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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 9 May 1985, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. AHMAD

(Pakistan)

- General exchange of views (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (continued)

Mr. NYAMDOO (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): I should like first of all, on behalf of the Mongolian delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the post of Chairman of this important organ of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission. I wish also to congratulate the other officers of the Commission on their election to their respective posts of Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur.

This session of the Disarmament Commission is taking place at a time when the world community and people of good will throughout the world are celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the historic triumph over fascism and militarism in the Second World War. That war, which cost the lives of tens of millions of people and caused untold suffering and grief among all the peoples, was unleashed by the extreme reactionary forces of world imperialism and constituted a most grievous crime against mankind. As is well known, the Soviet people and its glorious armed forces made a decisive contribution to that victory and to the cause of the liberation of many peoples from the fascist yoke. An important contribution to the common victory over fascism and militarism was also made by the peoples and armed forces of the anti-Hitler coalition and the resistance movements in the occupied countries of Europe and Asia.

On this day we wish to pay a tribute of profound respect to all those who helped win this great victory.

This year the world is also observing another significant date, the anniversary of a most important event, that is, the founding 40 years ago of the United Nations. As is well known, there is a direct link between these two events. The United Nations was set up as a result of the victory of freedom-loving peoples over fascism and by the will of the peoples determined to ban war from international life.

Now the struggle of the peoples against war and for the maintenance of peace on earth has assumed a new and ever-broader dimension. This is only natural if one recalls the principal lesson of the past world war: that it is essential to fight against war before it has a chance to break out. We are obliged to recall the lessons of the Second World War, and this is essential when we remember the tens of millions of people who died in the war. And it is our duty under the Charter to

(Mr. Nyamdoo, Mongolia)

save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. As events have shown, there are still forces in existence which would disregard the lessons of that war. It is precisely those forces which continue to wind up to new heights the spiral of armaments, in particular nuclear armaments, causing the proliferation of armaments in ever new spheres and increasing the threat to international peace.

Many States have felt legitimate alarm in connection with the new dangerous plans of the aggressive forces, in particular the United States, in the sphere of armaments. The so-called strategic defence initiative is nothing other than a United States attempt to achieve unilateral military and strategic supremacy in order to consolidate its domination in the world. It carries within it the danger of the spread of the arms race to outer space and sharply increases the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war. For that reason the struggle to prevent nuclear war and avoid the militarization of outer space has now assumed exceptional importance.

Many have welcomed the Soviet-United States negotiations on nuclear and space armaments which started in Geneva in March this year as a step towards the curbing of the nuclear-arms race and have placed their hopes in them. The Soviet Union has most convincingly demonstrated the truly serious nature of its intentions by making a whole series of concrete proposals on these questions and by taking practical steps, on a unilateral basis, to halt the deployment of intermediate-range missiles and the implementation of other retaliatory measures in Europe. It is important that the United States should demonstrate a responsible and constructive approach to these negotiations and recognize the principle of the identical and equal security of both sides. It is our basic premise that no measures that could upset the current Geneva negotiations should be undertaken.

The Mongolian People's Republic considers it necessary for the nuclear Powers which have not yet done so to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons. Only if they enter into such a commitment will we be able to avoid a nuclear catastrophe.

The socialist countries, including the Mongolian People's Republic, have persistently advocated the cessation of the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race, and have attached exceptional importance to the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests. For many years, as is well known, they have worked hard within the Conference on Disarmament to bring about the conclusion of such a treaty. Regrettably, owing to the obstructionist position of certain Powers, it has not proved possible to make progress in this important matter.

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We also advocate the freezing of nuclear weapons in both qualitative and quantitative terms. Such a freeze would without doubt be an important step towards the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and the reduction of a nuclear arsenal.

Everyone is familiar with other initiatives of the socialist countries designed to reduce military expenditures. The ever increasing arms race, which is gaining momentum through the fault of the imperialist forces, is absorbing, indeed devouring, huge amounts of money that could have been devoted to the economic and social development of the peoples. As the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, has said in one of his statements this year, military expenditures now amount to \$3 billion in a single day. We must take urgent and effective measures to reduce military expenditures. The delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic hopes that meaningful progress in this direction will be made at this session of the Disarmament Commission.

The Mongolian People's Republic attaches great importance to the implementation in full of measures envisaged in the United Nations disarmament strategy.

The Mongolian delegation shares the disappointment of many others at the absence of any progress towards the implementation of these measures. This is all the more important in that at this session of the Disarmament Commission we shall be carefully considering the item on the review of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.

With reference to South Africa's nuclear capability, we feel it is important that the Commission adopt concrete recommendations on this question at this session. The ever more aggressive policy of the apartheid régime, which is a permanent threat to the peace and security not only of southern Africa but also of the world as a whole, has convinced us of the need for urgent measures in this field.

This year, for the first time, the Disarmament Commission will discuss the limitation and reduction of naval armaments. The Mongolian delegation attaches great importance to this question and hopes that the Commission will discuss it with the proper sense of responsibility with a view to adopting appropriate recommendations on it.

The maintenance of peace on earth and the prevention of nuclear war are the main tasks of today's world, and it is precisely to that end that responsible and realistic political leaders, peace-loving peoples and public movements have been

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working. We wish here to refer to the Delhi Declaration adopted earlier this year by the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Sweden - which Mongolia fully supports. The statement of the Mongolian Foreign Ministry of 7 February 1985 in support of the Delhi Declaration says, inter alia:

"That document is in full accordance with the provision contained in the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, namely, that the preservation of this right and the promotion of its implementation constitute a fundamental obligation of each State." (A/40/125, p. 2)

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries continue to pursue consistently a policy designed to eliminate the threat of world war hanging over mankind and to maintain and strengthen peace on earth. A clear example of that policy is the outcome of the recent Summit Meeting in Warsaw of the leaders of Parties and States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, at which a decision was taken to extend the Treaty for a further period. The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic fully supported the decisions of that meeting in its statement of 29 April, noting that:

"They serve as a clear expression of the determination of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty to uphold peace on earth, to avert the threat of nuclear war, and to guarantee reliably and effectively a peaceful future for the peoples."

In conclusion, I shall quote the words of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party and President of the Presidium of the Great People's Khural of my country, Comrade Batmonh. He said:

"The foreign policy of socialism is based on respect for the right of States and peoples to live in peace. Optimism and faith in the good sense of mankind are inherent characteristics of that foreign policy."

Mr. TSVETKOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): I shall begin my statement by extending the congratulations of the People's Republic of Bulgaria to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the present session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We are happy that a person of your quality has assumed this function. This will guarantee that our discussions will take place in a constructive atmosphere and lead to positive results in the tasks that face our Commission.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

We congratulate and extend best wishes also to the other officers of the Commission, confident that our work will prove fruitful.

Today the international community is solemnly marking the fortieth anniversary of the victory over fascism in the Second World War. That war, in which 50 million persons perished, was a tragedy unprecedented in history.

We salute today those who sacrificed their lives to save the world from fascism. First and foremost, we must pay a tribute to the immortal exploit of the Soviet people, who bore the heaviest burden in that battle against a powerful and cruel enemy. It was at the enormous sacrifice of 20 million people that the Soviet Union gained that historic victory. It played a decisive role in the defeat of Hitlerian fascism and the destruction of his plans of conquest and in ensuring the survival of world civilization.

We also pay a sincere tribute to the other Allies in the anti-Hitler coalition of dozens of countries of the world for their contribution to that great victory. The memory of the hundreds of thousands of anti-fascist Resistance fighters shot by punitive detachments, exterminated in prisons or hanged - victims of the executioners - will live for ever.

The Bulgarian people also paid dearly through their mass resistance, and on the field of battle against Hitler's armies, in their contribution to the defeat of nazism.

The lessons of the Second World War are relevant in the present international tension. That war showed that countries with different social structures can unite for a noble objective and co-operate successfully in achieving it. It also showed us that the prevention of war must always be the central concern of all mankind. If yesterday the unity of peace-loving peoples could and should have nipped fascism in the bud, today political common sense and a sense of responsibility should take precedence over the desire for military supremacy, negative emotions and prejudices that could cause a thermonuclear catastrophe.

We should like to believe that the commemoration of this anniversary will give the United Nations a good opportunity to expand its activities of all kinds against the dangerous manifestations of fascism and neo-fascism, and against concepts that envisage armed confrontation as the most effective way of guaranteeing peace in the world. In this way we can guarantee for future generations a life in just and lasting peace.

(Mr. Tsvetkov, Bulgaria)

The present session of the Disarmament Commission begins its work at a time when there is no more urgent or timely question than the prevention of the danger of a nuclear war. This can be achieved by eliminating the material basis for that threat, that is, weapons of mass destruction, the destructive, lethal power of which is quite incredible. All these questions, including those usually referred to as global, are, despite their scope and gravity, minor questions as compared to the catastrophic consequences of a possible nuclear conflict.

Since nuclear weapons constitute the most serious threat to the existence of mankind, the People's Republic of Bulgaria fights consistently and unswervingly for the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and for nuclear disarmament. These questions too are on the agenda of the Commission's present session and must be examined thoroughly. In our opinion, the work of resolving these questions must start in the very near future with negotiations on the halting of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and the progressive reduction of stockpiles of such weapons until they are completely eliminated.

A ban on the testing of such weapons could prevent the creation of new kinds and new systems of nuclear weapons. The conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests has been a pressing question for a long time now, but a settlement of this issue continues to be blocked by certain nuclear States.

The question of guaranteeing positive results from the Soviet-American negotiations in Geneva on all nuclear and space weapons is linked to other urgent questions concerning the prevention of nuclear war with a priority nature. The beginning of those negotiations is for people of goodwill a source of hope that an arms race in outer space and on earth can be prevented, thus reducing tension and promoting normal relations among States.

The elimination of the danger of nuclear war depends largely on the efforts made to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons. No one could possibly doubt that, considering the great threat to peace posed by the emergence of nuclear weapons in countries which wish to possess them for aggressive purposes.

In this regard we attach great importance to the work of the Disarmament Commission in its consideration of South Africa's nuclear potential. We share the concern of many delegations, in particular African delegations, regarding Pretoria's nuclear ambitions. The existence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the aggressive South African régime will undoubtedly increase the threat to peace and security not only in that part of Africa but in the entire world. That is why the

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Republic of South Africa must be forced to renounce its nuclear ambitions and why we must prevent the collaboration of certain Western countries with South Africa in the development of its nuclear potential. We should like to believe that the Commission's present session will be able to complete its work on South Africa's nuclear potential and present to the fortieth session of the General Assembly specific recommendations on this important and pressing question.

