hoping that a similar consensus would be reached in the Disarmament Commission concerning recommendations that would mark progress towards the implementation of proposals likely to give concrete expression to the relationship between disarmament and development.

The French delegation thus associated itself fully with the efforts of the many delegations which were pursuing the same goal. In accordance with the decision taken by the Working Group, the French delegation participated with the delegations of India and Norway in preparing draft conclusions and recommendations for submission to the General Assembly consonant with the aims set out in resolution 38/71 B. This draft was supported in the Working Group by the overwhelming majority of the delegations which spoke on the subject, but some delegations - those of the Soviet Union and of other countries - opposed it. For their part, they presented a text which contained no provisions likely to ensure progress in this field. In particular, we deplore the polemical terms in which the idea of a conference was rejected.

The reasons which justify the proposed conference are clearly set out in the report of the Working Group. We believe that it is necessary

"to make a well-planned and conscious effort in advance" - that is, without waiting for disarmament measures - "to ensure that ways and means, including

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necessary institutional mechanisms, are devised and commitments undertaken so that a significant portion of the resources released from disarmament measures become available for economic and social development, particularly of the developing countries". (A/CN.10/1984/CRP.7, para. 10)

That is the justification for the proposed conference and for the recommendation to this effect in the draft prepared at the request of the Working Group by the delegations of India, Norway and France. The recommendation appears in paragraph 9 of the report and sets forth the objectives of such a conference, one of which is to consider the ways and means of giving practical expression to the relationship between disarmament and development. It is stressed that very careful, thorough preparations must be made for such a conference.

The French delegation greatly regrets that this text, which involves no substantive commitment did not provide the basis for an agreement. However, we are pleased to note that the Commission has been able to make a certainly very general but none the less positive recommendation on this item.

These efforts must be continued so that the General Assembly may be able at its thirty-ninth session to arrive at a wide measure of agreement on this matter. The French delegation is fully aware of the difficulties of this task, but it hopes that consultations can be undertaken between now and the beginning of the thirty-ninth session to pave the way for substantial progress towards giving practical expression to the relationship between disarmament and development.

Mr. Chairman, this morning I expressed to you congratulations and thanks on behalf of the countries of the European Community. I reiterate these most warmly now on behalf of the French delegation.

Mr. GARCIA ITURBE (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, Sir, I congratulate you and thank you, on behalf of my delegation, for the way you have carried out your difficult tasks as Chairman of our Commission. Your work has been aimed at all times at progress on the issues under discussion and at the formulation of a much more finished document which would reflect a whole series of situations in the world and the yearning of the international community for peace. Your efforts have been commendable; the results, as we all know, have not met our aspirations.

I also congratulate the Chairmen of the Working Groups, who worked towards the same objective, the Rapporteur and the members of the Secretariat, who co-operated so patiently and enthusiastically in the work of this Commission.

(Mr. Garcia Iturbe, Cuba)

The session that is closing today has been clearly characterized by the meagre results achieved. If we look at the documents with which we began this session and compare them with those resulting from our debates, we can see the reflection of the gravity and deterioration of the international situation. The deployment of Pershing II missiles in Europe was faithfully mirrored in this Commission by the deployment of brackets in all the paragraphs that concerned a just initiative in favour of disarmament and international peace and security.

We must also stress the fact that to existing documents were added others of great importance and objectivity, such as the one submitted by the delegations of Mexico and Australia in connection with nuclear disarmament - which was also severely mutilated by brackets in an attempt to neutralize that new initiative on disarmament.

We have heard some suggestions designed to lead to results in our work, such as those mentioned by the Argentine delegation this morning and the comments of the representative of Brazil in the Working Group on item 4. But in spite of the efforts made no results have been achieved.

All of this reflects the situation threatening peace and the survival of mankind in which we now live. If there were a nuclear conflict there would be neither winners nor losers, in spite of the fact that, as appears from the book The Nuclear Weapons Industry, by Bertsch and Shaw, according to National Security Decision Document No. 13, the United States is preparing to "win a nuclear war". That is an absurd idea, of course, because everybody knows that at the present time there are in the world more than 20,000 nuclear weapons, with a total capacity of nearly 13,000 megatons. Of those weapons more than 12,000 are in the hands of the United States, which, according to present plans, will be producing in the next decade 17,000 more weapons - to which, of course, would have to be added those produced by the other nuclear-weapon States.

In this situation can anyone conceive of winning a nuclear war? We believe not; we believe that the constructive and sound course of action is to adopt the proposals submitted here on the freezing of nuclear weapons; a commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons; the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests; and the complete elimination of such weapons, instead of preparations to try to win a war by using them.

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Not content with having given a fresh impetus to the nuclear arms race, the United States now wants us also to learn the art of space war. The so-called strategic defence programme adds one more danger to human existence through military developments in outer space, an area which most of the world's peoples want to use for peaceful purposes. Brackets of its own were added also to the paragraph aimed at trying to secure immediate multilateral negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

This situation is also reflected very directly in another item studied by our Commission, on which we made no progress: the question of military budgets. If we consider the increasing amounts devoted each year to the arms race, we might well think - as many countries do - that it would be better to use those resources for the production of consumer goods and to achieve a better standard of living for the world's population, than for the accumulation of destructive potential at ever more ominous levels.

If, for example, we look at the military budget of the United States for fiscal year 1985 - for which the most recent request amounted to \$291 billion - we see that it is rather difficult to reduce military budgets; basically that is because this accumulation of material, economic and technological resources leads to enormous profits for the big corporations which benefit mightily from the warmongering policies of the United States Government. In this connection, it is interesting to note that, according to the March 1984 bulletin of the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 19 per cent of the requested funding - that is, about \$55.3 billion - is for nuclear forces.

We therefore reaffirm what we have already said about the need for a freeze on military budgets, beginning with those of the nuclear-weapon States and the States members of the two principal alliances.

The situation is the same with regard to another of the items considered by this Commission, the item on confidence-building measures: in other words, the necessary progress has not been made and the bellicose intentions of the United States have also been obvious in developments on this issue.

It is impossible to attempt to promote confidence while there are countries which instead promote war and destruction. According to the 14 May issue of The New York Times, the United States is the world's main exporter of weapons, with arms sales to other countries totalling \$9.68 billion. If we consider this same

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matter with regard to Latin America, we find that, according to The Defense Monitor's bulletin No. 3 of 1984, in the four-year period 1980 to 1983, the United States sent to Latin America weapons and military assistance to the value of \$372.7 million.

