DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 20 May 1985, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan)

- Curbing the naval arms race: limitation and reduction of naval armaments and extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans

- Proposal by the representative of Cyprus

  (a) 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

  (b) Consideration of the agenda items contained in section III of resolution 33/71 H, with the aim of elaborating, within the framework and in accordance with priorities established at the tenth special session, a general approach to negotiations on nuclear and conventional disarmament

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

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- Reduction of military budgets

(a) Harmonization of views on concrete steps to be undertaken by States regarding a gradual, agreed reduction of military budgets and reallocation of resources now being used for military purposes to economic and social development, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries, noting the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

(b) Examination and identification of effects, ways and means of achieving agreements to freeze, reduce or otherwise restrain, in a balanced manner, military expenditures, including adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned, taking into account the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 34/83 F, 35/142 A, 36/82 A, 37/95 A, 38/184 A and 39/64 A, with a view to identifying and elaborating the principles which should govern further actions of States in the field of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures, keeping in mind the possibility of embodying such principles into a suitable document at an appropriate stage.

- Substantive consideration of the question of South Africa's nuclear capability as requested by the General Assembly and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid (resolutions 37/74 B, 38/181 B and 39/61 B and document A/CN.10/4).

- Organization of work.
The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

CURBING THE NAVAL ARMS RACE: LIMITATION AND REDUCTION OF NAVAL ARMAMENTS AND EXTENSION OF CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES TO SEAS AND OCEANS

The CHAIRMAN: As decided at our plenary meeting on Friday, 17 May, we have set a deadline of 12 noon today for inscription on the list of speakers for this item, as well as for agenda item 9, regarding the review of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade.

As members will recall, discussion in the plenary meeting is part of the consideration of agenda item 8. At the conclusion of this discussion I shall undertake the preparation of the report in consultation with friends of the Chairman and interested delegations.
Mr. KONSTANTINOV (Bulgaria): As is well known, on the basis of an initiative of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, with certain other countries as co-sponsors, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 38/188 F and 39/151 I, entitled "Curbing the naval arms race: limitation and reduction of naval armaments and extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans".

In submitting that proposal, the sponsors were guided by the view that effective measures on limitation of the arms race, which is ruinous for mankind, and the elimination of all sources of the threat of war are necessary in the interest of peace and international security. This fully applies also to the naval arms race, which for decades has remained outside the framework of the general efforts to bring about disarmament.

The role of naval forces in the overall military strategy of States has been steadily growing. Profound changes have come about in the development of the operational capability of naval forces, and their strategic role has increased. The deployment of nuclear missiles as armaments has given naval forces a war potential far surpassing everything known in the past.

New trends in the naval strategy of the imperialist States have in turn stimulated the development of naval armaments. The deployment of more sophisticated armaments and methods of waging war at sea and from the sea has still further increased the danger of war and threatens the security of all States. New types of naval fleet units designed to carry out military operations in the explosive areas of the world, which in many cases are at a considerable distance from one's own shores, are being created and old ones are being modernized. Programmes for expanding the number of naval vessels of all the main classes, including aircraft carriers and the different types of support vessels, are proceeding at full speed.

The naval arms race, which has been thus accelerated in recent years, has led to a greater increase in military expenditures, which impose a heavy burden on all peoples of the world and divert considerable new resources from social development programmes.

Another essential aspect of the problem is the increased naval presence and activities in a number of important areas of the world's oceans, particularly in areas of conflict and tension. We are observing an increase in the number of cases involving the use of naval formations as a show of force and as a means of interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign States, particularly developing countries, threatening their vital interests, independence and territorial
integrity. The mere presence of such large naval forces in explosive areas of the world could lead to further aggravation of the situation in a given region. We have all seen such developments in such areas as the eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Caribbean.

Bearing in mind that the major part of naval forces and armaments is located in international waters, this represents significant, specific feature from which derives a special threat to all those who use international waters for travel and trade. The increasing naval activity and the use of naval units for blockades and reprisals obviously have an extremely adverse effect also on the security of the busy sea lanes which traverse these areas. The military presence in maritime transport areas increases the vulnerability of shipping and prevents the unimpeded use by all States of the seas and oceans for peaceful navigation and trade, and the exploration and exploitation of the wealth of the world oceans for peaceful purposes. A large number of States are justifiably alarmed at the serious threat to their security caused by the proximity to their territories of numerous naval units, naval bases and strongholds of the imperialist Powers. In all this military fever they see the revival of the old gunboat diplomacy of colonial times. This time, however, the old gunboats have been replaced by powerful naval units with sophisticated armaments, including nuclear armaments, aircraft and marines on board.