The Bulgarian delegation still attaches great importance to the question of the reduction of military budgets. Over the past few years, Bulgaria and the other socialist countries have suggested various ways to break out of the impasse on this question. We hope that, given the understanding demonstrated by the Chairman and shown by a number of other delegations, the Commission will on this question, too, prepare practical, specific recommendations to be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly at its fortieth session.

We wish and will try to ensure positive results on the other important questions which are on the Commission's agenda at this session. These concern -- and rightly -- the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and consideration of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.

I should like to dwell in more detail on the question of limiting the naval arms race. The item on the cessation of the naval arms race is on the Commission's agenda for the first time at this session. However, it is not a new question for the international community. The thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly proved convincingly that most delegations believed that peace and security can be guaranteed only if new, persistent efforts are made to curb the arms race on all fronts and that the limitation and reduction of those weapons should encompass all types and systems in all areas -- in outer space, in the air space, on earth and on the seas and oceans.

The obligations of countries concerning the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world as set forth in the United Nations Charter and other sources of international law include the obligation to ensure international security on the seas and oceans. In this connection, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 38/188, adopted on the initiative of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, recognized

"the urgent need to start negotiations with the participation of the major naval Powers, the nuclear-weapon States in particular, and other

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interested States on the limitation of naval activities, the limitation and reduction of naval armaments, taking into due account the nuclear aspect of the naval arms race and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, especially to regions with the busiest sea lanes or regions where the probability of conflict situations is high".

In addition, the General Assembly appealed

"to all Member States, in particular the major naval Powers, to refrain from enlarging their naval activities in areas of conflict or tension, or far from their own shores".

The adoption of that resolution by States Members of the world Organization was an expression of their concern at the heightening of military confrontations on the seas and oceans, which dangerously aggravated tension in certain areas and the international situation in general; the increasingly frequent use of naval formations to threaten the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States; the creation of obstacles to peaceful navigation; and the exploitation of the resources of the world's oceans by a military presence and ever-increasing naval activities.

The continued naval arms race could not fail to give rise to concern on our part. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Pétar Mladénov, emphasized in his letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

"It is extremely necessary to take urgent and concerted action on a world-wide level to put a brake on the naval arms race and to limit and reduce naval weapons both quantitatively and qualitatively, to the extent that that is still possible."

The individual and collective proposals of the socialist countries aimed at lowering the level of military confrontation on the seas and oceans, of putting a brake on the naval arms race, still remain valid.

The constant increase in naval power is by no means a way of enhancing peace. There must be frank, constructive and serious negotiations that would lead to the conclusion of mutually acceptable agreements in the naval sphere. Many States are sincerely interested in this. The replies by Member States to the Secretary-General containing their views and proposals on the subjects under discussions are proof of this. We welcome the positive attitude to the proposal

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for negotiations put forward by one of the nuclear-weapon States and a major naval Power - the Soviet Union. The constructive participation of other nuclear-weapon States in the solution of this question would be of great importance for the cause of peace.

In General Assembly resolution 39/151 I, it was proposed that the Disarmament Commission consider the question of limitation of the naval arms race and submit a report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. Debate within the Commission could lay the foundations for developing a common approach and determine areas of common interest with a view to proceeding subsequently to direct negotiations with the participation of all States concerned.

Any proposals that might be formulated in the Commission would constitute a valuable contribution in this respect. This applies both to the nature of concrete measures that might be adopted in the naval area and to ways and means of conducting future work on this question.

For its part, the Bulgarian delegation believes that, in compliance with General Assembly resolutions, certain initial steps could be discussed in the Commission. At that stage, States, in particular the major naval Powers, could consider the possibility of agreeing not to extend their naval activities to areas far from their own shores. It is particularly necessary to limit the naval presence in areas of conflict or tension. Here special attention should be given to ships carrying nuclear weapons, the presence of which in certain areas of the world's oceans represents a serious danger.

The elaboration and implementation of confidence-building measures applicable to the seas and oceans would be very helpful in preventing conflict situations and in consolidating the security of international sea lanes.

Discussion of these preliminary steps, modest though they may be, would lay the foundation for gradual progress to negotiations on important matters directly related to naval armaments.

It goes without saying that all measures should be taken in such a way as not to encroach on the legitimate interests of any State.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is well aware of the complexity of the questions under discussion, but we still believe that it is through negotiations that mutually acceptable solutions can be found.

Mr. KORNEENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, first of all I wish to congratulate you and all the officers of the Commission on your election to your responsible posts. I wish you the greatest success in carrying out your duties.

This session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission is taking place at a most significant time. The international community has, for the last few days been solemnly observing a most significant anniversary, the fortieth anniversary of the historic victory of the peoples over the forces of fascism and militarism, which opened up the path of mankind to peace and progress. This peace, in which we have been living for 40 years now, was bought at a terrible price.

The war left horrendous traces in the territory of the Ukrainian SSR. Let me cite just a few figures concerning the criminal deeds of the fascists in Ukrainian territory: the Nazis destroyed 16,000 factories and industrial plants, 714 towns and 28,000 villages and left about 10 million people homeless; the occupying forces looted and destroyed 27,000 collective farms, 873 state farms, 33,000 schools and technical institutions, 116 institutions of higher education and more than 19,000 libraries, 62 theatres, 600 cinemas and 151 museums. In fact, the fascist plunderers used entire freight trains to cart fertile black soil from Poltava out of the Republic and shipped about a million high-quality fruit trees to the Reich. The direct losses suffered by the economy of the Ukraine amounted to about 285 billion roubles in 1941 prices.

However, one cannot in any way make up for the human sacrifices suffered by the Ukrainian people. During the years of the temporary occupation of the territory of the Republic, 3,898,000 peaceful inhabitants lost their lives, together with 1,366,000 prisoners of war. In other words, every day the fascist butchers killed an average of 6,900 people. Apart from that, 2,400,000 persons were forcibly driven off to work in Hitler's Reich. The SS units, organizations which were well known for their barbaric crimes, distinguished themselves by particular savagery. In the territory of the Ukraine alone, about 250 places of mass execution of civilians by SS troops have been found. In the Lvov region, for example, in the Yaniv death camp, the SS, using sophisticated methods of torture, killed 200,000 people. Babi Yar was another place where inhabitants of the city of Kiev were murdered en masse; more than 100,000 Soviet citizens were shot there. The whole world is familiar with the tragedy of a number of European settlements which the Nazis literally razed to the ground, destroying their inhabitants at the same

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time. There were 250 such instances in the Ukraine. Such atrocities, which more than match even the horrors of the medieval inquisition, cannot be forgotten, and the Ukrainian people, like all the Soviet people and all those who cherish peace on earth, hold in sacred reverence the memory of those who gave the most valued thing of all - their lives - for the peaceful future of mankind.

This sacred feeling of gratitude to the brave fighters who lost their lives in the liberation of the Ukraine is reflected in 27,000 monuments and memorials erected in our territory after the war. We also recall the help given in the liberation of the Ukraine by the Czechoslovak and the Polish armed units. The Soviet people have not forgotten the American airmen who used Ukrainian air bases for shuttle runs across Europe to bomb fascist troop concentrations. Today, when we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the great triumph over fascism, we must all recall the main lesson of the Second World War, which is that it is essential to fight war before it has started. If we disregard the lessons of the past and attempt to forget, distort or even rewrite the painful pages of history and question the legitimacy of the post-war arrangements in Europe, this can prove costly to the peoples. The past must not be allowed to be repeated. We are firmly convinced that no differences of political or social systems, no differences of views can be an obstacle to our common struggle against the common danger. That was true in the war against fascism and it must be all the more true now when we face the threat of a nuclear catastrophe.

In this whole range of complex and multifaceted problems now facing mankind, the question of how to stop the world sliding towards a nuclear abyss is of course of cardinal importance. In the opinion of the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR, one way of starting to resolve this problem would be to prevent an arms race in outer space and simultaneously to move towards a radical reduction in nuclear armaments until their complete destruction. The necessary practical basis for this has been provided by the Soviet-American negotiations, the first round of which was concluded recently in Geneva. The desire to make immediate progress in the question of nuclear disarmament motivated the decision of the Soviet Government to introduce, before November of this year, a moratorium on the deployment of its medium-range missiles and the halting of other retaliatory measures in Europe. In this connection, we are seriously concerned at the practical actions of the United States Administration, which has not only rejected out of hand the Soviet proposals but is also continuing its policy of striving for military-strategic supremacy over

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the Soviet Union by a feverish build-up of its nuclear arsenals. Results in the sphere of the limitation and reduction of nuclear armaments are not promoted at all by the United States' stubborn desire to drag outer space into the sphere of military preparations. The spread of the arms race to outer space would not only disrupt strategic stability but it would also disrupt efforts to limit and reduce armaments in all spheres and would bring the world closer to a nuclear catastrophe. The arms race would become more intensive, having entered upon new spheres. The only alternative to this is not to allow outer space to be turned into a new source of military dangers, not to create offensive space weapons and to destroy existing anti-ballistic-missile systems. At the same time, it is essential to agree on a radical reduction of nuclear weapons and bring about their complete elimination.

While giving priority to a whole range of questions of nuclear and space armaments, we do not in any way belittle the significance of the other problems of the reduction of armaments and disarmament, the solution of which would greatly help improve the international atmosphere and eliminate the threat of war. One of these problems is the curbing of the arms race in the seas and oceans. The current relevance of this problem has become heightened in today's international conditions in connection with the ever more frequent incidence of the direct use by certain Powers of their naval forces. The socialist countries have frequently proposed that agreements be reached on a whole range of concrete measures pertaining to mutual limitation of the use of naval fleets and the limitation and reduction of naval armaments, as well as on appropriate confidence-building measures generally, with respect to the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The urgent need to start appropriate negotiations was recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 39/151 I, adopted on the initiative of the Bulgarian People's Republic. That resolution points out in particular that the subject of the negotiations, with the participation of the major naval Powers, the nuclear-weapon States in particular, and other interested States, must be questions pertaining to the limitation of naval activities, the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, especially to areas where the busiest international sea lanes lie and or to regions where the probability of conflict situations is high. The delegation of

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the Ukrainian SSR fully supports the provisions of that resolution and considers that the discussion by this session of the Commission of this question could at last facilitate progress towards the solution of this range of problems related to the curbing of the naval arms race. A real practical measure to curb the arms race in all its aspects would be a long-overdue solution to the question of the non-increase and reduction of military expenditures, it being understood that the funds thus released could be effectively used to meet the social and economic development needs of States, including developing States.