That is not a confidence-building measure; on the contrary, it adds tension to the international atmosphere. The picture is completed by the covert activities carried on by the United States throughout the world, especially in Latin America, and more specifically against the people of Nicaragua.

Indeed, more than \$70 million has been allocated so far by the United States Government, through the Central Intelligence Agency, to attempts to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government. To this must be added an uninterrupted series of military operations aimed at intimidation, such as Big Pine I, Big Pine II, the forthcoming Big Pine III, Granadero I, Ocean Venture, Solid Shield and others the basic objective of which is to deploy on the Nicaraguan border sufficient shock troops to unleash aggression against the heroic people of Nicaragua at any given moment. Those manoeuvres have the additional clear purpose of encouraging a climate of aggression, to the detriment of the peace and security of the nations of the region.

This was clear from the 1984 Ocean Venture manoeuvres, in which simulated invasions were carried out - like the invasions perpetrated against Grenada by the United States and some eastern Caribbean countries - on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, against the will of the patriotic forces of the Puerto Rican people, particularly the fishermen of the island. It was clear too from the manoeuvres carried out at the naval base at Guantanamo - which is occupied against the will of our people and Government - which included a simulated evacuation as part of a manoeuvre on the invasion of our country.

We emphasize that it is necessary to improve the present situation if real confidence-building measures are to be adopted. If we cannot achieve that, let us at least work to create a real basis for the improvement of the international climate. If we are to create a climate of real confidence and if the relationship between disarmament and development is really to be established the necessary foundations must first be laid through international disarmament and security. The prerequisite for that is the renunciation of the threat of the use of force against the territorial integrity or the political independence of any State.

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We stress the need for the adoption of effective disarmament measures and the reallocation of the economic resources thus released to the economic and social development of peoples, especially those of the developing countries.

The erroneous assertion made in the course of discussions on this item that the brutal invasion of Grenada by the United States was a proper linking of military with economic and social confidence-building measures is to our mind in its very essence the antithesis of trust and the negation of everything established by the United Nations Charter.

In connection with the Working Group on South Africa's nuclear capability, our delegation wishes to commend once again the outstanding work of Ambassador Hepburn as Chairman of the Group, and the professionalism and goodwill with which the majority of delegations worked in the quest for a consensus text. Thanks to all this, the Working Group had made progress towards the adoption of a text, as stated by Mr. Hepburn when he introduced the report on 25 May. At that time he said that only four paragraphs remained to be approved and stressed that efforts would continue to achieve a consensus on those paragraphs as well. This was without doubt the item on which most progress was made in the work of the Disarmament Commission.

Surprisingly, however, the work of the Group took a sudden turn for the worse owing to the obstructionist position and lack of political will of the delegation representing the present United States Administration, which thwarted all the efforts undertaken.

All of this coincided with preparations by the United States Assistant Under Secretary of State for African Affairs to travel to Pretoria as part of the planned strengthening of relations with the apartheid régime. It seemed that there was a desire to give every possible assurance to the South African racists in order to promote the co-operation and co-ordination that exist between those two countries.

Given the existing situation of stagnation on this issue of vital importance to the peoples of Africa in particular and to mankind in general, our delegation wishes to reiterate that, whether in the General Assembly or any other forum of the United Nations, the position of Cuba on the question of South Africa's nuclear capacity will be one of unrestricted support for the interests of the African peoples in their struggle against the apartheid régime and energetic condemnation of all the States that support and help South Africa, directly or indirectly, in

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its policy of aggression and destabilization against the countries of the African continent through the development of its capacity to produce nuclear weapons, which is achieved mainly through the collaboration in the military and nuclear spheres of Israel, the United States and other Western countries.

As we said at the beginning of our statement, the work of our Commission during this session has not produced the results desired by the majority of countries represented here. We believe that in our statement we have explained the reasons for this. We consider it necessary also to stress the need to continue to work and fight for the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and to ensure that all Member countries respect the principles of the Charter so that the work of the United Nations is recognized and respected throughout the world, in spite of the efforts that are being made by a whole series of organizations of the extreme right such as the Heritage Foundation, which desires "a world without the United Nations" - which is the title of a book recently published by that United States Foundation. We, on the contrary, desire a world with the United Nations, a world in which the United Nations will become stronger day by day, in which countries struggle together to preserve peace and in which the interests and wishes of the international community prevail over the individual interests of a small group of countries.

Mr. DIACONU (Romania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, I would like to add the voice of my delegation to the voices of those representatives who have already congratulated you on the remarkable way in which you have directed and organized the work of this session of the Commission. We also congratulate the Chairmen of the Working Groups and the secretariat of the Commission, who contributed greatly to the orderly conduct of the Commission's work. There were questions of extreme seriousness and urgency for peace and the security of States on the agenda of this session. The discussions during four long weeks most certainly proved that States attach enormous importance to nuclear disarmament and to the study, on the basis of the proposals of non-aligned and other States, of specific recommendations the adoption and implementation of which would contribute decisively to eliminating the danger of war, putting an end to the nuclear arms race and beginning the reduction of nuclear weapons.

My delegation, as representatives know, put forward a proposal aimed at the renewal of negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe. This is a

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constant concern of my country and of President Nicolae Ceausescu because of the threat to human civilization and the very existence of life on our planet caused by the existence of nuclear weapons in Europe and throughout the world.

The deployment of American medium-range missiles and the counter-measures announced by the Soviet Union constitute the beginning of a particularly dangerous new stage in the nuclear arms race, which could have extremely serious consequences. We are convinced that the adoption by the Commission of the recommendation of the Romanian delegation - that the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Soviet Union be called upon urgently to take measures to ensure that the deployment of new American missiles and the counter-measures announced by the Soviet Union are cancelled and thereafter to resume negotiations on that basis on agreements and arrangements to end the deployment of nuclear weapons, withdraw those that are already in place and free the continent from all nuclear weapons - would have been in keeping with the wishes of the peoples of Europe and other regions of the world. It is regrettable that the adoption of such recommendations, which is clearly urgently necessary, has not proved possible this year. We hope that consideration of these proposals will continue at the 1985 session and, before that, during the next session of the General Assembly, in conditions which it is hoped will be more propitious.

For several years the Commission has considered the question of the reduction of military budgets, to which the Romanian delegation attaches the greatest importance. Within the framework of the United Nations there is general agreement on the extremely positive effect which the reduction of military budgets would have in increasing confidence between States, on the reduction of military rivalry and on the economic and social development efforts of peoples.