This dangerous development of naval armaments cannot but give rise to serious concern and great alarm among those who are sincerely interested in eliminating the threat to international peace and security and achieving success in the efforts to bring about disarmament. It is therefore vitally necessary to undertake at the international level urgent measures to curb the naval arms race and to limit and reduce naval armaments, quantitatively and qualitatively, while all this is still possible. Urgent steps to restore confidence in the freedom of navigation and to create conditions for substantially limiting naval activities must also be taken.

The growing danger of the increasing naval presence and activities is not of a limited regional nature. It has assumed global proportions and includes all parts of the world's seas and oceans - the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Persian Gulf and so on.

Bulgaria, together with other socialist countries, has sought to promote the adoption of measures to limit naval activities and curb the naval arms race. A number of concrete proposals designed to achieve this goal have been put forward,
individually and collectively, in order to reduce the level of military confrontation on the seas.

The Warsaw Declaration of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty Organization, adopted in May 1980, emphasized that it was necessary "In the interests of peace and the stabilization of the international situation, as well as in the interests of ensuring the safe and unimpeded use of major international maritime communications, to begin consideration, in such a forum as the United Nations, of the question of restricting and lowering the level of military presence and military activities in appropriate regions ..." (A/35/237, annex II, p. 15)

In the Prague Political Declaration of January 1983, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty called for the opening of talks on the limitation of naval activities, on the limitation and reduction of naval armaments and on the extension of confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans.

At its thirty-eighth session, the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the initiative of several countries, including the People's Republic of Bulgaria, adopted resolution 38/188 P, whereby the question of curbing the naval arms race was included for the first time on its agenda. In that resolution, the General Assembly acknowledged the necessity of opening talks on this question with the participation of States possessing powerful naval forces, particularly the nuclear-weapon States. Moreover, the General Assembly called upon those States to desist from expanding their naval activities to areas of conflict and tension or to areas far from their own shores. Taking duly into consideration the necessity of studying further the nature, scope and subject of the proposed talks, the resolution called upon Member States to communicate their views and recommendations relating to this question.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in pursuance of that resolution, circulated a report (A/39/419 and Corr.1) containing the replies of Member States. Additional replies have been forwarded to the Secretary-General during the current year and have been distributed in documents A/CN.10/70 and Add.1 and 2.

It is worth noting that those replies show unequivocally that the majority of Member States are sincerely interested in starting a process designed to lead to agreement on mutually acceptable measures on the limitation of naval armaments and naval activities and the building of confidence. Moreover, the replies of a number of countries, including one nuclear-weapon State and major naval Power - namely the
Soviet Union — contain many ideas and concrete proposals relating to the subject and the character of the proposed talks and the measures to be adopted. My delegation is of the opinion that this report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations has laid a solid foundation for a broader and more businesslike exchange of views on the question of future joint efforts in this direction.
This year, for the first time, the question of curbing the naval arms race has been included in the agenda of our Commission.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 39/151 I, requested that the Disarmament Commission consider the question of curbing the naval arms race and report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session. In accordance with that appeal, the Bulgarian delegation, on behalf of the delegations of the German Democratic Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and on its own behalf, has submitted a working paper to the Disarmament Commission in document A/CN.10/73 of 14 May 1985. In the view of the authors of the working paper, the consideration of this item in the Commission could create the opportunity for adopting a concerted approach and for identifying areas of common interest with a view to proceeding to direct negotiations at a later stage with the participation of all interested States. All proposals put forward in the Commission will be a valuable contribution to that end. This applies both to the substance of the concrete measures to be undertaken in the naval field and to the ways and means of making further endeavours in this respect.

All relevant measures to be envisaged in our discussion in this Commission should, of course, be in full conformity with the principle of undiminished security, taking into account all factors determining the relationship of forces at sea, as well as other ways of limiting weapons affecting naval forces in one way or another. Only thus will it be possible to reach lasting and effective agreements in such an important area, affecting the security of all States.

So far as concrete proposals are concerned, the working paper contains some suggestions for our deliberations.

In full accordance with the fundamental provisions of General Assembly resolutions 38/188 F and 39/151 I, the consideration of the question of the non-expansion of naval activities of States in areas of conflict or tension is one of the measures that should be given high priority. A situation in which the naval fleets of the great Powers are deployed for long periods far from their shores cannot be considered to be normal. It would therefore be advisable during further negotiations to seek a joint solution which would eliminate this situation. Steps to bring about withdrawal of ships equipped with nuclear weapons from certain areas of the world's oceans and to establish limits on the presence of certain types of ships in these areas would also be an important stabilizing factor.
Measures to limit naval armaments at the global level cannot, of course, be adopted and implemented without consideration of the efforts made in other directions to limit armaments which, in one degree or another, affect the naval forces of States.