In the opinion of my delegation, a path towards the attainment of these goals is provided by the proposal of the members of the Warsaw Treaty to the Member Countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), relating to the commencement of negotiations on the question of a mutual non-increase of military expenditures and on their subsequent reduction, which was made on 5 March 1984. The content of that initiative is well known to the members of the Commission; we shall not dwell on it in detail now. We simply wish to emphasize that the holding of the proposed negotiations would be conducive to an improved political climate in Europe and throughout the world and would be very much in the vital interests of the peoples. The reduction of military expenditures would effectively help curb the arms race and bring about social and economic progress and improvement of the economic conditions of the developing countries.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR hopes that this year the Disarmament Commission will succeed in moving ahead along these lines and elaborating recommendations such as will make a real contribution to the solution of questions pertaining to the non-increase and reduction of military expenditures.

For some years now, the question of the nuclear potential of South Africa has been before the Commission. Numerous studies of this problem, including those made within the United Nations, are evidence of the serious danger to international peace and security inherent in the acquisition by the racist régime of Pretoria of the potential for the production of nuclear weapons.

It is no secret that it is helped in this regard by the extensive political, economic and military links between South Africa and certain Western States. It is precisely those States which have in fact been blocking the work of the group on the nuclear potential of South Africa by doing their utmost in every way to prevent the Commission from adopting recommendations which would help eliminate forever the

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threat created by the nuclear potential of South Africa, a threat to the security of the African States and world peace in general.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR looks forward to a constructive and productive discussion of this question at this session and is prepared to make its contribution to such a discussion.

Nineteen eighty-five is a landmark year in the life of the United Nations. Together with the fortieth anniversary of the historic triumph over fascism, the international community is also celebrating another anniversary - the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. Having been born as a result of victory in the most destructive and bloody war which has ever been seen by mankind, the United Nations assigned itself the noble task of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of a new disaster, and the 40 years which have since elapsed have convincingly demonstrated the positive and important role of the United Nations in carrying out this truly global task. Among the assets of the United Nations are many examples of the successful solution of complex international problems and quite a number of concrete achievements which have made a positive contribution to the maintenance of peace on earth and the strengthening of security, the development of mutually advantageous cooperation among States and the solution of a number of problems pertaining to the curbing of the arms race.

We attach great importance to the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field, and we believe that its contribution could be even more weighty if certain States were to show political will and were to refrain from blocking the solution of cardinal questions pertaining to the limitation of the arms race. Considering the United Nations as an effective instrument for peace and security, we hope that the just and democratic principles on which the Organization was founded 40 years ago will become further consolidated in the practice of international relations.

Mr. EDIS (United Kingdom): My delegation is delighted, Mr. Chairman, to see your country and you personally in the chair of our Commission. The broad views of my delegation on the items before this Commission were contained in the statement delivered by the representative of Italy on behalf of the 10 members of the European Community on 7 May; perhaps a case of 10 for the price of one, as it were, instead of one at the price of 10, which we sometimes hear from another group of countries.

(Mr. Edis, United Kingdom)

I am speaking briefly now to say something about a topic which was formally commemorated at the ceremony in the Economic and Social Council yesterday, but which has also been referred to at some length by a number of speakers today. I refer to the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, which we in Britain marked yesterday and which I believe the Soviet Union and a number of other countries celebrate today.

No one can be in any doubt of the terrible sacrifice which the Soviet Union paid during its participation in the Second World War from 1941 until 1945, nor of the vital role that the Soviet armed forces and people played in the defeat of nazism.

Along with fellow members of the Commonwealth, many of whom are represented in this room today, the United Kingdom was also involved in that conflict. In fact, the United Kingdom was involved from the very start of the war in September 1939 in defence of Poland and participated in the war until its very end in Europe in May 1945.

We do not ourselves believe that the fortieth anniversary of the end of that conflict should be an occasion for triumphalism, for historical selectivity, for recrimination - certainly not for attempts to whip up old animosities or create new ones. In our view, this should be a time first and foremost for sombre commemoration of the victims of that war, which was of course not fought just in Europe, but as far as we and others are concerned, in Africa, in Asia and in the Pacific.

We believe that it should also be a time to renew the resolve which was embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, whose fortieth anniversary we also mark in a few months' time, that the terrible tragedy which ended in 1945 should never be repeated.

In our view, the themes of this anniversary should be peace, reconstruction, reconciliation, hope for the future. We honour the dead of our own and other nations; we give thanks for 40 years of peace bought by the sacrifices of our dead and those of our allies, and also by our reconciliation with our former adversaries. And we recall that the defeat of tyranny led to renewed growth of freedom in many countries and to partnership and co-operation with former foes. Most recently, this reconciliation was epitomized in the statement issued in Bonn on 3 May by the heads of State of seven Western countries.

(Mr. Edis, United Kingdom)

We also see the anniversary of the end of the last great European war as a symbolic occasion to reaffirm our hope for more fruitful dialogue and co-operation between East and West.

In this context, the statement of 3 May to which I have referred said:

"As recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, all countries have a joint responsibility to maintain international peace and security and to this end refrain from the threat and the use of force. We for our part share a determination to preserve the peace while protecting our democratic freedoms. To that end, each of us will work to maintain and strengthen a stable military balance at the lowest possible levels of forces, neither seeking superiority for ourselves nor neglecting our defences. We are prepared to pursue a high-level dialogue to deal with the profound differences dividing East and West. We strongly support endeavours to strengthen the peace and enhance deterrence through the negotiation of meaningful reductions in existing levels of nuclear arms, limitations on conventional arms, the banning of chemical weapons and lessening the risks of conflict. We welcome the opening of negotiations in Geneva. We appreciate the positive proposals of the United States of America. We urge the Soviet Union to act positively and constructively in order to achieve significant agreements there.

"We shall also continue to seek to work with the developing countries so as to help them fight hunger and disease, to build free and prosperous societies and to take their part in the community of nations committed to peace and freedom. We respect genuine non-alignment as an important contribution to international security and peace.

"As we look back to the terrible suffering of the Second World War and the common experience of 40 years of peace and freedom, we dedicate ourselves and our countries anew to the creation of a world in which all peoples enjoy the blessings of peace, of justice and of freedom from oppression, want and fear; a world in which individuals are able to fulfil their responsibilities for themselves to their families and to their communities; a world in which all nations, large and small, combine to work together for a better future for all mankind."

Mr. SHAH NAWAZ (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, it is a very happy experience for me to see you, a compatriot and an old colleague and friend, presiding over the deliberations of the 1985 session of the Disarmament Commission. Through my long experience of working with you I have come to admire your personal qualities and your sensitivity to universal human concerns. Your election to that high office is a tribute to your wide-ranging experience and knowledge of disarmament negotiations in multilateral forums and the respect you enjoy among the community of diplomats and scholars in the field of disarmament. Your election also honours Pakistan, as it represents an acknowledgement of the dedication with which our country has been pursuing the objectives of disarmament at the international and regional levels.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate your predecessor Ambassador Gbeho of Ghana, on his outstanding leadership of the work of the Commission last year and on his dedication, which have earned him our profound respect.

The experience of the past seven years in the Disarmament Commission illustrates the persistent absence of progress on disarmament issues in multilateral forums and the frustrating task which confronts the negotiators in this body and other disarmament forums of the United Nations. This frustration, however, does not diminish - nor can it obscure - the paramount importance of disarmament for human survival in this nuclear age. Despite the elusiveness of success, disarmament negotiations must be continued with the utmost vigour and with a sense of optimism.

There have been and will always be more than one viewpoint on approaches to attaining the goal of disarmament. The broad framework provided in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament embodied these approaches and set the agenda for general and complete disarmament; but, as amply demonstrated by the period which has elapsed since its celebrated adoption, it has failed to generate the necessary momentum for progress towards disarmament.

Regardless of the explanations we may offer for this paralysis, experience bears out that there is a direct relationship between disarmament and the international security environment. Progress towards disarmament can be sustained only in an improved international security situation. Conversely, the arms race thrives on international tensions and in a political environment of distrust and suspicion.

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Building on this argument, it must also be said that the two preponderant military alliance systems, which account principally for the global arms race, are also the principal actors on the international political scene in most of the international conflicts and tensions. Dedication to disarmament on their part requires not only a willingness to halt the arms race, but also a concomitant resolve to desist from military adventurism.

Revived hopes for meaningful results from the resumed disarmament talks in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union will be extinguished if either of them resorts to seeking military gains in any part of the globe. It is heartening that those Powers recognize this intrinsic relationship and that, with the resumption of dialogue aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating the arms race on earth, they have also undertaken negotiations on regional situations. There can be no doubt that progress in one set of negotiations would prove to be a catalyst for advance in the other.

It is in the light of the undeniable organic linkage between international security and disarmament that we attach a great deal of importance to confidence-building as a prerequisite for sustained and meaningful efforts towards disarmament. We view confidence-building from a broad perspective and, by that token, place emphasis on the multiplicity of limited disarmament measures recommended by the first special session on disarmament, in both their nuclear and their conventional aspects.

With regard to the nuclear aspect, I am specifically referring to measures of an interim or regional nature such as the comprehensive test ban, practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States, the halting of the qualitative and quantitative development of nuclear weapons or the introduction of new weapons systems, whether in space or on earth, and the denunciation of doctrines justifying their development.

We view the requirement of verification in the same perspective. Willingness to submit to verification, in whatever context - reciprocal, bilateral, regional or global - will serve to strengthen confidence and invigorate international endeavours aimed at disarmament. Confidence-building, even if achieved through limited measures, can help to break the cycle of fear which is at the heart of the spiralling arms race. These measures are complementary and not contradictory to a global approach to general and complete disarmament and constitute steps towards

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the objective of the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, which cannot be achieved in one stride.

Interim and regional measures of nuclear disarmament were part of the composite blueprint for disarmament evolved at the first special session, but they have suffered from neglect in past several years. This is regrettable, because what is at stake is human survival itself. Nuclear disarmament is the most important priority of our time and all endeavours, great or small, in its pursuit have value. A fresh resolve, an all-embracing strategy and practical steps are essential if we are to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race. The role of multilateral forums, in particular that of the United Nations, is indispensable, since these voice the growing universal concern over the nuclear threat and represent the increasing moral pressure of world public opinion in favour of nuclear disarmament.