We welcome the fact that during this session the representatives of many countries reaffirmed in the clearest terms the concern which they feel at the increase in military budgets and stressed the need to take practical steps for the freezing and reduction of military budgets. The purpose of formulating and adopting principles which should govern the attitude of States concerning the freezing and reduction of military budgets is to facilitate the earliest possible negotiation of agreements on the reduction of military budgets.

We express the hope that in 1985, when, according to the recommendation adopted this year, consideration of these principles will be continued in order to

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identify and formulate them, all delegations will evince the necessary political will and goodwill and sufficient flexibility to overcome points of disagreement and adopt these principles.

It is regrettable that on the other three points - confidence-building measures, the relationship between disarmament and development, and South Africa's nuclear capability - the reports presented to the General Assembly contain procedural recommendations only. This reflects the impossibility of reaching even partial agreement.

The Romanian delegation took an active part in the consideration of these matters and tried to make a constructive contribution in an attempt to make possible the formulation and adoption of substantive recommendations. We hope that the General Assembly will find the necessary framework within which to continue consideration of these items, whose importance need hardly be stressed in present international conditions.

When one considers the gravity of the international situation today, the stockpiling of nuclear weapons, the huge resources wasted on armaments and, above all, the expectations of the peoples, the results of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission are obviously meagre. The reasons are many and I do not wish to dwell on them at this stage. Our work was undoubtedly influenced by the particularly serious situation in international relations, as well as the deadlock that has lasted for several years in disarmament negotiations, in conditions of an unbridled arms race.

The lack of results in the work of the Disarmament Commission, however, must not lead to resignation and acceptance of the present situation as inevitable. If the United Nations really has the key role in disarmament matters, it must act accordingly, and the Disarmament Commission is the most appropriate body for this. All the Member States of the United Nations participate in it, and political action by the international community as a whole can thus be mobilized in favour of disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security.

By the same token, we certainly cannot accept the idea that the absence of concrete results in the Commission's work reduces or calls into question the importance of this body. Our feeling of frustration is due rather to the refusal by some States effectively and constructively to use the universal framework offered by the Commission for a substantive debate on the problems of disarmament,

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which in the very serious conditions of today concern not certain countries only but all the peoples of the world. It is the conviction of the Romanian delegation - and we insist vigorously on this - in that present conditions, when dialogue and co-operation are more necessary than ever, the Disarmament Commission must intensify its endeavours and must be able to fulfil its role in an effective manner in order to make a specific contribution to the adoption of the measures necessary to put an end to the arms race and achieve disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament.

Mr. SAID (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): It seems that for some years now there has been a tradition at meetings on disarmament that when the time comes to draw up the balance sheet we all finally find ourselves in agreement in expressing our regret, our disappointment or our frustration at the lack of progress in the consideration of the agenda items. Unfortunately, as we take stock of the present session, it seems that we are not breaking that disturbing tradition. The report of the Commission that we have adopted today is itself significant in that regard. Neither the particularly commendable efforts that you, Mr. Chairman, have made to bring the differing views closer together nor the equally commendable efforts of the Chairmen of the various Working Groups have succeeded in overcoming the difficulties encountered.

Yet on certain agenda items at least some progress might have been expected; the impression we had at the beginning of our work was that some positive conclusions might be reached; but we must now note that that hope was illusory. Such was the case with agenda item 6, concerning South Africa's nuclear capability.

On the agenda of the Commission since its first substantive session in 1979, that question, it seemed to us, was one on which the desired conclusions might be reached. We felt that at last that question would be the subject of clear recommendations based on the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. In the end the same pitfalls and obstacles with which it had originally been confronted once again blocked such recommendations.

Yet South Africa's nuclear capability does not require any further proof. The threat that it represents is a real one not only for the security of the neighbouring countries but also for the security of the entire African continent and hence for international peace and security. To allow the apartheid régime,

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which is based on the negation of human rights, on internal oppression and external aggression, free access to nuclear weapons is inconsistent, not to say shortsighted.

We had hoped that through the Disarmament Commission the international community might send a clear warning to South Africa that would persuade it to put an end to its inhuman, adventurist, dangerous policy. That warning would have been particularly welcome at a time when the Prime Minister of the apartheid régime is making what is to say the least an unusual tour, which might give the completely unwarranted impression of a rehabilitation operation. Some of us decided that this must not be allowed to happen and the rule of consensus which our Commission follows proved them right.

The same applies to agenda item 8, on the relationship between disarmament and development, which our Commission had to consider this year. We regard consideration of this question as a separate issue by a United Nations body to be the outcome of militant action undertaken over a period of years by those who have faith in the disarmament-development equation, in particular the non-aligned countries.

We ourselves have constantly reaffirmed that the arms race constitutes one of the serious obstacles to any significant progress towards the establishment of a new world economic order, which necessarily implies a spirit of interdependence and solidarity and which requires an atmosphere of peace and stability.

We saw in the consensus adoption of resolution 38/71 B an encouraging sign and at the same time support for the initiative aimed at giving concrete expression to that solidarity. The massive support enjoyed by that initiative in our Commission led us to expect specific, positive results, but some decided otherwise.

The idea of linking economic and social development to genuine disarmament is, in our opinion, commendable, and we ourselves support it. But the argument that we should wait for disarmament agreements to be concluded and enter into force before beginning some kind of process towards linking disarmament and development seems to us to belong to a dream world. It is certainly optimistic, but it could hold up the whole enterprise and shake our faith in the professed solidarity with regard to the question of aid for development to the detriment of armaments.

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When military budgets are what they are, when the recommendations for their reduction meet the objections with which we are familiar, and when the identification of measures for increasing confidence in the relations between States lead to the different views that have been expressed, we are of course forced to conclude that we are not yet on the path towards strengthening international peace and security, the promotion of disarmament and the effective elimination of the danger of war, particularly nuclear war.

It is often said that disarmament is a matter of political will: we can only say that that political will is still absent.

I do not wish to conclude my brief statement without repeating to you, Mr. Chairman, our heartfelt and brotherly congratulations on the way in which you have guided our work, which does honour to you and your country.

Mr. SORZANO (United States of America): Let me begin, Sir, by congratulating you on your efficient and effective performance as Chairman of the Commission. My congratulations are also of course, extended to the officers of the Commission and the respective chairmen of our Working Groups. We also express our appreciation to many others who have enabled our work to proceed smoothly - the Secretariat, interpreters, and technical staff.