It would be highly desirable at this stage to give consideration to confidence-building measures the basic objective of which would be to assist in averting conflict situations and in strengthening the security of sea lanes.

Discussion of the proposals contained in the working paper, and also of all other views and proposals that may be presented in the Disarmament Commission, must be aimed at the preparation of the conditions for the transition to negotiations, with a view to reaching agreements on a number of specific measures concerning the mutual limitation of naval activities and the limitation and reduction of naval armaments, as well as concerning appropriate confidence-building measures both in general and in connection with specific areas. The study carried out by the United Nations in regard to the naval arms race, parallel with the discussion in the Disarmament Commission, should also be aimed at the achievement of a concrete result: the beginning of negotiations on this subject. It is also essential to make full use of the possibilities of the regional approach to the limitation of naval activities and naval armaments.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, as one of the initiators and advocates of the active consideration of the question of curbing the naval arms race, is well aware of the complexity of that question. However, as is pointed out in the reply of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Petar Mladenov, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

"... the complexity of the questions related to curbing the naval arms race cannot justify inaction. Experience has shown that by means of negotiations it is always possible to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution in the interests of peace and general security provided that all States concerned have the necessary political will and take a constructive approach".

Mr. PAVLOVSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): the delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic supports a thorough discussion of the issues relating to curbing the naval arms race, limitation and reduction of naval armaments, limitation of the naval activities of States and extension of
confidence-building measures to the seas and oceans. As has already been emphasized by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty in the Prague Political Declaration of 5 January 1983, those States favour the starting of negotiations on this range of question.

The need to find a solution to these extremely important issues was reaffirmed at the last two sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. In this connection, a large number of States expressed great concern about the growth of the naval arms race. The build-up of naval arms in a nuclear century affects the security of all countries of the world, including the group of States to which Czechoslovakia belongs.

At the present time, a substantial part of the strategic nuclear arsenals of States are to be found on the seas. Within the borders of the world's seas and in the regions adjacent to them, there are very many points of world conflict and hotbeds of tension. The military naval arms race has become one of the major factors of destabilization and the growth of tension in various parts of the world. On the global scale, it continues to lower still more the threshold of nuclear conflict.

The level of military naval confrontation and the general state of international relations are closely linked questions. It is not difficult to realize the link between the naval arms race and plans for the expansion of the militarization of outer space.

Military naval armaments are absorbing an ever-increasing quantity of funds and thus diverting large sums of money that could be used instead for development - inter alia, for exploring the resources of the sea and for extracting minerals, in accordance with the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

All those facts are very well known. We assume, however, that the study now being carried out by experts will provide additional clarification in this domain. But, here and now, there can be no doubt whatsoever that it is extremely urgent to work out and adopt practical measures to limit the dangerous naval arms race and strengthen confidence-building measures, both on a global scale and in individual regions of the world - in particular, in the Indian Ocean, in the Persian Gulf and in the Mediterranean area.
In addressing these problems, it is interesting to note a parallel with the efforts to limit the nuclear-arms race, which, in the past, was made in an article by The New York Times in connection with the anniversary of the Washington Treaty on the limitation of naval arms.

Certain excerpts from this article are extremely instructive in many respects. They are also very relevant. I should like to read out a few of them which have a direct bearing on the issues now under discussion.

The article notes, inter alia:

(spoke in English)

"There are enough similarities between then and now, between a race in battleships and one in nuclear weapons, to make those events of more than 60 years ago pertinent to the current debate over strategic security.

"...

"Yesterday's battleships and today's nuclear weapons share one essential characteristic: the ability to engender a deep-seated terror of a technological breakthrough that would give absolute superiority to one nation and fatal vulnerability to another."

(continued in Russian)

In describing the progress of those negotiations, the article went on to state:

(spoke in English)

"The first set of recommendations came from the General Board of the United States Navy. This advisory group, composed largely of senior admirals, wanted the United States to reaffirm and even expand its naval buildup as a pre-condition for negotiation."

(continued in Russian)

The United States Secretary of State, Mr. Hughes, at that time rejected those proposals. He stated:

(spoke in English)

"Competition in armaments must stop ... We can no longer content ourselves with investigations, with statistics, with reports, with the circumlocution of inquiry. The time has come for action. There is only one adequate way out, and that is to end it now."
In this connection, the article continues:

"Today, some of those who say they want reductions in nuclear arms also say that the United States must first add to its strategic arsenal in order to negotiate from strength, or, to put it more bluntly, to intimidate the other side into reducing.

"We also have those who say that to lessen the danger of a nuclear war, one must first stop the arms race - to freeze, to stop now, and then turn to the serious business of reduction. The same divergence of opinion existed in 1921. But then public and Congressional pressure persuaded the Harding Administration to adopt the stop-now approach. And it worked."