While preoccupation with nuclear arms must remain uppermost in our minds, a concurrent effort is required to arrest the ever-increasing conventional arms build-up, for reasons of both security and development. The conventional arms build-up accentuates regional tensions and conflicts and causes a major drain on human resources which can become available for development. Nearly 80 per cent of the \$1,000 billion spent annually on armament account for the manufacture and development of conventional arms and the maintenance of conventional forces.

In outlining our broad approach to disarmament, I may point to Pakistan's unreserved commitment to support and co-operate with all international endeavours for the elimination of nuclear weapons and prevention of a nuclear war, as a moral imperative. Apart from maintaining a moral position and joining the efforts of the rest of the world, there is little that a country of the size of Pakistan can, by itself, do to affect the course of nuclear disarmament at the global level. Nevertheless, consistent with its view of interim and regional disarmament measures, Pakistan has taken several practical initiatives, especially in the regional context, which reflect its abiding commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to the peace and security of our region.

I turn now to the tasks before the Disarmament Commission. It needs to be recognized that the Commission's agenda covers a wide spectrum of disarmament issues and concerns. The Commission is engaged in the consideration of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament. It is studying a possible reduction of military budgets. It has undertaken review of progress in

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disarmament with particular reference to the role of the United Nations. It has also focused attention on the specific, though deeply disturbing, question of South Africa's nuclear capability. Judging from its deliberations in the past, the Commission appears to be engaged in an exercise to develop, howsoever slowly, a body of principles, strategies and ideas in relation to these crucial aspects of disarmament. This endeavour, by its very nature, is protracted. Disarmament permits no ready results, and past experience leaves no room for expectations of dramatic developments. Our accomplishments during this session, as indeed at any given stage, will have to be measured conservatively.

It is this awareness which convinces us of the usefulness of focusing our deliberations on areas which bear maximum promise of results. It will be a worthy accomplishment if at this session we are able to reach an agreement on such items as the reduction of military budgets and the nuclear capability of South Africa, which have been on the agenda of the Commission for several years now. This does not imply that efforts should be wanting in regard to other items on the agenda, although, in our assessment, consensus in those areas is not yet within reach. The new agenda items, such as review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and curbing of the naval arms race, would require a general exchange of views before becoming the subject of focused deliberations. In regard to the item of the naval arms race, we should keep in mind the expert level study to be completed before the next General Assembly session by the group appointed by the Secretary-General. In making these suggestions, I wish to caution against the tendency, often evident in the multilateral forums on disarmament, of engaging in protracted, wasteful debates on procedures, modalities and format.

I have availed myself of the opportunity of the customary general debate in the Commission to give an overview of our position on various disarmament issues as well as to make some comments on the substantive aspects of the agenda of the Commission. We shall offer specific comments and proposals, where necessary, when the Commission engages in the detailed consideration of the agenda items in its various sub-groups.

Mr. KURODA (Japan): On behalf of the Japanese delegation, allow me to present my felicitations to you, Ambassador Ahmad, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission during its 1985 session. I am confident that under your able guidance we shall make progress in our work, and I assure you of the Japanese delegation's full co-operation to that end.

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Inasmuch as this session falls at the mid-point of the Second Disarmament Decade, I believe it is fitting and proper that I begin my statement by commenting on the agenda item relating to the review of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.

In the past five years the continued tension in the international situation seems to have overshadowed our efforts towards attaining substantial progress in disarmament. Weapons technology is advancing day by day, making arms control and disarmament even more complicated. In spite of the desire expressed in the Declaration, there has been no significant achievement during this period.

I should like to point out, however, that there are some encouraging developments in the field of disarmament whose importance should not be underestimated. The start of new United States-Soviet disarmament negotiations is certainly a step forward. Regional disarmament efforts are being made in Europe. Intensive negotiations on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons are being carried out at the Conference on Disarmament. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) régime has been strengthened with the participation of additional States.

In these circumstances, it is my delegation's view that the task before us is to help promote such encouraging trends through fruitful discussions on well-chosen and practical items, as the Ambassador of Italy stated on behalf of the European Community.

The first substantive item on our agenda is "Nuclear disarmament". This particular item, in the view of Japan, requires a practical approach for the accomplishment of concrete measures. We must therefore avoid an approach that is too idealistic.

It is generally recognized that a nuclear war would most likely be preceded by an international dispute. Therefore, the prevention of nuclear war must be considered in conjunction with the peaceful settlement of international disputes and the prevention of war in general. Accordingly, the strict observance by all States of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations is a fundamental prerequisite in preventing nuclear warfare. In other words, it is necessary that we uphold and strengthen the peace-keeping role of the United Nations.

Stockpiles of nuclear weapons reached a level of overkill some time ago. A significant reduction of existing nuclear arsenals to the lowest possible level is the most urgent task facing us today. Japan wholeheartedly welcomed the start of new United States-Soviet disarmament negotiations last March and strongly urges

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both the United States and the Soviet Union to continue their negotiations in a serious and constructive manner.

A comprehensive nuclear-test ban is undoubtedly one of the most important nuclear disarmament measures. Japan has consistently called for the early realization of such a ban.

This item has top priority on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. Nevertheless, since the beginning of last year no substantive deliberations have taken place on this important issue owing to persistent differences concerning the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee. In the meantime nuclear tests have been conducted without interruption. For the early conclusion of a comprehensive-test-ban treaty, further discussions on scope, verification and compliance including technological issues relevant to the detection and identification of nuclear tests are required. There can be no direct route to the comprehensive test ban goal without adequate consideration of these matters.

With regard to the substance of the comprehensive test ban, various proposals, including the step-by-step approach introduced by Japan, have been put forward. Japan strongly hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will establish an ad hoc committee with an agreement on its mandate, so that substantive discussions will be initiated as soon as possible.

The Third Review Conference of the NPT will be held at the end of August. In spite of the different positions on the NPT, no one can deny the role that the Treaty, to which almost 130 States have become parties, has played in promoting the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Universal adherence to the NPT would ensure nuclear non-proliferation in the future. Therefore, Japan has actively called upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty. We are pleased to hear that recently a number of States have expressed their intention to participate in the NPT.

Under the NPT, nuclear-weapon States are required to pursue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. Japan joins the non-nuclear-weapon States in welcoming the start of new United States-Soviet disarmament negotiations. We regard it as a positive step taken by two nuclear-weapon States in response to the strong appeal of non-nuclear-weapon States.

On the first day of this month the meetings of the Preparatory Committee of the Third Review Conference of the NPT in Geneva were successfully concluded. It

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agreed, among other things, on the date and duration of the Review Conference, its agenda, its financing and the structure of its committees. Japan hopes that, with the co-operation of State parties, the Review Conference will successfully fulfil its important tasks.

Now I should like to turn to the item "Reduction of military budgets." Japan has held the view that our work should be based on a fair measurement and comparison of each country's military budget, according to a standardized instrument.

Every year the General Assembly recommends that all Member States report their military expenditures using the standardized reporting instrument developed by the United Nations. However, the number of States participating in this exercise has been rather limited, and so far hardly any States with centrally planned economies have reported their annual military expenditures. Japan is convinced that wider participation in this reporting system by States representing different social and economic systems will increase the transparency of military budgets, and thus build confidence between States. Otherwise, it will be difficult to make progress on this matter.

Paragraph 27 of the Final Document adopted by the tenth special session states that

"In accordance with the Charter, the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament ...". (resolution S-10/2, para. 27)

In order to carry out such a role and responsibility the United Nations must work more effectively and efficiently.

In the First Committee of the General Assembly a large number of draft resolutions have been presented without having been thoroughly discussed, and owing to time constraints they have been voted upon hastily. As a way to improve this situation, further efforts should be made to streamline related or similar draft resolutions into a single consensus resolution. The recent trend whereby many organs which generally lack experience and expertise in the field are taking up disarmament issues may not only disperse disarmament efforts but also could introduce additional confusion into the ongoing discussions and negotiations. Therefore, the consideration and negotiation of disarmament-related issues should be primarily entrusted to the appropriate organs; that is, the First Committee of the General Assembly - the United Nations disarmament commission of the General

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Assembly - the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

Duplication of activities by various organs should be avoided. In the selection of topics for disarmament studies, priority should be given to those items directly related to the ongoing disarmament discussions and negotiations. Duplication of studies dealing with similar subjects should also be avoided.

Finally, I should like to touch upon the item dealing with curbing the naval arms race. First, I would point out that General Assembly resolution 39/150 I, which requests the United Nations Disarmament Commission to consider this item, was not adopted by consensus. Moreover, this resolution leaves out important activities on the seas and oceans, such as transportation and the development of resources and fishing industries. Furthermore, it does not cover those naval defence activities that contribute to the maintenance of the security and peace of the States and regions concerned. A study of this subject is currently being carried out by a group of United Nations experts. We are afraid that discussions on this subject at this session might affect the on-going study and prejudice its outcome.

The ultimate goal of mankind is general and complete disarmament. We should never give up our hope of attaining that goal. We can approach it only by taking a long and arduous path, moving steadily forward one step at a time and accumulating practical measures one by one. With this determined and pragmatic approach, I feel confident that we shall be able to achieve tangible results in the remaining half of the decade.

Mr. FOSSUNG (Cameroon): In an earlier statement at the current session, Sir, my delegation took the opportunity to express to you its immense satisfaction at your election to the chairmanship of our Commission. I wish simply to reaffirm that sentiment and to assure you again of my delegation's readiness to co-operate fully with you and the other officers of the Commission in the accomplishment of the important tasks before the Commission.

I have asked to speak to present to the Commission my Government's views on disarmament issues, in particular agenda item 7, which deals with the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

The current session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which will, among other things, be examining, the role of the United Nations in the field of

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disarmament, is taking place at a particularly historic moment, on the eve of our Organization's fortieth anniversary.

An anniversary is traditionally a time for stock-taking, a reflective moment when one looks at what has been accomplished, at where one is at present and at what one wishes for or can expect in the future. Forty years ago democratic and peace-loving forces triumphed in the bloodiest and most destructive armed conflict in human history and committed themselves thereafter, under the umbrella of the United Nations, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Thus, as clearly provided for in the Charter of the Organization, the original and primary purpose of the United Nations was to prevent war and promote the maintenance of international peace and security.

The record of the past 40 years has, however, been most disappointing, as the world has witnessed the greatest arms race in history and constant resort to the use of force in the settlement of disputes among States, contrary to the provisions of the Charter. That our world has been spared a third world war - which in today's nuclear age would be too ghastly to contemplate - can be attributed not to the effectiveness of the central role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, but rather to the ominous and tenuous balance of terror, in particular between the two super-Powers. Established as a peace and security institution with world-wide responsibilities, the United Nations has, regrettably, become marginalized, and its role and influence in this field have been rendered insignificant.