Generally, we have been encouraged by the serious nature of our debate and the Commission's efforts to address its agenda. My delegation participated actively in these efforts to identify mutually acceptable approaches to the serious questions on our agenda, and we are pleased that in many instances it was possible to find compromise formulations which moved us forward. While we recognize that our efforts in this body are no substitute for negotiations, still we are convinced that these deliberations have helped to focus attention and develop a consensus on areas in which progress might be possible in other forums. Thus, though we have not been fully successful in our efforts to identify consensus solutions to the problems represented by each of our agenda items, we have made some progress in each area. Our individual characterizations of that progress may be small or great, depending upon our national perspectives, but jointly we must admit that the mere presence of progress is itself significant.

I should now like to refer to our accomplishments in each of the subsidiary bodies set up by the Commission.

(Mr. Sorzano, United States)

In spite of your able and extensive efforts, Mr. Chairman, we have, regrettably, been unable, again this year, to reach consensus on a complete set of recommendations relating to the important issues dealt with under agenda item 4. Vice-President Bush clearly enunciated my Government's position at the Conference on Disarmament last April by stating that the United States seeks "effective and equitable cuts in the world's nuclear, conventional and chemical forces" and reiterating our desire "to prevent their use". Specifically, regarding nuclear arms control, Vice-President Bush stated that "the United States believes it is essential to accelerate efforts to reach effective, verifiable agreements" and repeated the call for the resumption of the two nuclear arms negotiations suspended by the Soviet Union six months ago. The United States remains ready to explore all ideas, without pre-conditions, at any time.

This basic approach - the search for effectively verifiable agreements that would substantially reduce weapons and forces, on the basis of equality of rights and limits - underlies our approach to many items on the agenda of the Disarmament Commission.

In contrast with previous experience, we have now been unable to reach a consensus recommendation on agenda item 4 for the past two years. It might be useful to re-examine our approach to this agenda item. We have to date addressed specifics, with a view to reaching agreement on a concrete set of recommendations. An approach focused on the development of a comprehensive set of balanced recommendations might facilitate progress. This balanced approach is reflected in the document introduced on behalf of seven delegations by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom yesterday (A/CN.10/65), which the United States supports in general. We view this document as a substantial contribution to any future work on the subject.

With specific regard to the report of the contact group on agenda item 4, it was concluded that recommendations appearing in the annex entitled "Compilation of proposals for recommendations on agenda item 4" without brackets or alternatives were generally acceptable. This basically reflects the state of affairs at the conclusion of our work in the contact group. We are concerned that this characterization of unbracketed texts as generally acceptable should not be misunderstood. While many of these texts may be generally acceptable, the position

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of the United States on any one of these recommendations, whether reflected in brackets or not, will be finally determined by the content of the document as a whole.

Although the debate on the reduction of military budgets failed to lead to agreement on a concrete set of recommendations, it did contain a useful and enlightening exchange of views. Much work remains to be done, particularly since fundamental differences of position remain with regard to some aspects. For example, my Government continues to believe that any agreed and balanced reduction of military expenditures will be possible only if it is based on the principles of transparency and comparability. This can best be achieved by ensuring the regular availability of meaningful and reliable data. A difference on this point, as well as others, is reflected in the report of the Working Group and in the working paper prepared by the Chairman, which was annexed to the report. We believe this working paper, along with other proposals and ideas on the subject, provides a good basis for continued discussion.

My delegation, with other interested delegations, addressed the question of the nuclear capability of South Africa with the objective of achieving consensus on a document which would contribute in a concrete way to the resolution of this difficult and serious question. We participated constructively in the Working Group by advancing proposals which we felt would strengthen the practical aspects of the paper, while making it more broadly acceptable to all States. Unfortunately, a consensus was not achieved this year, although considerable progress was made towards a common understanding on this issue. My delegation stands willing to address this question in any appropriate United Nations forum, including the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation is disappointed that we were unable to complete, as requested, our drafting of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level, after having clearly identified the issues and differences of views in our comprehensive exchange on this item during the 1983 session of the Disarmament Commission. My delegation was, none the less, heartened by the flexibility displayed by most delegations and their willingness to reach agreement on such guidelines as those reflected in the Chairman's composite text, which is annexed to the final report.

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We believe this constructive approach has enabled us substantially to broaden the consensus on many sections of future guidelines and to achieve conceptual progress.

In addition, our report does reflect consensus on several important individual recommendations, such as the need to be fully aware of the heightened importance of confidence-building measures as well as disarmament measures in the present international situation. In the light of this, we are, frankly, confused by the contention of a group of delegations that no substantive progress was reported. We believe that further work should be based on the Chairman's composite text, which, while committing no delegation, records to a large extent the consensus reached to date, and would thereby ensure that no progress so far achieved should be lost.

The question of disarmament and development received the attention of the Commission for the first time this year. My country has an unmatched record of assisting developing nations. We fully recognize the need to respond to the pleas for development assistance and are vigorously pursuing this policy as something that cannot be deferred. Just as we believe that security and stability are important for stimulating development, so too do we recognize the possible role of effective disarmament. We will continue to consider any proposals designed to enhance international co-operation in the interest of development with the same zeal with which we address meaningful and realistic disarmament proposals that enhance international security.

Though it is true that we have not been fully successful, we have enjoyed some success. Modest progress in some areas has occurred, and it is important to remember that. My delegation is interested in seeing the work on all of these important issues carried forward to its conclusion. The reports which have been submitted are intended not only to highlight disagreements but to preserve areas of consensus. In each case, therefore, we believe that the reports contain useful starting points for our future work. I would like to reaffirm my Government's commitment to continue to participate in good faith in future meetings of the Commission. We will continue to avoid polemics while seeking with determination and dedication those areas of convergence which will allow progress in our quest to construct a secure, stable and peaceful world.