Further, in explaining the reasons for the ultimate failure of the efforts to limit the arms race and of the growth of militarism and of the Nazi threat, the article makes the following conclusions:

"The first freeze failed because Governments did not take advantage of the opportunities it afforded; neither did they realize that arms control agreements must be continually nourished. That, too, is a lesson of the first freeze."

Today, the Soviet Union and the countries of the Warsaw Treaty are proposing the start of negotiations on a whole range of questions regarding the limitation of naval activity, curbing naval armaments, and the adoption of confidence-building measures in this area.

These proposals affect both global and regional approaches to finding a solution to these problems and to ensuring that all measures should be worked out in accordance with the principle that the security of every State will not be jeopardized and taking strictly into account all factors that determine the balance of forces on the seas and in other areas of limiting arms that have a bearing on naval armaments.
Therefore, in the view of the Czechoslovak delegation, one of our Commission's tasks is to submit to the General Assembly of the United Nations specific and clear recommendations or, at the very least, ideas regarding such recommendations on the substance of the matter. On that basis, we can then pave the way for practical businesslike talks on a whole range of issues regarding the limitation of the naval arms race.

As has been pointed out such negotiations could take place at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva or at another multilateral forum that could be agreed upon. In that connection the delegation of Czechoslovakia, fully supports the practical and constructive views found in the working paper of the delegations of the Bulgarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, and the Soviet Union. We think this document provides a good basis for further work on this issue.

I should like to believe that the words cited here of the former United States Secretary of State, Mr. Hughes, and his appeal for action will be heard today as well.

Mr. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Today, the Soviet delegation would like to express its views on item 8 of the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission on "Curbing the naval arms race: limitation and reduction of naval armaments and extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans".

This area of joint efforts on limiting arms and on promoting disarmament is one to which the Soviet Union attaches great importance.
The build-up of naval armaments and the involvement of an ever-increasing number of regions of the oceans of the world in the sphere of the activity of military fleets are fraught with dangerous conflicts and further aggravate the international situation. These developments have put the question of curbing the naval arms race on the agenda of world politics.

First of all I should like to recall that the question of limiting the naval arms race is by no means a new hue in the palette of international relations. This was just mentioned very clearly and compellingly by my colleague from Czechoslovakia, Comrade Pavlovsky.

This issue was considered in Washington as far back as in 1921 and 1922, and later at the Geneva and London Conferences. Moreover, the organizer of those conferences was the United States, and the United Kingdom, France, Japan and Italy and a number of other countries were active participants in them. Thus, it is, to say the very least, strange that it is precisely the delegations of those very countries that are now apparently asserting that this is practically the very first time they have heard mention of the limitation of military naval activity, which in their view seems to be virgin soil in the disarmament negotiations.

Those views in fact have absolutely nothing to do with reality. The agreements reached in the course of the international conferences I have mentioned did not last long since they had a built-in drawback: their initiators were pursuing first and foremost the objectives of obtaining unilateral advantages in the building up of their own naval military forces. As a result, those agreements did not lead to a reduction in the danger of war but, on the contrary, promoted a further build-up of military naval armaments and the strengthening of the contradictions existing between those who were parties to them.

In the more than a half-century that has elapsed since then, the role of military naval forces has increased year by year, and it continues to increase.

In our time military naval fleets equipped with modern and sometimes nuclear armaments are one of the major components of the armed forces of many States. Thus in the triad of the strategic forces of the United States, in the naval forces, we find that the number of such nuclear forces now exceeds 50 per cent. Today we are witnessing a new round of military naval arms, and here, too, the initiator is the United States. Banking on acquiring comprehensive military superiority and on the opportunity to use massive force even in those regions that are very distant from the American continent, that country continues to build and use ever newer ships
supplied with the most sophisticated means of destruction, and it is also hauling old ones out of moth-balls and supplying them with those means.

In the United Kingdom, submarines now carry sophisticated Polaris ballistic missiles having six nuclear warheads instead of three; in the 1990s there will be plans for the deployment of atomic submarines with Trident II missiles, which will then have 14 long-range nuclear warheads.

In France, sea-based missiles having a single warhead are to be replaced with missiles having six warheads; instead of five submarines, by 1990 the French military naval forces will have seven such missile-equipped submarines in their arsenals.

In such conditions the Soviet Union too is forced to improve its military naval forces. Facts which have a bearing on this issue have been published in the Soviet book *The Origin of the Threat to Peace*, published by the Ministry of Defence of the Soviet Union.

The explosive character of our era came about as a result of that sphere of the arms race that includes the sea areas of our planet. The further building up of naval fleets and the stepping up of their activity is fraught with the danger of the destruction of stability both globally and within the context of individual regions, and it threatens the security of peaceful navigation.