For the poor, small and militarily insignificant non-aligned countries, of which my country is one, the United Nations record in the field of peace and security is particularly disappointing, because we have long looked to the world body, and especially to its Charter provisions concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes and collective security, as offering perhaps the only viable option for ensuring our security. The failure to implement those provisions, defuse conflicts and prevent, deter or punish aggression has increasingly shifted attention from the quest for international peace and security within the framework of the United Nations to efforts to ensure national peace and security through independent national means of self-defence, as the credibility of the United Nations in this field has eroded over the years. That shift has taken place despite the fact that an effective international role appears to be more necessary in today's increasingly interdependent world, the countries of which face many common threats

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and challenges, including the common threat to human survival posed by nuclear weapons. Even the seemingly localized problems of underdevelopment and colonial and racist domination and aggression in our region cannot be treated in isolation from the quest for durable international peace and security. These problems affect and, in turn, are affected by developments on the wider international level.

The limits and risks of national power, in particular national military power, are greater today than ever before, in part because of the global dimensions of modern military strength, especially that of the nuclear-weapon States. That handful of States has the power to destroy the entire human race. In these grave circumstances, it is difficult to see how the nuclear-weapon policies and activities of those States can be said to be matters of purely national or domestic interest. These matters concern and are of interest to everyone. All States have the right to security, and efforts to ensure security for some countries at the expense of others would be unrealistic and, ultimately, destabilizing for all.

The international community is therefore confronted with a most dangerous dilemma, namely, that, in the face of the failure of the United Nations to prevent war and to maintain international peace and security, and the fact that States have understandably shifted increasingly to national means to ensure their security, this growing reliance on national military means has encouraged an arms race which, especially in the nuclear field, now threatens everyone and poses the gravest danger to the security and, indeed, to the survival of the entire human race.

That, in our view, is the crux of the matter. It is unrealistic to expect disarmament without the existence of security; at the same time, it is difficult to expect lasting and durable peace and security without significant progress towards genuine disarmament.

The present situation is particularly difficult for countries like mine, which neither are responsible for, nor participate in, the arms race but which are gravely affected by it in several ways. But we face a serious dilemma: We cannot afford to be complacent about the situation; nor can we compete effectively with the major military Powers. Those States not only produce and stockpile vast quantities of various types of weapons, but also supply the weapons used in conflicts all over the world, including regions like ours where indigenous weapon production is nearly non-existent. The militarization of the security concept, therefore, means that those countries which do not produce weapons must either do

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so if they can, or buy them, to ensure their legitimate right to security, and to defend their peoples and their territorial integrity.

But we would prefer a different approach, since the present military-based quest for security, in our view, neither promotes genuine security nor permits the practical realization of genuine disarmament. Not only does military competition provoke or exacerbate tension and crisis among States; it also - especially in the case of developing countries like ours - diverts already limited resources from our social and economic development. The persistence or perpetuation of underdevelopment and poverty in our area can only widen the already ominous rift between developed and developing countries and hence place additional obstacles in the way of the quest for lasting or viable security everywhere. We therefore believe that practical re-commitment to the original purpose of the United Nations, namely to prevent war and to maintain international peace and security, offers the most viable option for progress towards genuine disarmament and peace. Indeed, in our view, arms limitation and disarmament efforts, in the absence of a system, or of conditions, of peace and security, are likely, at best, to be futile.

My Government has always recognized the fact that ever since its establishment the United Nations has devoted particular attention to the goal of disarmament, seeing its primary role and responsibility in this area as fundamental in the maintenance of international peace and security. In so doing, the United Nations has constantly provided a forum for deliberations and negotiations, as well as a focal point for various other programmes and activities aimed at contributing to the disarmament process. These activities have generally served to enhance the authority of the Organization and to expand the range of multilateral involvement in the quest for disarmament.

Notwithstanding their importance and relevance, the activities carried out so far by the United Nations, including the series of arms limitation agreements that have already been concluded, represent, however, no more than partial, very limited first steps. These activities and agreements have neither halted the arms race nor reduced the military arsenals and capabilities of States. The reality is that the arms race has continued to escalate quantitatively and qualitatively, and that resort to force in the settlement of disputes among States has increased, to the extent that war and conflict have become constant features of post-War international relations.

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The present regrettable situation of a lack of substantive progress demonstrates, in our view, that it is not the proliferation of resolutions, meetings, studies and other programmes or activities that will bring about disarmament. To be sure, the various programmes and activities are important and have been carried out effectively. My delegation believes, nevertheless, that it is not just a question of doing things right, but, perhaps more important, of doing the right things.

The persistence of the arms race problem and its related effects means that despite past efforts much more remains to be done to find the right solution. Hence, the need, in our view, is to explore and experiment with new ideas and approaches in the quest for disarmament.

Certainly, the primary responsibility for the arms race rests with the major military Powers, whose co-operation is indispensable for any meaningful action to realize arms restraint and disarmament. At the same time, Cameroon believes that since the effects of the arms race extend to the international community as a whole, including even those States which, like ours, are not involved in the arms race, the problem has become one of concern and interest to all States. In this context, the search for disarmament cannot be left to any group of States or spokesmen. That is why Cameroon continues to support the position consistently taken by the General Assembly that the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the field of disarmament. In our view, because of the seriousness and universality of the effects and consequences of the arms race, in particular the nuclear-arms race, the international community, under the umbrella of the United Nations, has a right - and, indeed, a duty - to participate fully in this field, taking into account the primary responsibility of the Organization for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The United Nations can and should be more active in the field of disarmament, not in terms of additional programmes and activities, but in terms of the ways in which it uses the means already available to it in this field. This calls for clear and precise identification and elaboration of the practical ways and means of discharging the role of the United Nations in disarmament.

In our view, it is essential to define the Organization's role in this field in concrete terms. The Organization must be guided, above all, by a greater sense of realism, pragmatism and priorities. We believe that public confidence in and the credibility of the United Nations as a whole would be further enhanced if there

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were a wide perception that the Organization is successfully accomplishing a few important tasks rather than spending its limited resources on too many inconclusive undertakings. The credibility problem from which international organizations seem to suffer is the result, in my delegation's view, not so much of any significant public drift from internationalism as of a growing sense of disappointment with their performance and achievements.

In the field of international peace and security, including specifically disarmament, the United Nations should, in descending order of priorities, concentrate on: first, preventing war and promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes; secondly, providing a forum for and facilitating, where appropriate, deliberations and negotiations with a view to reaching concrete agreements on specific security- and disarmament-related measures; thirdly, assisting States, as appropriate, in the implementation, monitoring and verification of security- and disarmament-related decisions and agreements; and, fourthly, serving as a central source of data, ideas and other relevant information in support of the disarmament activities of States and of the public as a whole.

The successful fulfilment of these specific tasks would require, among other things, appropriate machinery and other institutional arrangements in which Member States can have confidence, and, above all, the demonstration of political will.

While political will is a necessary, indeed an indispensable, element for the realization of progress, we believe at the same time that the existence or absence of confidence in the machinery of various kinds is also a critical factor. Cameroon, therefore, considers that any review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament must cover also the functioning and achievements of the various institutional arrangements and bodies involved, including the Secretariat. That is the kind of comprehensive approach that we have sought to take in the views and suggestions which we have submitted to the Secretary-General on this issue.

In our suggestion, we have sought to emphasize the link between disarmament and security and, in particular, our conviction that to pursue disarmament in the absence of security is to engage in a futile exercise. Thus, we attach great importance, in the first place, to the strengthening of the role of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General in preventing conflicts, promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force and in general, maintaining international peace and security.

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Moreover, taking into account, inter alia, the fact that the threat of nuclear war is the single most important danger facing global security and mankind as a whole, and that the highest priority in the evolution of a workable and credible system of collective security must therefore involve efforts to prevent nuclear war and eliminate nuclear weapons, we believe that nuclear disarmament negotiations should be conducted under the auspices of the global, universal forum of the United Nations and, specifically within the Security Council, whose permanent members are also the five nuclear-weapon States.

At the same time, Cameroon considers that in other disarmament-related areas, in particular the field of conventional arms limitation and disarmament, more limited approaches, for instance at the bilateral, subregional or regional levels, might offer greater opportunities for progress, at least in the initial stages. Certainly, in the longer term, especially within the context of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, conventional disarmament would also have to be conceived and implemented at the global level to be effective and long-lasting. In the beginning stages, however, it seems to us that the chance of progress will be greater when negotiations on the limitation of conventional arms take fully into account the specific conditions existing in various areas of the world.

The reasons for and causes of war and conflict and the acquisition of armaments differ from situation to situation and region to region. In our region, for example, efforts towards arms limitation and disarmament must take fully into account the geopolitical situation in southern Africa and, specifically the struggle of the peoples of that subregion for independence and freedom from colonial and racist domination, and the yearning of the independent African States of the area for an end to the unprovoked acts of armed aggression frequently mounted against them by the apartheid régime of South Africa.

We should be realistic and recognize the structural and practical limitations of the United Nations. Indeed, the founding fathers of the Organization recognized this when in the Charter they clearly envisaged a role for regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, and specifically in connection with regional arms limitation and disarmament initiatives, my country strongly supports, among other things, the ongoing efforts of the Contadora Group of States in Latin America to regulate arms transfers and promote peace in their area, the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-

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Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, and the decision by the Organization of African Unity to convene, in co-operation with the United Nations, a regional conference on disarmament, development and security in Africa. That conference is scheduled to take place in the Republic of Togo later this year.

Cameroon believes that such regional efforts, the aim of which is to build confidence, promote co-operative relationships and find local solutions to local disputes among the States concerned, can play a vital role in promoting security and the attainment of arms limitation and disarmament. Thus, in our view, they should be encouraged and facilitated by the United Nations within the context of the spirit and the letter of the relevant provisions of the Charter, in particular Chapter VIII, dealing with regional matters. In our view, the United Nations, by using its experience, capabilities and resources to assist specific regional initiatives aimed at resolving specific local problems, would be contributing directly to the maintenance of international peace and security by preventing the possible internationalization of some of those problems, especially since such internationalization can sometimes make the search for solutions very difficult.

Cameroon welcomes the wide-ranging co-operation that has evolved, especially in recent years, between the United Nations and various regional organizations and institutions, including the Organization of African Unity, of which Cameroon is a member. We attach much importance to the continuing expansion of such co-operation to cover also activities and programmes in the security-related field, to ensure that no serious opportunity for peace anywhere in the world is left unexplored or under-explored because of the lack of adequate resources.