As a final point I am compelled to note that many delegations which have participated in today's debate and earlier Commission debates have addressed

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American and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) defence and security policies. We have listened with interest to their remarks and regret that it is necessary to speak in this forum to set the record straight. I would like to draw the Commission's attention to several points contained in the communiqué issued at the conclusion of the spring session of the North Atlantic Council, which has already been referred to by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany. Of primary significance is the pledge, demonstrated in word and deed over 35 years, that NATO is a defensive alliance the weapons of which will never be used except in response to attack. The NATO alliance does not seek superiority, but is committed to ensure security by a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. As a result, in consultation with the allies concerned, my Government has made a comprehensive series of proposals in the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) and the Strategic Arms Reductions Talks (START) in Geneva for substantial reductions leading to arms-control agreements which could be balanced, equitable and verifiable. The alliance has offered to halt, reverse or modify the deployment of United States intermediate-range nuclear forces, including removing and dismantling missiles already deployed in Europe, on the basis of concrete results at the negotiating table. The NATO alliance calls once more upon the Soviet Union to resume negotiations on nuclear forces without pre-conditions or delay. In the absence of concrete negotiated results, longer-range nuclear missiles are being deployed in accordance with the December 1979 decision, a decision which dramatically illustrated the alliance's commitment to maintain nuclear weapons at the lowest level possible for effective deterrence. The allies concerned withdrew 1,000 nuclear weapons from Western Europe in 1980 and will over the next few years withdraw another 1,400, as well as one weapon for every Pershing II and cruise missile deployed. The resulting stockpile will be the lowest in Europe for some 20 years.

Therefore NATO maintains only the conventional and nuclear forces necessary to deter and defend against aggression and to resist attempts at intimidation, while endeavouring to establish a stable long-term relationship based on mutual trust and understanding and respect for sovereignty, self-determination and human rights.

Before closing, I would also like to note that the alliance, which respects the sovereignty and legitimate interests of all States, works for peace, security

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and development. Its member countries seek to expand economic and cultural relations with all countries and are committed to giving assistance to developing nations, believing that these policies are mutually beneficial and contribute to peaceful evolution. They consider respect by all States for genuine non-alignment an important contribution to international stability.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): I wish to make a few remarks for the record concerning our work at this session. While I intend to make my comments general, a greater degree of emphasis will be placed on the question of the nuclear capability of South Africa. The reason for this is obvious.

Last year my delegation commented on the reasons why a consensus text could not be adopted on this item, and, given those views, I was not at all confident that there would be any progress this year. Let me state simply that, as Chairman of Working Group II, I was pleased with the co-operation and professional performance of the participants. With cautious optimism I felt that, given the momentum shown almost from the first day of our deliberations, a concrete text would emerge in the final analysis.

It was emphasized all along that no Government should expect to have all of its concerns met, since consensus had to be reached on a multilateral basis. It was also easy to understand that some Governments had greater difficulties than others in agreeing to certain language, phraseology or concepts. What was an agreed position was that apartheid was abhorrent and a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind. It was on this premise that we sought agreement to condemn the growth of the nuclear capability of South Africa, since such a development could only worsen the already unpardonable plight of black South Africans.

Defining a question goes part of the way to answering it. Negotiations are just that - a method of give and take in order to reach a solution acceptable to all. I would liken the position described in these last two sentences to that of a couple who so desperately want to be parents that to achieve it they will do anything. One day the wife comes home and tells her husband, "The doctor says I almost conceived, and there is hope." On another visit she finds out that she has conceived, but later the foetus aborts. The couple turn to adoption and are given a green light. On the day before signing the adoption papers, however, they are told that the baby will not be available for some time.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

The fate of the majority of South Africans is similar. The Pretoria régime has rejected every suggestion or decision that was made by the international community. The Pretoria Government has ignored urgings even by those States that have diplomatic relations with it. The South African Government seems to reject the notion that isolation from the international community would be harmful.

I do not believe any of us would have been naive enough to think that a paper submitted by the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission would have changed Pretoria's action but, given the nature of the text that was emerging, strong recommendations from the international community on this subject would have had some effect.

We have been discussing confidence-building measures, reduction of military budgets, prevention of nuclear war and disarmament and development. We must ask ourselves how we are going to implement any of these if we refuse to accept the idea of interdependence. While my delegation cannot accept extreme positions in these sensitive - or in any other - negotiations, it can well understand how frustration can provoke harsh and unrealistic recommendations. My delegation is convinced that in the case of South Africa neither mollification nor condemnation are persuasive arguments.

For this reason, as its Chairman I encouraged Working Group II to endeavour to produce a balanced text as an alternative to the extremes. We can blame the failure on the very disquieting situation in the world.

We can blame it on power rivalry or polarization of East-West North-South relations. But these excuses, no matter how valid, cannot absolve the international community from exerting every effort to show that it is seriously concerned over the stalemate that appears on every question pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security. We seemed to have reached the stage where no word or phrase is acceptable unless it has no relevance to what is being discussed. In our deliberations we talk of flexibility and compromise, but often only on individual terms.

The late President Abraham Lincoln, who was a very quiet and melancholy man except when he talked about democracy, had this to say:

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy."

Given the accomplishments at this session, my consternation is not only in respect of the victims of oppression, whether that oppression results from the policy of apartheid, the threat of nuclear war, the absence of peace and security, poverty, aggression or injustice, but also in respect of those of us who are unable to see that the ills of the world cannot and should not be cured through political channels only. As someone said, in negotiations little success can be achieved until all sides back off.

The foregoing, rather than negating the effectiveness of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, heightens the need for greater understanding and selflessness among delegations of the international community. I am convinced that, if the sincere efforts made at this session are repeated at future sessions, the hope for success will not be dimmed.

It would be remiss of me, Mr. Chairman, if I were to close without thanking the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretariat for the usual capable assistance and expressing my sincere appreciation of your wise leadership in helping delegations to reach a decision. Although the outcome was not as positive as we had hoped it would be, the exercise proved very worth while indeed.

Mr. HUSAIN (Pakistan): My delegation has already expressed its general views on the issues before the Disarmament Commission this year in our statement made in the plenary on 9 May 1984. We do not intend to repeat those views and have asked to speak at this stage merely to put forth our observations on the proceedings of the current session of the Disarmament Commission, which is to conclude today.

Like many other delegations which have spoken earlier, we also feel that the Disarmament Commission, during the current session, has fallen far short of the high expectations which are attached to it by the international community. The progress on various issues before the Disarmament Commission has been of a limited and marginal character and does not constitute an adequate response to the serious and unsatisfactory state of affairs in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Husain, Pakistan)

To our dismay, the Disarmament Commission was not able to make any major headway during its deliberations on nuclear disarmament, which were marked by continuing mutual suspicion and mistrust, rigidity of approach and repetition of well-known positions of the parties directly concerned. In view of the vital importance of nuclear disarmament to international peace and security and to the survival of mankind, the lack of progress in this field cannot but be a cause of serious concern to all of us. The situation demands urgent and energetic remedial measures on the part of all concerned. We would like to urge that as a first step in that direction, everything possible should be done to facilitate the urgent resumption of talks between the two super-Powers on the reduction of their nuclear arsenals. We would also like to take this opportunity to appeal to other nuclear Powers to extend their co-operation in the task of nuclear disarmament.