But that is only one side of the coin, albeit the most important side. We cannot forget the significant sums of money and resources that are thus diverted from constructive goals. Today we are already encountering the negative effects of the naval arms race on research and the exploration of the resources of the seas and oceans, and this is taking place at a time when the significance of those resources for mankind, given the acute shortages of raw materials and food products in a number of regions of the world, continues to grow. The development of these negative tendencies, which are linked with the growth of military naval activity, is something we have not yet been able to reverse or even to halt.

Finally, we cannot fail to dwell also on the negative role naval fleets play in the foreign policy of certain States. It is widely recognized that as long ago as at the end of the 19th century the naval forces of the imperialist States had become one of the major means of enslaving the peoples of entire continents; the naval "big stick" was used in the effort to divide and conquer the world and to
achieve expansion and bolster many kinds of threats. It is precisely from that
time on that we see traces of that sadly famous gunboat diplomacy.

However, it is by no means necessary for us to go back to examples taken from
such a distant past. The significance of the naval forces of that group of States
has not changed, even in our day. During the years following the Second World War,
the United States and other NATO countries have more than 100 times sent their
ships and marines to suppress national liberation movements and to participate in
armed conflicts and acts of military provocation. If we consider merely the
events of the last few years, we can recall instructive cases of the direct use of
naval forces to exert pressure on sovereign States, particularly developing States,
to interfere in their internal affairs, to carry out acts of armed aggression and
intervention and to preserve the vestiges of the colonial system. The Caribbean
basin and the South Atlantic, the Eastern Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf —
and this is by no means a complete list — are places in which those countries have
engaged in sea piracy.
For all those reasons, the Soviet Union believes that the appeals made by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions were timely. In those appeals, the Assembly called on us to start negotiations on 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 with the busiest sea-lanes or regions where the probability of conflict situations is high. My country is ready to participate in such negotiations.

It is difficult for me to agree with the views expressed by the representatives of some States that consideration of this issue by the Disarmament Commission — let alone the holding appropriate negotiations — is premature, and that we should first wait for the results of the United Nations study on this subject. Efforts made in the 1960s and 1970s to curb the naval arms race and to curb naval military activity have to some extent been reflected in a number of international agreements, including the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, the USSR-United States Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, and the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), which for well-known reasons has not entered into force. But these individual successes, some of them bilateral, dealing with limited areas, cannot replace multilateral efforts to resolve a whole range of problems connected with the limitation of such naval activity.

Unfortunately, the resolution of a range of issues connected with the limitation of the naval arms race has not yet been advanced by so much as a single step. Once again, this has been attested to by the General Assembly at recent sessions and by our Commission. This situation results primarily from the position taken by the United States and a number of its allies. Yet the importance and significance of this issue demand its speedy consideration and resolution. It is necessary, as quickly as possible, to lay down specific steps on how to limit naval activities and the naval arms race and on how to go about carrying out talks and negotiations in that connection. In this context, we believe that decisions of the Disarmament Commission would be helpful in making useful recommendations.

In the difficult conditions we face when trying to resolve disarmament problems, all of us — and here I think we have complete consensus — came to the
conclusion long ago that positive results of our negotiations - and such results are achieved - are lagging and fall further behind every year compared with the constantly and swiftly expanding arms race. Why, then, should we do as we are told and wait and stand by, on the pretext that we cannot consider, let alone resolve, the problem until a study has been completed? The issue of the limitation and reduction of naval forces and armaments has become an urgent one. But we should not repeat the errors of the past. All appropriate measures should be worked out and implemented in accordance with the principle of not impairing the security of anyone, with due regard to all factors determining the balance of forces on the seas, as well as other types of arms limitation, which in one way or another involve naval forces. Moreover, full use should be made of the possibilities of the regional approach to the limitation of naval activities and naval armaments.

Regarding this issue, and regarding other disarmament issues, we adhere to a policy of principle. We believe that it is necessary as soon as possible to begin consideration of this issue. Its very importance and significance demand that we do so.

For many years now the Soviet Union has repeatedly proposed the implementation of concrete, practical measures for the various parts of the world's oceans and for various categories of naval forces and armaments.

It is relevant to recall that these measures include such proposals as the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Mediterranean area and the conversion of that area into a zone of stable peace and co-operation; the limitation of military activity in the Indian Ocean region and the extension of similar measures to the Pacific Ocean; the establishment of mutually agreed limits for cruising by nuclear-missile submarines; and various concrete proposals on the limitation and reduction of naval armaments.