Before concluding, I will recapitulate and put in a nutshell the basic thesis and elements of our approach relating to the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

We favour a streamlined, serious, political process of deliberations and negotiations among States towards the attainment of concrete measures of peace, security, disarmament and development. This process should involve, inter alia, the universalization, within the United Nations framework, of efforts towards nuclear disarmament, taking into account, in particular, the urgent and universal nature of the nuclear threat.

In other fields of disarmament, in particular the conventional field, we consider that a wide variety of approaches could be pursued, including, among others, bilateral, subregional, regional and wider global approaches. Such a

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streamlined and serious political process within the context of our approach would, correspondingly, require a streamlined and serious Secretariat, in which Member States could have confidence, charged with assisting and facilitating the deliberations and negotiations of States and with implementing, as appropriate, the various decisions and agreements reached. Our approach, therefore, includes proposals, specifically in the field of disarmament, to streamline Secretariat structures, programmes and activities, enhance efficiency and effectiveness, promote co-ordination and eliminate waste and duplication.

If the statements that have been made so far by various delegates show anything, it is that there is a general desire for the establishment of genuinely stable and peaceful conditions in our world. If the necessary political will is shown, particularly by the nuclear-weapon States, this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission can explore in an effective manner constructive proposals and recommendations to ensure the effectiveness of the role of the United Nations in the disarmament field.

Mr. SHARMA (India): It gives me great pleasure to extend to you, Sir, the felicitations of my delegation on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Disarmament Commission for the current session. We are fully confident that the Commission's work is in good hands with you in the Chair. Your well-known personal charm and patience and your business-like approach will undoubtedly ensure the smooth conclusion of the Commission's work this year. You will have, Sir, the fullest co-operation of my delegation in the performance of your task.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to congratulate all the other officers of the Commission and to assure them of my delegation's co-operation.

The Commission meets at a time when the necessity of dialogue and co-operative efforts is increasingly being acknowledged by all nations, particularly those States with the largest nuclear-weapon arsenals. In a sense, this climate should augur well for every forum in the field of disarmament, be it the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva or the brief session of the Disarmament Commission in New York.

The record of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament, however, has left us with considerable doubts as to whether mere words and inclination towards talks and dialogue can indeed overcome the innumerable real obstacles that lie on the way to disarmament agreements. We have also seen that enthusiasm for talks begins to wane when demands are made for the initiation of purposeful

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negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Perhaps it is here that these three to four weeks of deliberations in the Disarmament Commission can provide a useful impetus by paving the way for the initiation of disarmament negotiations.

The fact that the Commission is a deliberative organ and not a negotiating organ is eloquent enough to dispel any doubts about its role. It is futile to rake up the issue of the hierarchy among these separate disarmament forums when their separate roles are clearly specified per se and in relation to each other. Efforts in the field of disarmament are devoid of any meaning unless these efforts either lead to or contribute to actual negotiations towards concrete and effective measures.

The method adopted in the past by the Commission of deciding its recommendations by consensus has the merit that all of us here bear the responsibility for the Commission's efforts. Yet we find that in the past seven years or so no contribution has been possible for the work of this Commission regarding item 4 of its agenda. As adopted again this year, this item very clearly spells out the goal before us - that is, consideration of various aspects of the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, in order to expedite negotiations aimed at effective elimination of the danger of nuclear war.

The second part of the item - 4(b) - also points to the priorities laid down by the General Assembly at the first special session devoted to disarmament. When we look at the Commission's work in the overall perspective of the complete stagnation of multilateral efforts towards nuclear disarmament the alarming dimensions of our failure here begins to show themselves. Can there be any disarmament forum today which can afford to ignore or underplay the most pressing task before all of us - the elimination of the danger of a nuclear war, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and the complete abolition of nuclear weapons?

In the past seven years the nuclear problem has been rendered far more intractable than it was at the time of the first special session devoted to disarmament. The nuclear-arms race has registered many more escalations both in quantity and in quality. The willingness of the nuclear-weapon Powers to listen to the opinions of the vast majority of mankind which was reflected in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament has of late been on the decline. It has become impossible even to discuss nuclear disarmament issues with full participation by the nuclear-weapon Powers. In the Conference on Disarmament all work relating to items 1, 2 and 3 of its agenda remains stagnated because of

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the persistent refusal of some of the nuclear-weapon Powers to commence and further serious work on the issues involved. Here in the Commission we find an inexplicable indifference to nuclear issues. And in the First Committee of the General Assembly the resolutions devoted to concrete action towards nuclear disarmament are met with complete opposition by some of the States that are most important in that regard. The complementary nature of deliberations and negotiations is yet to be made use of in this crucial field of nuclear disarmament.

Our delegation will contribute, as in the past, to the Commission's work on each of its agenda items. Of late, however, we have noticed a tendency to clutter up the agenda with too many issues, which eventually take time away from those demanding urgent attention. The exercise of reviewing the United Nations role in the field of disarmament ought to give us an opportunity to examine the basic political factors responsible for the current state of stagnation in nuclear disarmament efforts and disarmament efforts in general. If that exercise, on the other hand, gets bogged down in a discussion of the United Nations machinery for disarmament, it will be another example of the dissipation of our time and energy in a fruitless venture.

The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament prescribed suitable machinery for the implementation of the Programme of Action contained therein. That machinery has functioned reasonably well in the past seven years. The root cause of the dismal record in disarmament efforts lies in the lack of the political will on the part of the nuclear-weapon States and their allies to come to grips with the main issues. Unless those States and their allies demonstrate determination to make progress, discussion of the adequacy or otherwise of the existing institutional machinery on disarmament will not be relevant. In fact, an attempt to tamper with this machinery, which only a few years ago we all considered to be the most suitable and appropriate for the purpose, may even go against our interest.

Our delegation was among those that sponsored at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly the resolution on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade. We consider that exercise to be timely. A mid-Decade review and appraisal of the Declaration gives us one more opportunity to see what has been wanting in our efforts. This will also help us rededicate ourselves with renewed vigour to

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pursuing international co-operative efforts to bring about disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular.

We do not think that the passing of the years has in any way eroded the priorities which we attached to the nuclear issues in disarmament. If anything, the lack of progress in the high-priority issues only further underscores the urgency of effective action towards the conclusion of a comprehensive-test-ban treaty, halting the nuclear-arms race and proceeding towards nuclear disarmament.

While reviewing the record of the past five years, we cannot but note with deep dismay how the second special session devoted to disarmament failed completely to carry out any of the substantive tasks on its agenda. The failure of the second special session was most disconcerting, because at that session the General Assembly could not even do minimal justice to the profound concern and anxiety of people all over the world about the threat of a nuclear war. The 1980s have also shown how the attitude and security doctrines of the nuclear-weapon Powers have effectively thwarted the negotiation of any new disarmament agreement. What is worse, the allegations and counter-allegations about violations of past agreements which have been traded between the two major nuclear Powers have served to jeopardize even existing treaties and agreements.

At the turn of the decade a number of negotiations were under way on crucial disarmament issues - for instance, a comprehensive test ban, the banning of anti-satellite weapons, and so on. Subsequently, the suspension of those negotiations and the adoption by some of the negotiating States of rigid positions on the issues involved led to the frustration of efforts in other forums to resume multilateral negotiations on those issues. A retrospective of the past five years also shows how, despite the repeated endorsement of an overwhelming majority of the Member States of the United Nations, some nuclear-weapon States and their allies have persistently refused to respond to the recommendations of the General Assembly by rejecting the negotiation of serious disarmament agreements, and how the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body, has, as a result, been unable to commence negotiations on measures for the prevention of nuclear war, on a treaty on a nuclear-test ban and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The bilateral negotiations between the two major nuclear-weapon States have continued only intermittently during the past five years and there, too, the scope of the negotiations has been severely limited. The bilateral negotiations have

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failed to halt the nuclear-arms race because those negotiations have, a priori, ruled that out. In spite of their inherent limitations, those negotiations have been exaggerated in importance, to the exclusion of all other efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament. The United Nations, which according to the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament, has not even received so much as a report on these negotiations. As for the world at large, it has yet to witness any concrete action to reduce the nuclear threat. While we greatly appreciate the declaration of the commitment of the bilateral negotiators to elimination of nuclear arms everywhere, and while we look forward to their actions with hope, we are acutely conscious of the urgency of effective concrete action to initiate the process which would ultimately lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth.

In this context it is crucial for all of us to emphasize that issues in disarmament must be taken on their own merits. Nuclear-weapon systems and arsenals must be abolished not because they are possessed by members of one or the other military alliance but because of the threat that flows from the very nature of these weapons. It is immensely regrettable that the alarming factual content of the nuclear issues in disarmament is being deliberately obscured and enormous pressure is being put on all nations to see these crucial issues in terms of over-simplified East-West bloc politics. Such trends must be stopped forthwith if nuclear disarmament and disarmament in general are to be given any chance in future.

For the rest of the Second Disarmament Decade it is absolutely necessary for the international community to endorse a minimum programme of action for immediate implementation. The very minimum of concrete action we must take in these remaining years should include conclusion of a treaty on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon-test ban, negotiation of instruments for prevention of an arms race in outer space and urgent agreement on adoption of appropriate and practical measures for prevention of nuclear war. Most central among these measures for prevention of nuclear war are a nuclear freeze and prohibition on the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

As the dark clouds of an inexorable nuclear catastrophe steadily haunt our world, the only silver lining comes from the groundswell of public opinion throughout the globe against these weapons of global annihilation. Over the past five or six years millions of people in many nations have suddenly been made aware

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with the utmost horror of their common nuclear predicament and the monumental folly of the nuclear-weapon States which consider these weapons of global suicide to be the weapons of their security. The sheer growth of their nuclear arsenals has belied all previous claims about the utility of these weapons, and people all over the world now realize this more than ever before. As the Delhi Declaration states,

"it is imperative to find a remedy to the existing situation where hundreds of billions of dollars, amounting to approximately one and a half million per minute, are spent annually on weapons. This stands in dramatic contrast to the poverty, and in some cases misery, in which two thirds of the world population live."

Our endeavours in the Commission must ensure that this central problem of our times is resolved without any delay - and resolved it can be. We have no doubt about it, no matter how complicated the arguments may be of the proponents or apologists for nuclear weapons. Progress in all other issues in disarmament depends, directly or indirectly, on the abolition of nuclear weapons. All activity in other fields of disarmament, while important in itself, stands to be nullified in its aim and purpose if the nuclear issues remain neglected.