Working Group I, established for consideration of the item entitled "Reduction of Military Budgets," was able to make limited progress in its work, but unfortunately again got bogged down in the familiar problems of transparency, comparability and verification.

It is a matter of deep disappointment to my delegation that once again it was not found possible to reach a consensus on the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability. Needless to say, the danger of acquisition of nuclear weapons by the illegal racist régime of South Africa poses a serious threat to international peace and security. The international community, therefore, must take urgent steps to prevent South Africa from acquiring and developing nuclear weapons, which would frustrate the objective of denuclearization of the African continent. Further, South Africa should not be allowed to continue its exploitation of Namibian uranium, in violation of the accepted principles of international law.

The importance of confidence-building measures in the current climate of suspicion, mistrust and political tensions cannot be over-emphasized. The Working Group dealing with this subject was also not able to reach a consensus on guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and for their implementation on a global or regional level. We feel, however, that the Chairman's composite draft of guidelines for confidence-building measures, (A/CN.10/1984/WG.III/WP.2), provides a useful basis for the continuation and conclusion of work on the subject. Despite the existing divergences of views among the delegations, we remain hopeful of progress in this area in the future.

(Mr. Husain, Pakistan)

It would be remiss of my delegation not to express its disappointment at the failure of Working Group IV to agree to the convening of an international conference on disarmament and development. In this respect, we fully share and support the views expressed in paragraph 9 of document A/CN.10/1984/CRP.7 and hope that it will be possible during the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly to evolve a consensus on the holding of an international conference on disarmament and development, to be preceded by a preparatory meeting.

Despite the absence of any significant progress in the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission this year, my delegation continues to attach a great deal of importance to it as the main deliberative body of the United Nations system in the field of disarmament. While we are disappointed at the lack of progress, we feel that it should lead to greater and more determined efforts in our future deliberations rather than to despondency and loss of interest on our part. We are hopeful that the international community will rise to the challenge and, in the larger interests of mankind and in a spirit of mutual co-operation, will be able to take steps for the elimination of the danger of nuclear war, for the halting and reversing of the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, and for the achievement of the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Mr. Chairman, before concluding this brief statement, my delegation would like to express its deep appreciation of the able and skilful manner in which you have handled the proceedings of the Disarmament Commission. But for your capable guidance and leadership, the Commission would not have achieved even the limited progress that it has achieved during its session concluding today. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank other members of the Bureau, the Chairmen of the various Working Groups and members of the Secretariat for their valuable contributions to the work of the Disarmament Commission.

Mr. WAHAB (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Today, as we are about to conclude the work of the 1984 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, I wish to express Egypt's position on the work and results of this session. It is very important for us to pause and assess the work we have done during the past few weeks. I would recall that in the statement it made at the beginning of the session, the Egyptian delegation said that it believed in the Commission's role as a deliberating body which has the responsibility to assess and analyse the position

(Mr. Wahab, Egypt)

in the entire field of disarmament and to reach concrete recommendations in that respect.

Generally speaking, it can be said that the activities of the Working Groups on the various agenda items have demonstrated that the Commission has been working in difficult international circumstances, with the existence of great tension. The main obstacles to the reaching of recommendations on the items that have been on the agenda for several years, as well as on the new item this year - that is, the relationship between disarmament and development - have been the absence of the political will on the part of those whose political will is necessary to the achievement of any concrete progress in the field of disarmament. The absence of that political will was also evident in the work of the first session of the Committee on Disarmament. We are about to resume the meetings in Geneva, and we hope that the sole negotiating body within the United Nations context will succeed in overcoming the obstacles facing our work at the conclusion of this substantive session of the Disarmament Commission.

In spite of the efforts made by the contact group on item 4 and in spite of the review of the proposals for recommendations concerning this item, carried out in the hope that the contact group would be able to arrive at concrete conclusions to be transmitted to the General Assembly at its next session, the negative attitude of some delegations and the absence of the necessary political will frustrated that hope. We were not able to reach a consensus on a whole set of recommendations included in the group of proposals on item 4. We believe, however, that it is necessary to insist on continuing the deliberations on this item, especially since there is clear evidence that most States did accept some recommendations that were reached by consensus and that do not appear in brackets. This is true, for instance, of the subjects of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the guaranteeing of the security of the non-nuclear States and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. These are included in the special section concerning the nuclear arms race and the prevention of nuclear war. There were also some recommendations in the special section concerning other aspects of the arms race and disarmament, such as the necessity of reaching agreement, within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament, on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons, the recommendation concerning the right of States to undiminished security (recommendation 3 in the introduction to paragraph 2 of the proposals) and

(Mr. Wahab, Egypt)

the commitment by States to show the necessary political will to achieve agreements on disarmament in order to prevent an increase in tensions and the threat to international peace and security.

In view, particularly, of the fact that the third review conference on the non-proliferation treaty is to start next year, we request all States to make every attempt to deal with the core of the subject, which is the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the prevention of nuclear war, as well as the conclusion of definite agreements to that end, in order to guarantee the success of the review conference in the interest of the security and peace of mankind.

The fact that the proposals concerning the very core of the subject appear between brackets is very regrettable. Hence, we hope that at its next session the Commission will be able to start where it has left off at this session, using the same method by which the contact group was able to separate the suggestions accepted by the majority of delegations from those about which there was controversy, in order to deliberate on the remaining proposals more thoroughly. We hope that in that way the next session will be able to achieve concrete and substantive progress on the proposals relating to the recommendations on item 4.

In this respect, I cannot fail to express the Egyptian delegation's appreciation to the chairman of the contact group, the Chairman of our Commission, Ambassador Gbeho, and to Mr. de Queiroz Duarte of Brazil, the chairman of the unofficial working group dealing with recommendations 1 to 4 of the set of proposals.