The Soviet Union has suggested that, depending on their content, these measures be implemented both on a bilateral basis with the United States and on a multilateral basis. The Soviet Union has actively favoured work on measures aimed at curbing the naval arms race, in particular within the context of Soviet-United States talks on the limitation and consequent reduction of military activities in the Indian Ocean - unilaterally broken off by the United States - and within the context of the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons. Now too the USSR is
ready for businesslike consideration of relevant issues, if our partners
demonstrate the same readiness. Our proposals remain in force.

As noted recently by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet proposal put
forward during the course of the Soviet-Indian meeting held in 1982 at the highest
level also remains in force. We then proposed that, without waiting for the
convening of an international conference on the Indian Ocean, all States whose
ships ply the waters of the Indian Ocean basin should refrain from taking any steps
which could exacerbate the situation in that region. We have in mind here that
they should not send major naval units to the region, or carry out military
manoeuvres there, or expand or modernize military bases in hinterland States in
which such bases exist.

Where can this curbing of the naval arms race begin? In the view of the
Soviet Union, the beginnings of a resolution of this problem could take the form
of, for instance, an agreement by States not to extend military activities in
regions of conflict or tension. We consider this to be the most urgent of measures.

As to future measures, the Soviet Union has carefully devised a system of
possible actions. Among them I would note the following: It would be useful to
search for solutions which would do away with situations in which the military
fleets of major powers are sent far from their own shores for long periods of
time. We think that among other useful steps would be the withdrawal of nuclear
vessels from certain regions of the world's oceans and the establishment of limits
on the presence in those oceans of certain types of ships.
(Mr. Issrael'yan, USSR)

The Soviet Union included those proposals, inter alia, in a letter dated 9 April 1984 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Andrei Gromyko, to the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on the question of the limitation of naval activity and naval armaments. Moreover, it was stressed that the USSR could take further steps in the area of direct and effective limitation of naval armaments. Such measures could include, for example, the limitation of the number of warships of major types.

I should like to mention yet another area of activity - consideration of the possibility of introducing limitations on submarine forces and equipment and measures with regard to naval bases on foreign territory.

In addition to such limitation measures, which could put an end to further build-up of naval armaments, the USSR believes it necessary to consider in the future the question of the reduction on a balanced basis of the number of ships in the fleets of major sea Powers. Here, particular attention should be given to such vessels as, for example, aircraft-carriers, which are particularly destabilizing and are used for shows of force and to exert pressure on independent States. We attach great significance to agreement on and the implementation of confidence-building measures in this area. The significance of such measures will be increased to the extent that tend to prevent conflict situations and strengthen the security of naval communications.

The recommendations of this Commission should be aimed at practical actions. In the view of the USSR, all the major naval Powers and other interested States should participate in the negotiations on limiting naval activity and naval armaments. In such negotiations the Soviet Union is ready to consider also appropriate measures to ensure mutual trust and confidence among States regarding the observance of obligations undertaken.

With regard to the selection of a forum for negotiations on this problem, the Soviet Union's position is flexible. This has also been mentioned by my colleagues from other socialist countries. We consider as one possibility for such negotiations the context of the Conference on Disarmament and we are also ready to consider the possibility of beginning such multilateral negotiations on the whole range of issues relevant to this problem. Our position is that the holding of
multilateral negotiations on curbing naval activity and naval armaments should not serve as an obstacle to considering those issues in negotiations among nuclear powers.

We have stated here the views of the Soviet delegation on item 8 of our Commission's agenda. Once again our views rea affirm the great interest of the Soviet Union in the working out of measures that could stop the arms race in one of its most dangerous areas. We express the hope that our statement will be carefully studied. We are of course ready to listen to the views of other members of the Commission.

I assure the Commission that the Soviet proposals are not aimed against the security interests of any State or group of States; their primary objective is to prevent the use of the great expanses of the world's oceans for aggressive military purposes. We believe that the United Nations Disarmament Commission could play a useful role in this matter. Its decisions could not only have a moral impact in promoting negotiations but also put forward useful recommendations as to what specific steps should be taken to ensure the effective limitation of naval activity and naval armaments.

Mr. NORDENFELT (Sweden): The naval build-up and the development of naval arms systems, especially during recent years, have added new dimensions to international security. The modernization and expansion of the fleets of the major maritime Powers and the increased sophistication of naval-based arms systems have created new and extended operational capabilities, causing great concern among a large number of nations. There is well-founded concern about the possible effects on the freedom of the high seas and the principle of non-interference with international sea communications for trade and shipping and with the economic exploitation of maritime resources. Another serious concern is that the greater part of the naval armaments and the naval forces is unaccounted for in the arms limitation and disarmament context.

Against the background of rapid deployment of naval forces and armaments, as well as difficulties in evaluating the consequences for international peace and security, including the consequences for international shipping and sea communications, Sweden, together with Austria, Finland, Iceland, Indonesia, Mexico and Yugoslavia, proposed a study on the naval arms race at the United Nations General Assembly in 1983. It was felt that such a study would enhance
international understanding of the issues involved and should help to clarify matters of concern to many States.