Mr. ALATAS (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, let me begin by expressing my delegation's great satisfaction at seeing you presiding over our deliberations. We are happy that this year the Disarmament Commission is chaired by an outstanding representative of the Asian region and of a fraternal country, Pakistan, with which Indonesia has always maintained the most cordial and friendly relations. Being aware of your vast experience and expertise in multilateral diplomacy, we are confident that under your leadership we shall achieve substantive progress and success in our work. I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to extend my sincere felicitations to the other officers of the Commission on their elections.

Mindful of your exhortation not to indulge in a general debate, I shall confine my remarks to only some aspects of the items before us, while reserving more detailed comments on specific questions for our deliberations in the Working Groups.

No one can deny that the most important question confronting the world today is how to stop and reverse the ongoing arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race. In this and other forums in the past, Indonesia has been on record as emphasizing the urgent need to initiate a process of negotiations on the cessation

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of the nuclear-arms race, on nuclear disarmament and on measures for the prevention of nuclear war. It is most distressing, therefore, that despite more than two decades of concerted and determined efforts the international community has not been able to take even the initial steps leading towards negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

The world continues to be confronted by a seemingly unstoppable proliferation of nuclear weapons, now threatening to extend to outer space as well, and by excruciatingly slow progress in the multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. Hence the heightened sense of insecurity which pervades the entire international community, and the growing realization that, in the event of a war in which nuclear weapons were to be used, world-wide catastrophe would be inevitable.

Indeed the pleas of mankind for a halt to this headlong rush towards self-extinction have over the years found expression in successive documents adopted by our world Organization, the Non-aligned Movement and scores of international conferences and meetings. These concerns were most emphatically reiterated in the Declaration adopted on the occasion of the observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Asian-African Conference, which my Government had the privilege to host at Bandung in April this year. Delegations from Africa and Asia assembled on that occasion, inter alia, expressed, and now I quote from that Declaration:

"their deep concern at the accelerated arms race, particularly in the nuclear field ... In this regard they emphatically reiterated that while the primary responsibility to prevent a nuclear catastrophe rests with the nuclear-weapon States, it cannot be made the exclusive concern of those States, for world disarmament, peace and security are the responsibility of mankind as a whole". (A/40/276, appendix, para. 7)

In conformity with the overwhelming desire of the international community to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race, the Declaration further urged the nuclear Powers to cease all nuclear-weapon tests and the production of nuclear weapons, to commit themselves not to use them and to proceed immediately with negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

In this context, Indonesia, like others, has welcomed the commencement of negotiations in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union on a complex of questions concerning space and nuclear arms. We know that these negotiations still have some way to go, but we hope that they will yield significant results and

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lead to a progressive relaxation of tensions, in the common interest of all nations and all peoples.

Indonesia regards the question of the prevention of nuclear war as being of paramount importance and as affecting all mankind. This task acquires even greater urgency given the continued emphasis on doctrines of fighting a nuclear war and other strategic concepts premised on the use of nuclear weapons. The situation is further compounded by particularly alarming technological innovations in recent years, such as the compression of time in the delivery of missiles to their targets and the resultant launch-on-warning policies. These developments reveal the growing vulnerability of command, control and communications systems, thus further increasing the risk of accidental nuclear war arising out of technical malfunction, human error or political misjudgement. We believe there are now sufficiently concrete proposals and suggestions before us for us to start serious work on nuclear war prevention, including a freeze on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems and the prohibition of the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. These, we believe, should be followed by substantial arms reduction negotiations in the context of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have so far directed my remarks to the nuclear aspects of the arms race and disarmament. This should not be construed to mean that we are oblivious to the danger posed by an unbridled conventional arms race.

We must note, however, that the rapid accumulation and further qualitative development of these armaments are being pursued by the States which already possess the largest military arsenals and which develop, produce, stockpile and sell by far the greatest proportion of these armaments. It is also an undeniable fact that, in general, developing countries do not possess the capability to produce armaments and are thus dependent on the purchase of weapons to acquire the means for self-defence. Moreover, the proportion of arms purchased by these developing countries pales in significance in comparison to the arms acquired and deployed by members of military blocs. It stands to reason, then, that negotiations on the reduction of conventional armaments should focus on the major producers and users rather than on seeking to deflect attention by interjecting issues that are secondary to the primary cause of the conventional arms race.

Nor can my delegation accept the contention that conventional armaments per se are as great a threat to the survival of mankind as are nuclear weapons, and that

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conventional armaments in the hands of third-world countries in some way pose a threat to peace and security as great as or greater than that posed by the nuclear and conventional weapons possessed by the great Powers. It is our view, therefore, that if we are to make progress in our work on this important subject we should return to the fundamental framework and priorities upon which we all agreed in the Final Document.

Yet another shadow that continues to cast a pall over international peace and security is the reckless pursuit of a nuclear-weapon capability by the racist régime in South Africa. It is now generally acknowledged that Pretoria has the military and economic means to acquire nuclear explosive devices enabling it to produce nuclear weapons. Unquestionably, the possession of nuclear weapons by South Africa would pose an unprecedented threat not only to the States of Africa but to the world at large.

The General Assembly has already expressed in no uncertain terms its strong censure of the nuclear policies of the South African racist régime, especially considering its abhorrent apartheid policy, its continuing illegal occupation of Namibia and its repeated acts of aggression against its neighbours. Our apprehension, like that of so many other Member States, is also based on Pretoria's obstinate refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all of its nuclear installations under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. South Africa's reliance on brute military force in its relations with regional States and in enforcing security within its own borders, in utter disregard of the sanctity of the United Nations Charter, clearly establishes the inherent instability of that régime, which is likely to provoke it to use its nuclear capability, if it possesses such a capability, to produce nuclear weapons in a desperate attempt to perpetuate apartheid and its hegemonist designs on the region.

South Africa, therefore, must be compelled to accept an internationally binding commitment to non-proliferation and to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. To this end, the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa must be extended to include all materials and technology that have a nuclear application. It is imperative that those States that continue to turn a blind eye to the dangerous consequences of the situation cease any assistance which would contribute either directly or indirectly to the apartheid régime's nuclear-weapons capability.

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As an archipelagic State situated at the crossroads of two oceans and of important international waterways, Indonesia is gravely disturbed by the increasing build-up of naval forces in the world and the development of new naval arms systems, including maritime nuclear-weapon systems. In past years, these particular aspects of the overall arms race have hardly figured on the international agenda of arms control and disarmament negotiations. It is undeniable, however, that the continuous expansion and modernization of the navies of, especially, the two major Powers and the increased sophistication and deployment of naval-based weapons systems are adding a new and potentially destabilizing dimension to the global arms race. My delegation, therefore, welcomed the international community's resurgent realization of this fact as evidenced, inter alia, by the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 38/188 G and 38/188 F in 1983.

As members are aware, resolution 38/188 G requested the Secretary-General to carry out, with the assistance of governmental experts, a comprehensive study on all aspects of the naval arms race with a view to analysing their possible implications for a wide spectrum of issues. Furthermore, the study is to be directed specifically towards facilitating the identification of possible areas for disarmament and confidence-building measures - in other words, towards curbing the naval arms race through a process of multilateral negotiations, which is the object of item 8 on our current agenda.

As a delegation actively participating in the work of the expert group and thus committed to ensuring the comprehensive as well as action-oriented nature of the study, Indonesia believes that an in-depth discussion of the issues by the Commission could proceed more effectively if it were to be based on the report of the expert group scheduled to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at the forthcoming fortieth session.

An important gauge of the enormity of the arms race is the money allotted to military budgets. A telling indicator is that year after year an ever greater proportion of the gross national product of States is being absorbed by military budgets. This has not merely taken a heavy toll of national economies, but also continued to retard world economic recovery and development. It is a truism that the budgets of the militarily significant Powers are greater than those of the rest of the world combined. Hence it is reasonable to expect that those States should assume responsibility for taking the initiative on this admittedly complex

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question. In the years that this item has been on the agenda, some progress has been made, on which my delegation believes renewed efforts could be based now in order to conclude our deliberations on the issue.

In reviewing the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament it is gratifying to note that the Disarmament Commission has proved its utility in elaborating and defining various issues. It has formulated the draft elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament to be considered by the Conference on Disarmament, it has identified various goals to be pursued within the Second Disarmament Decade and it is close to finalizing the elaboration of guidelines on confidence-building measures. Its recommendations reflect fully the growing alarm of the international community over the continuing arms race, and the sense of urgency attached to achieving progress on disarmament. In line with this approach, the Commission should continue to define and elaborate proposed measures and thereby play a more active role in preparing the ground for subsequent negotiations leading towards concrete agreements. It could, for example, carry out an in-depth analysis of the reports of various groups of experts set up under the auspices of the United Nations in order to identify areas for negotiations. The Commission could also assist the General Assembly in making its own assessment of the status of and the improvements necessary in various agreements and treaties that have already been reached. Finally, it can clarify a number of issues which at present cloud the endeavours that are being made bilaterally, regionally or globally to achieve the goals stipulated in the Final Document.

Admittedly, all of this requires, first and foremost, the unqualified acceptance by the major Powers of the Disarmament Commission's unique role and mandate. Indeed, the experience of recent years has confirmed that disarmament is too vital a task to be left exclusively to the major nuclear Powers and the alliances headed by them. It is in this context that multilateral negotiations on all issues relating to disarmament under the aegis of the United Nations should be the rule rather than the exception. It is only through the multilateral approach that the larger context of safeguarding global peace and security, rather than the narrow confines of great-Power rivalry and confrontation, can be kept in focus.

In this the fortieth anniversary year of the founding of the Organization it is incumbent upon all of us to commit ourselves to further enhancing the effectiveness of the machinery and procedures of the multilateral disarmament

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process in dealing with the multitude of issues that confront the international community.

The Indonesian delegation subscribes firmly to the view that the Disarmament Commission can make a constructive contribution to progress towards the goal of nuclear and conventional disarmament. That the work of the Disarmament Commission is important needs no emphasis. For our part, we pledge our continuing support in our common endeavours to enhance the Commission's role in multilateral disarmament efforts.

Mr. BENNOUNA (Morocco) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to say how pleased my delegation is to see you presiding over the Commission at this session. The unanimous support for your election to guide the work of a body which deals with key problems of our time is a tribute to you and your country, Pakistan, with which Morocco is happy to maintain close bilateral relations to co-operate in specific international action in this Organization, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As you rightly stressed in your opening statement, the Disarmament Commission is resuming its work this year at a time of promising developments in the vital area of the limitation of armaments and disarmament. The resumption of consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear and space weapons justifies optimism regarding possible improvements in East-West relations, which in turn would have a beneficial effect on the entire international community.