The item concerning the nuclear capability of South Africa has been on the agenda since 1979. It is very regrettable that despite the gravity of the situation in South Africa and the constant deterioration of that situation, despite the international unanimity on the condemnation of the racist policy of the Pretoria régime and that régime's insistence on pursuing the policy of apartheid, and despite the results of the study made by the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of technical experts on the subject, which leaves no possible doubt about South Africa's nuclear capability and the danger it poses to the security of the whole continent, as well as the obstacles it places in the way of the attempts by the African continent and the whole world to implement the declaration of Africa as a nuclear-free zone, the Working Group on this item was not able to arrive at final recommendations that could be adopted by consensus. It

(Mr. Wahab, Egypt)

is indeed regrettable that, after having come so close to achieving consensus on a document that the Commission could transmit to the General Assembly, the Working Group was unable, because of the intransigent attitude of some countries, whose names we all know, to achieve success, despite the fact that it had grouped together all the proposals in an attempt to achieve a compromise, as is clearly reflected in document A/CN.10/1984/CRP/WG.11/CRP.1. We feel that referring the question of South Africa's nuclear capability to the General Assembly without having reached a consensus on the subject is very regrettable. We ask the Disarmament Commission to continue to examine this item, which has special importance vis-à-vis African security and international security. We hope that certain delegations will renounce the attitude that has prevented the achievement of any tangible progress. We hope that they will understand the gravity of this situation and will demonstrate their adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, especially the right of all peoples to self-determination.

Before concluding my comments on this item, I wish to express the Egyptian delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Hepburn, the Chairman of Working Group II, who conducted the proceedings of the Group with the experience, skill and wisdom with which we are all familiar.

The Egyptian delegation has followed with close attention the activities of Working Group I, on the reduction of military budgets. We understand full well the difficulties facing that Group. They are reflected in the Group's report, which clearly shows the obstacles to achieving progress in this field so long as there is no progress in the halting of the arms race and in the direction of general and complete disarmament. We welcome the inclusion of the working paper annexed to the report. It clearly states the position reached by the Working Group on the point raised by my country to the effect that the reduction of military budgets, on an agreed balanced and mutual basis, must be implemented gradually and in a parallel way - whether on a percentage or on an absolute basis - in order to ensure that no single State or group of States achieves any privilege or advantage over another State or group of States at any stage. The report also clearly states the necessity of respecting the principles of the Charter, in particular regarding the peaceful solution of all political problems.

(Mr. Wahab, Egypt)

There is no need to state that if the necessary political will is available, the reduction of military budgets will not constitute a real problem. We hope that, as is stated in the report of the Group, the Commission will be able in the future to arrive at a suitable document containing the procedures for the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

In this respect, I wish to pay a tribute, on behalf of the Egyptian delegation, to Mr. Diaconu for the efforts he patiently exerted as Chairman of the Working Group and for the way in which he organized its work.

The delegation of Egypt followed with close attention and participated actively in the activities of Working Group III, on confidence-building measures. As we stated in our opening speech to the Commission, we proceed from our conviction that these measures are important and necessary. We belong to a region where tension has prevailed for a long time. We in the Middle East, like those in Africa and the Mediterranean, realize the importance of these confidence-building measures. However, we believe that if we wish to ensure that they will be effective, we must ensure - and this is stated in paragraph 4 of item 9 of the report of the Working Group on confidence-building measures - that, first of all, these measures cover the economic, social and cultural fields. They must not be limited to the political and military fields, and they should not be a substitute for disarmament measures.

We referred during the discussions in the Working Group to the regional dimensions of confidence-building measures. We stated also that the features of each region are not necessarily similar or the same, and that should be taken into consideration. We believe that confidence-building measures could be unilateral or multilateral. In certain regions, such as the Middle East, the Mediterranean and southern Africa, unilateral confidence-building measures are very important to the international climate prevailing in those regions.

The report presented on the activities of this Working Group reflects the deep divergencies in the points of view on this subject. We share the opinion that the General Assembly should take an appropriate decision to ensure that the work on the guidelines will be completed, by transmitting the item to our Commission once again. That should enable us to complete our examination of the item. We must ensure that the progress made at this session, although very modest, will bear fruit at the next session.

(Mr. Wahab, Egypt)

We express our appreciation to Mr. Wegener, who conducted the work of this Group most efficiently.

With regard to the relationship between disarmament and development, my country would welcome the convening of an international conference, in accordance with the French initiative, to review that relationship and to establish an international disarmament fund in order to release resources for development. However, some States held different positions and the report of Working Group IV reflects these. My country believes that the convening of such a conference might direct attention to the importance of disarmament and given certain developing countries reason to hope that the resources released by disarmament might be used for development. We thank Mr. Bhatt for his efforts in guiding the work of this Group.

My delegation realizes that we have fallen short of achieving the desired results, but we must not lose faith in the role of this Commission as a deliberative body, in connection with items transmitted to us and with those already on our agenda. General Assembly resolution 37/78 H provides a framework that must be the basis of the Commission's work in the future, both when discussing the items on our agenda with a view to making practical recommendations where we can secure a consensus and in preparing the report of the Commission to the General Assembly.

In this context, I commend the constructive analysis made by the Ambassador of Argentina this morning to the attention of the Commission.

Mr. Chairman, we paid you an African tribute at the beginning of this session and we said that it was not the traditional tribute for a new Chairman of the Commission. I reiterate our thanks and appreciation for your efforts in conducting the Commissions's meetings and for your attempts to reconcile differing points of view. Our thanks go also to the members of the Secretariat, in particular the interpreters, who helped us so much in our work.

Mr. MAPANGO ma KEMISHANGA (Zaire) (interpretation from French):

Mr. Chairman, at the outset I wish to add my voice to the voices of those who have spoken before me in expressing appreciation of the felicitous way in which you have conducted the Commission's work.

My delegation has followed the Commission's work closely from beginning to end and can therefore already draw certain conclusions, the most important of which seems to me to be that there was almost total lack of progress. Indeed,

(Mr. Mapango ma Kemishanga, Zaire)

traditional viewpoints on many substantive questions have not simply remained inflexible but have hardened. The reports of the different groups clearly show this. The areas of agreement and disagreement have become more clear-cut. While it is true that the arms race is unanimously condemned and that its cessation and subsequent reversal seem to be the common objective, unfortunately, this unanimity is lacking when practical means of reaching that objective are proposed. We see an avalanche of proposals and counter-proposals, some aimed at marking time on the road to the common objective and others meant to serve national interests, thus disregarding the common interest and international solidarity.

While it is true that we all agree in recognizing the danger of war, especially nuclear war, this unfortunately has little weight when we think of the proliferation of doctrines that serve to disguise the proliferation of nuclear weapons, thus heightening tension in the world.

The results of the Commission's work are so meagre and disappointing that my delegation sees the end of the tunnel we are in receding further and further.