General Assembly resolution 38/188 G requested the Secretary-General:
"to carry out a comprehensive study on the naval arms race, on naval forces and naval arms systems, including maritime nuclear-weapon systems, as well as on the development, deployment and mode of operation of such naval forces and systems, all with a view to analysing their possible implications for international security, for the freedom of the high seas, for international shipping routes and for the exploitation of marine resources, thereby" - and I stress this - "facilitating the identification of possible areas for disarmament and confidence-building measures".

The naval arms race has not been the subject of any serious consideration in the multilateral disarmament context for about half a century. The problems involved are complex and touch on vital security interests for almost all Members of the United Nations. The study - which is now well under way and should be ready for this year's session of the General Assembly - will help to clarify the problems and will be of assistance to delegations as to further steps to be taken in this area.

When the study has been completed Member States will be able to participate in and contribute fully to the deliberations on this item on a reasonably equal footing with delegations representing the major naval Powers and their allies. To try to reach any substantive conclusions on this item at this juncture would be premature and would run the risk of leading to a lopsided result.

We are convinced that the study will help us to find common approaches and to initiate a process towards reaching agreement on concrete naval disarmament and on confidence-building measures in this area.
PROPOSAL BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF CYPRUS

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): I do not wish to speak about the problem of the naval arms race. Of course, as part of the arms race, it is a bad thing, but if the arms race goes on the naval arms race does not add much to it. It is the arms race itself that must be stopped. My point in speaking now is to draw attention to the fact that any decision taken by this Commission is supposed to be by consensus, but can be by a majority. The Final Document - and I would like to introduce a draft resolution on this matter - clearly states that the Commission

"shall make every effort to ensure that, in so far as possible, decisions on substantive issues be adopted by consensus" (resolution S-10/2, para. 118 (b)).

This does not mean that decisions of this Commission must be by consensus; decisions could be by a majority. Decisions should preferably be by consensus, but if that is not possible they can be by a majority. This idea of insisting on a consensus prevents any decisions being taken, because the consensus idea allows a veto to every member of the Commission. If one member does not agree, that ends it. So a veto is allowed to every member, with the countries that wish to veto draft resolutions of the Commission not being shown to have done so. In the Security Council, if one of the major Powers wishes to veto a draft resolution, it appears as vetoing it; but under a consensus rule everyone has the right of veto without its being shown who is vetoing.

Therefore I submit that at the proper time the question of majority decisions by this Commission should be taken up. A draft resolution should probably be introduced to the effect that decisions of the Commission should as far as possible be taken by consensus, but that, if there is no consensus, they can be taken by a majority. I think that this is very important in order to be consistent with the provisions of the Final Document in paragraph 118.

(a) 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

(b) CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA ITEMS CONTAINED IN SECTION II OF RESOLUTION 33/71 H WITH THE AIM OF ELABORATING, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED AT THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION, A GENERAL APPROACH TO NEGOTIATIONS ON NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT
REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS:

(a) HARMONIZATION OF VIEWS ON CONCRETE STEPS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY STATES REGARDING A GRADUAL, AGREED REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS AND REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES NOW BEING USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, NOTING THE RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

(b) EXAMINATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF EFFECTIVE WAYS AND MEANS OF ACHIEVING AGREEMENTS TO FREEZE, REDUCE OR OTHERWISE RESTRAIN, IN A BALANCED MANNER, MILITARY EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING ADEQUATE MEASURES OF VERIFICATION SATISFACTORY TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE PROVISIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 34/83 F, 35/142 A, 36/82 A, 37/95 A, 38/184 A AND 39/64 A, WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING AND ELABORATING THE PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GOVERN FURTHER ACTIONS OF STATES IN THE FIELD OF THE FREEZING AND REDUCTION OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES, KEEPING IN MIND THE POSSIBILITY OF EMBODYING SUCH PRINCIPLES INTO A SUITABLE DOCUMENT AT AN APPROPRIATE STAGE.


The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps during the time that we have at our disposal I could request the Chairmen of our Working Groups to give oral reports to the plenary Commission on the state of their work midway through the session of the Commission. I will begin this process by giving a very brief report on the status of the work in the Committee of the Whole with regard to item 4.

As delegations will recall, item 4, which is concerned with the arms race and in particular the nuclear arms race, was entrusted this year, as has been the case in previous years, to a Committee of the Whole. The Committee of the Whole had one formal meeting, during which some delegations made general statements on this item. It was agreed thereafter that item 4 would be handled informally in a contact group of the Chairman.