My delegation hopes that this new climate will provide an opportunity for our Commission to make progress in successfully fulfilling its mandate. That would make it possible to restore the prestige attached to multilateral negotiations and to reaffirm our obligations under the Charter and the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. At that session the General Assembly gave our Commission special responsibilities, calling upon it in particular to work out recommendations on the especially complex problems of disarmament and arms limitation.

We are convinced, however, that that objective can be achieved only if our deliberations proceed constructively on the basis of a realistic programme, and only if Member States, particularly those possessing nuclear weapons and the biggest arsenals, demonstrate a firmer political will.

It goes without saying that one of the most important questions that our Commission must deal with at this session as a matter of extreme urgency is the

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preparation of specific, mutually acceptable recommendations on the prevention of nuclear war and on nuclear disarmament.

The facts and figures in United Nations documents are disturbing and suggest the need for constant vigilance, for at the present time there exist more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, equal to 16 billion tons of TNT. Thus every human being is in a sense sitting on 3.5 tons of explosives.

My country has been a member of the Geneva Committee since its beginning and we have worked constantly, particularly in the Group of 21, to reconcile the views of the Powers and for the adoption of agreements that would lead to the attainment of our objective. It is in the same spirit that we are working in this Commission, in the conviction that our recommendations, which are the expression of international opinion, could have a beneficial influence on the process of concluding binding commitments.

Of course, the results in Geneva do not reflect the constant efforts of our Organization since its creation. Far from discouraging us, that should encourage us always to remember the disarmament principles that form the basis of international peace and security.

As a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Morocco is compelled to express its serious concern over and its opposition to both the vertical and the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. We hold firmly to the commitments to which we subscribed in the Final Document, which states, inter alia:

"The achievement of nuclear disarmament will require urgent negotiation of agreements at appropriate stages and with adequate measures of verification satisfactory to the States concerned". (resolution S-10/2, para. 50)

We believe that it is a matter of extreme urgency for our Commission to reach a compromise on concrete recommendations on this subject. At the last session, the non-aligned countries submitted a list of proposals which today seem even more important if they are considered with greater attention and more determination.

Nuclear research should be oriented towards peaceful uses in so far as possible in order to accelerate the development of poor countries and reduce poverty throughout the world.

The guarantees afforded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are of fundamental importance in this connection, and my country has already taken the initiative in concluding guarantee agreements with that institution.

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As part of our global approach to the problem, our Commission has an obligation to stress the link between the limitation of nuclear weapons and conventional weapons.

The further development of conventional weapons must also be controlled in order to prevent the imbalances which are often the source of difficulties and the cause of flare-ups of various kinds.

Finally, expenditures for nuclear weapons have reached a considerable level and now exceed \$800 billion a year. At the same time, the flow of capital for development is being reduced. It is the Commission's duty, therefore, to draw the attention of people once again to this great contradiction and to call for concrete action so that there can be a new balance in support of development. We must prepare the groundwork for the forthcoming Conference on Disarmament and Development which the Assembly decided to convene on the initiative of France.

The African continent is particularly vulnerable to the arms race. We would in particular like to stress that the growth of South Africa's nuclear capacity poses a threat to all African countries fighting apartheid and racial discrimination, and that is quite clear in the Secretary-General's note which concludes, inter alia, that South Africa continues to have the technical capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons.

My country, which has constantly supported the plan to denuclearize Africa, calls for the support of the entire international community for the adoption of binding agreements in this connection.

My delegation expresses the hope that the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and the celebration, only yesterday, of the victory over nazism and fascism will represent an important stage in the implementation of the objectives of the Second Disarmament Decade.

On that occasion it will be necessary to strengthen the universal role of our Organization which undeniably represents the ideal forum for the expression of views of all nations, great and small.

The CHAIRMAN: I will now call on the representative of the United States who wishes to make a statement in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. LOWITZ (United States of America): I would like to respond to the preceding comments of some other delegations on the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war in Europe. Indeed, yesterday and today we mark the anniversary of a significant event of this century: the end of the Second World War in Europe. It

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is not, however, the anniversary of the end of the Second World War. That conflict continued for several more months in other areas with many casualties occurring during the period. If it is our purpose to ensure that we do not forget the tragedy and suffering of that war, then we must be careful to remember the actual end of the war.

However, the United States does believe that it is right and proper solemnly to observe the end of hostilities in Europe, and we wish to support the comments of those who have spoken before us to that end. Indeed, at the recently concluded seven-nation economic conference in Bonn, in which the United States participated, a political declaration was adopted which remembered

"in grief all those who lost their lives in that time, whether by acts of war or as victims of inhumanity, repression and tyranny. We acknowledge the duty we owe to their memories and to all those who follow after them to uphold peace, freedom and justice in our countries and in the world."

Unfortunately, some statements made in this hall appear less intended to honour the victims of the war than to imply that one country mainly provided the decisive forces for the defeat of European fascism. We cannot allow such remarks to pass unchallenged. The United States recognizes the vital role played by each allied country. We note that the success was the result of a co-operative endeavour which relied on the efforts of many allied nations.

Prior to 1941, the United States provided material aid through the Lend-Lease Programme to the allies in the joint effort to defeat fascism. After our entry into the war, our contribution in combat was significant. I would also like to note that other allied countries came to the rescue of Poland as early as 1939 and stood alone for more than a year during an early crucial stage of the war. This happened while an infamous non-aggression pact remained in force between two European Powers.

The United States regrets that the commemoration of this anniversary has been turned into an occasion which could open old wounds. We would prefer to concentrate on allied co-operation and the accomplishments of the post-war period, to highlight reconciliation and hope for the future.

Let us join together to make the lasting legacy of that war the recognition of the potential of nations co-operating to achieve a goal. Let us reflect on the spirit which 40 years ago gave rise to the founding of the United Nations itself. It is this spirit upon which we should focus. We are disappointed that some have

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taken this opportunity to continue the debate on current security issues and cast aspersions on Western security policy. The United States and its NATO allies have accepted a responsibility to preserve peace. As recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, it is a responsibility we all share. It should be apparent that meaningful commitment to discharging this responsibility would require either the maintenance of military force capable of deterring aggression or the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

On many occasions, representatives of NATO member Governments have stressed the defensive nature of the alliance and the fact that none of its weapons will ever be used except in defence against aggression. Still we are repeatedly accused of developing and maintaining a first-strike force. This is simply not true. We are determined to preserve the peace and protect the democratic freedoms secured by the sacrifices of those who have come before us, including those who perished in the Second World War, by responding to the challenge posed by a military Power whose intentions are unclear. To that end, each of us in the alliance will work to maintain and strengthen a stable military balance at the lowest possible levels of forces. We do not seek military superiority for ourselves; we are prepared to pursue a high-level dialogue to deal with the profound differences dividing East and West. We strongly support efforts to strengthen the peace and enhance deterrence through meaningful arms control negotiations.

The United States is also determined to find continuing expression of the spirit of co-operation which existed during the War in its work with the international community in the pursuit of common noble goals. Past co-operation has laid the foundation for the emergence of strong representative democracies in Western Europe and Asia; it has fostered spectacular economic growth and has led to the establishment of an international political framework which, though not perfect, has contributed to improving the human condition. We continue to try to encourage co-operation in the interest of a more stable, secure and humane world, particularly through efforts in the field of human rights.

One important aspect of the victory over fascism was the defeat of an ideology which, among other things, attempted to justify the subordination of basic human rights to other, supposedly higher, goals. As noted in the Bonn declaration to which I referred earlier,

(Mr. Lowitz, United States)

"We are proud that the Governments of our countries owe their legitimacy to the will of our people, expressed in free elections. We are proud that our people are free to say and write what they will, to practise the religions they profess and to travel where they will. We are committed to assuring the maintenance of societies in which individual initiative and enterprise may flourish and the ideals of social justice, obligation and rights may be pursued."

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We wish first of all to express our pleasure at the fact that, yesterday and today, a significant number of delegations mentioned the historic fortieth anniversary of the end of the war in Europe, as you yourself did, Mr. Chairman, at this morning's meeting. We take this opportunity to thank the delegations of fraternal countries which congratulated the Soviet Union and other States of the anti-Hitler coalition and all those who participated in that struggle against fascism and nazism.

In our statements we have repeatedly affirmed that the Soviet Union and the Soviet people profoundly respect the memory of all those who fought fascism - all, without exception, whatever country they may have come from - whether Soviet fighters, German anti-Fascists, American infantrymen or Chinese soldiers. We honour their memory and their contribution and, as I have said, we shall never forget them.

We lay no claim to a preponderant role. Unfortunately, history was such that we had to pay more than other peoples. We lost 20 million; the United States lost 400,000. We spent \$128 billion; the United States spent \$1.2 billion. These are historical facts. We are happy that the people of the United States did not have to pay the price we did, but we would ask the representative of the United States at least to recognize the contribution made by the Russian Soviet people. We would ask him to remember what was written by Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, both of whom I had occasion to quote at the Conference on Disarmament. I do not like to repeat myself, but I just want to recall one congratulatory telegram sent by President Truman. He wrote the following to the Head of the Soviet Government:

"I should like to transmit to you, and through you to your heroic people, the heartfelt congratulations of the American people and Government. We highly appreciate and commend the great contribution made by the Soviet Union in the cause of civilization and freedom."

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We are not, as claimed by one representative who spoke before me, being bitter about this. We are not bitter and have no desire to express bitterness about this. No, we truly see this day as a day of triumph: the triumph of a policy of coexistence, a policy of co-operation. There is no erasing from history that day in May which saw the signing of a Soviet-British treaty on friendship and mutual assistance. We shall never forget that in June 1942 an agreement was signed by the Soviet Union and the United States on economic co-operation and mutual assistance. We shall never forget that on 10 December 1944, for the first time in history, a Soviet-French agreement on mutual assistance and alliance was signed.

Those are the times we are recalling. We want those times to return again; we want our alliance against the ideologies of fascism and nazism to turn now against nuclear war and other common threats. We want that alliance to be universal, with no opponents, encompassing all of mankind.

In conclusion, I am very happy that my statement moved the representative of the United States to address those events. I and all others present are well aware of those who suffered. The unconditional surrender of Japan came later, in August, but it is the end of the war in Europe that we were talking about. It will soon be time for us to celebrate the tremendous victory of the Asian peoples and all other peoples who fought against the threat of Japanese militarism in the Far East, and we shall do so at the appropriate time.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.