However, my delegation remains confident about the possibility of solving the problem. We well understand the concern of some and the delaying tactics of others. All that is of course directly connected to what is at stake. We developing countries interpret the concept of peace not only through general and complete disarmament under effective international control, but also through other ideas and principles directly linked to it, for example, the principles of the right of peoples to self-determination and their right to determine their own destiny, which involves the right to development. It was within this precise context that we gave our full support to the French initiative concerning a recommendation that the General Assembly convene an international conference to define precisely the relationship between disarmament and development and draw the necessary conclusions, in the interest of the nations of the world, especially the developing nations. That conference should be preceded by a preparatory meeting of experts in that field.

In this connection, we have insisted on the need for developing countries - which find it difficult if not impossible to get information and data on the military budgets of countries possessing major nuclear arsenals and militarily important States - to be reassured about the reduction of military budgets by means of generally acceptable methods of transparency and verification, without which any reduction would be nothing but a figment of the imagination, a utopian idea.

(Mr. Mapango ma Kemishanga, Zaire)

I cannot end my statement without expressing our deep regret that the Commission has not succeeded, in spite of the unceasing efforts of the Chairman of Working Group II, Mr. Hepburn of the Bahamas, in working out specific recommendations on South Africa's nuclear capability, which is a serious threat to the security of the States of the area, thus disappointing the hope those States had placed in it.

We continue to believe that all is not yet lost and that with a little goodwill on the part of all the Commission will be able to fulfil its mandate as laid down, in particular, in paragraph 118 (a) of the Final Document.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: Having listened to the concluding statements of various speakers and their comments on the work of this body, I should like, at the risk of further taxing your patience, to offer a few remarks of my own which I feel are pertinent to the deliberations of the Commission as well as to the conclusions reached at the end of the session; I shall not attempt to summarize our proceedings; that has already been done eloquently by a number of delegations.

When we began the session in early May we had no illusions about the enormity of the task ahead and the likely results, but we were heartened at the same time by the new approach that we were being called upon to adopt in accordance with resolution 37/78 H, which requested us to be more action-oriented, to seek the discussion of specific and limited items and to make concrete recommendations to the General Assembly. It is also true that our agenda was indeed an extensive heritage, not only because of items carried over from previous sessions but also because of the new requests made by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

In spite of the daunting situation, there was the intention, if not the determination, to stay as close as possible to the new course outlined for the Commission. But no sooner had the general exchange of views ended than an atmosphere, all too familiar, set in within the Commission. It was not difficult to foresee problems in the areas which had been the subject of earlier deliberations and which were later to be the subject of recommendations that we all know.

I will not attempt to point out the difficulties in detail, but nor will I overlook the blame that should be placed squarely on an international situation

(The Chairman)

which is characterized by political tension and which continues to deteriorate. We did not lack an understanding of the variety or divergence in the perception of the work of the Commission. In that respect the work of the Commission and its results truly mirrored the status of international relations at this time. It was unfortunately an image of relations calculated to outsmart or indeed humiliate the other side and not necessarily to assuage the anxieties of the millions who live under the threat of a nuclear holocaust. It goes without saying, therefore, that if the Commission is to contribute effectively towards the search for disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, then all nations, in my view, will have to endeavour to improve relations with one another.

Notwithstanding the problems I have just mentioned, there was a possibility, albeit faint, that we could reach agreement on some of the issues on the agenda. That hope, I am sorry to say, was realized only in small measure and, in the main we ended our work far from the desired goal. In my view, in addition to the predictable opposition suffered on most proposals, the Commission was also hamstrung by the very consensus principle that it had employed to strengthen agreement. While I cannot advocate the abolition of the principle in the face of what I still hope will be transient difficulties, the Commission would do well to remember at the same time that it has other procedures at its disposal.

Without advocating an entirely new approach in the work of the Commission, let me venture to say that the Commission might wish to consider as an objective the preservation of any consensus reached on which the international community could, true to its mandate, focus on specific and limited items and make concrete recommendations, even on an interim basis to the General Assembly.

To do this, it seems to me, a certain amount of concentration on issues in themselves would be imperative. That is to say, a delinking of issues would have to be tolerated. It seems unimaginable to me that the United Nations Disarmament Commission could meet for a whole month and not be able to recommend that the two super-Powers resume talks, only because agreement has not been reached on other issues.

What should be pursued vigorously is the establishment of common ground on which we can build every little agreement we can reach for the ultimate objective of maintaining peace and security in the world. In doing so, the Disarmament Commission will be carrying out its responsibility as a deliberative body dealing

(The Chairman)

with disarmament questions, with the participation of all Members of the United Nations, and will strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document, which is an example of an international consensus on vital matters.

Another area that deserves serious consideration is the question of establishing a priority in our objectives. In other words, should the Commission continue to postpone guidance to the General Assembly in the absence of agreement, and should we weaken the Commission by referring to the Assembly the same kind of documents, which have not been adopted owing to the lack of a consensus, or should we, in a spirit of co-operation and concern for mankind, seek language which will at least point the way to how to pursue the various disarmament objectives? I should like to state again that the credibility of the Commission and of all the multilateral and bilateral efforts in the area of disarmament is likely to suffer unless the present long period of negative results is soon ended.

In conclusion, let me say that I am more convinced now than ever before that the overwhelming majority of non-nuclear States in the Commission have a crucial and historic role to play in its activities. That role will be played with success only if the States involved employ their combined moral strength and courage to mediate between the super-Powers and to ensure that the will of the majority prevails. That is democracy. To do this, their voices must ring out in strident unity, or near unity, if they are to be heard. They must seek to demonstrate the consensus being pursued through solidarity and not be tempted always to be caught up in an unproductive chase after unanimity.

These are some of my thoughts at the end of our session. I leave them with members of the Commission, hoping that they will trigger some positive results in the future.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the other officers of the Commission, to the Chairmen of the subsidiary bodies and to our Rapporteur, the representative of the Byelorussian SSR. In my view, they have all done an outstanding job and manifested energy and devotion that words are inadequate to describe. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Sergio Duarte of Brazil for the invaluable assistance given me and for the experience and wisdom that he was kind enough to place at the disposal of us all.

(The Chairman)

Also, I am certain that the other members of the Commission will join me in expressing sincere thanks and appreciation to the Department for Disarmament Affairs and its Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jan Martenson, and, particularly, to the Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Fehmi Alem, and the other officers who assisted the five Working Groups, for their boundless energy and invaluable assistance. I also thank particularly the interpreters, translators, technicians and conference officers, as well as all those who in many ways not immediately visible to us have assisted the Commission in its meetings over the last month.

I declare the 1984 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission closed.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.