The contact group has held three meetings. The basis for its work has been the 1984 report of the Disarmament Commission and the document therein pertaining to this item. As far as the task of removing the existing brackets from that document is concerned, I regret to report that there has been no success so far. Differences remain on the fundamental questions contained in the document, but there has been an attempt to restructure the document. This has consisted basically in rearranging some of the paragraphs and removing some of the repetitions. The contact group has to finalize its work at the next meeting, which I indicated last Friday would be scheduled some time towards the end of the present
week. Copies of the most recent revision of the long paper that has been under consideration in the contact group are available in the conference room.

I now request the Chairman of the Working Group on agenda item 5 to inform the Commission of the progress of its work.

Mr. TINCA (Romania): Working Group I, on the item relating to the reduction of military budgets, held seven formal meetings. It considered the working paper and the various proposals presented to the Commission at last year's session and contained in annex X to the report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly (A/39/42).

The Working Group also considered new proposals, ideas and suggestions with a view to reaching agreement on as many principles as possible. The Working Group had a preliminary exchange of views on the format of the document, which is supposed to include the principles which might be recommended to the General Assembly for adoption. The Working Group succeeded in broadening the area of agreement on many principles. Some brackets existing in some paragraphs were removed, although a definite decision on these paragraphs is still subject to agreement on the document as a whole.

A great deal of attention was devoted by the Working Group to some principles on which divergent views have persisted for many years. Although suggestions for overcoming the existing differences were discussed, it appears - and I say this with regret - that a compromise formula is not at hand. At the last meeting of the Group, last week, it was decided to continue consultations among delegations with a view to better understanding one another's positions and identifying the possible direction for further action. The most difficult stage is ahead of us, and therefore I believe that all delegations are called upon to do their utmost to show flexibility and a spirit of positive co-operation in order that we may find a solution acceptable to all delegations.

That ends my progress report on the work of Working Group I, and I hope that the Working Group will be able to present its final report in good time.
The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of the Bahamas to give a report on the work of Working Group II, on agenda item 6.

Mr. HEpbURN (Bahamas): Working Group II, on the nuclear capability of South Africa, held six meetings - some of them very brief - during the last week. At the first meeting it was agreed not to have a debate on this item and to refer to the text contained in document A/39/42 as the basis of discussion and negotiation. Delegations concluded a first reading of the text at the second meeting. At that time, paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 5 were accepted without change. Cosmetic changes were proposed for some of the remaining paragraphs. However, other paragraphs, such as paragraphs 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10 seemed to present major elements of disagreement. After spending some time dealing with all the amendments, it was decided that amendments should be submitted in writing. The delegations concerned complied with this, and Working Group II now has seven papers containing amendments.

An oral proposal was made at the first meeting to restructure the text, but, after some initial discussion, that idea was not pursued.

At the fourth and fifth meetings, delegations expressed a willingness to work towards a consensus text and requested more time for concentrated informal discussions. The Group also met in a smaller room in order to search of some means of reaching agreement. It is my understanding that there were several quasi-regional meetings and it seems that the areas of concern and disagreements have been identified but, for the moment, consensus is elusive.

I am aware of only two meetings scheduled for this week and the Working Group is prepared to continue to engage in further informal discussions with delegations to ascertain the kind of report to be presented to you, Sir. I should point out, however, that several delegations expressed the view that the current text, with some refinement in language and updating, could be accepted. It remains to be seen whether we would find that course of action in the time remaining.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to ask a question. In view of the fact that this is the next to last week of our session, we have only a very limited number of working days left. I should like to know first whether the Chairman intends to distribute the schedule of the Commission's work for this week - which we would welcome - and
if so, when we would receive that schedule. Secondly, I understand that there was an agreement that the discussions on items 4, 5 and 6 would take place primarily during the first and second weeks. I should like to know when we can assume that the reports of the Working Groups and the Committee of the Whole on agenda items 4, 5 and 6 will be completed.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the timetable for this week, it will be available to delegations at this afternoon's plenary meeting.

With respect to the allocation of meetings during the week to consider the various agenda items, the representative of the Soviet Union is quite right in recalling that I appealed to the Chairmen of Working Groups I and II, dealing with items 5 and 6, to concentrate on doing their work during the past week so that the time available during this week could be allocated to agenda items 7, 8 and 9. I think by and large that has been possible. For agenda item 4, I require only one informal meeting at which I hope to finalize the paper on which we are working. I think the Chairman of Working Group I has indicated that he would also require just one meeting to finalize his report. I believe the Chairman of Working Group II has made a similar statement. That means that we shall be concentrating most of this week on agenda items 7, 8 and 9. It is my hope that reports will become available by the end of this week and that the Commission, meeting in plenary, will be able to consider them on Tuesday of next week.

I hope that this explanation is satisfactory.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.