FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 15 March 1960, at 3 p.m.
PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Bulgaria:

Mr. M. TARABANOV
Col. K. SAVOV
Mr. K. CHRISTOV

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. A.C. CAMPBELL
W/Cdr. R. MITCHELL

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. J. NOSEK
Lieut.-Gen. I. HECKO
Mr. Z. TRHLIK

France:

Mr. J. NOCH
Mr. M. LEGENDE
Mr. L. PERILLIER

Italy:

Mr. G. MARTINO
Mr. F. CAVALETI
Mr. L. DAINELLI

Poland:

Mr. M. NASZYKOWSKI
Mr. M. LACHS
Mr. J. SLIWINSKI

Romania:

Mr. E. MELINCESCU
Mr. N. MELINESCU
Mr. C. BOGDAN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.A. ZORIN
Col.-Gen. A.A. GRYZLOV
Mr. A.A. ROSSHCHIN
PRESENT AT THE TABLE (cont'd)

United Kingdom:
Rt. Hon. D. ORMSBY-GORE
Sir Michael WRIGHT
Miss B. SALT

United States of America:
Mr. F.M. Eaton
Mr. O.C. STELLE
Rear-Admiral P.L. DUDLEY

Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission:
Mr. L. PADILLA NERVO

Secretariat:
Personal Representative of the Secretary-General:
Dr. D. PROTITCH
Mr. G. PALTHEY
Mr. W. ERSTEIN

Acting-Director, European Office:
Deputy Personal Representative of the Secretary-General:
Dr. PROTITCH (Representative of the Secretary-General): On behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations it is my privilege to welcome you to the Palais des Nations and to declare open your first meeting. I also have the honour to convey to you the following message from the Secretary-General:

"This is the first occasion since the discussions in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission in London in 1957 that negotiations on general disarmament have been resumed by the Powers having special responsibility in this field. This time the consideration of the question is being undertaken on the basis of an agreement by the Foreign Ministers of France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States to establish the new ten nation committee on disarmament and to report the results of its work to the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations. In creating this new forum as 'a useful means of exploring through mutual consultations avenues of possible progress', the four Powers explicitly recognized that 'ultimate responsibility for disarmament measures rests with the United Nations' and expressed the hope that 'the results achieved in these deliberations would provide a useful basis for consideration of disarmament in the United Nations.' The Disarmament Commission and the General Assembly have welcomed this new approach to the problem. Your deliberations, therefore, take place with the full endorsement and support of the United Nations.

"It is unnecessary to stress here the seriousness and importance of your work. The Charter of the United Nations has made the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments one of the prime tasks of the international community, and the General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly emphasized the need for controlled disarmament, the urgency of which is underlined by each new technological advance in the field of armaments. Members of the United Nations have expressed their deep and growing concern with the military, political and economic implications of what is so commonly described as the 'armaments race'. It may be taken for granted that all the members of this Conference are fully cognizant of the vital interest of all nations and all peoples in the achievement of universal controlled disarmament.

"You convene at a time when an acute concern about mankind's prospects has led to unusually intensive international political activity. This in itself could be a good augury for your deliberations for may it not be that this intensified activity, especially at the highest levels, does in fact reflect at least a first step towards that mutual trust which would seem to be indispensable to the realization of this Conference's goals. You know, of
course, that the hopes of the world are solidly with you at the same time as you are more fully aware of the formidable complexities of the task confronting you than probably anybody else.

"I assure you that everything possible will be done to facilitate the smooth functioning of your work and to provide you with whatever may be required in the way of services and facilities. I have appointed as my Personal Representative to your Conference Dr. Dragoslav Protitch, and as Deputy Personal Representative Mr. William Epstein.

"I offer my sincere good wishes and earnest hopes for success in your endeavours."

Turning to the immediate business before us, may I call to your attention that the Secretary-General has already made available to your ten Governments — in accordance with the unanimously adopted resolution of the General Assembly on general and complete disarmament — the records and documents of the plenary meeting and meetings of the First Committee at which that question was discussed. He has also brought to the attention of the members of this Conference the Assembly's resolution on the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. PADILLA NERVO (Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission): Your invitation to me to speak at the opening of this important Conference can only be regarded as further evidence of your governments' understanding of and concern for the role and responsibility of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, of which I have the honour to be Chairman. By the same token, my presence might be regarded as symbolizing the vital interest of all countries in the results of your Conference.

It is my duty and privilege to recall that the Disarmament Commission unanimously welcomed the accord of the four Powers for the resumption of consultations on questions of disarmament, while recognizing, as did the Foreign Ministers, that ultimate responsibility for disarmament measures is vested in the United Nations by its Charter. Moreover, the Commission, which the General Assembly has decided should continue to be composed of all Members of the United Nations, is anxious to assist you in your task in any way and at any time that may be deemed beneficial.

The world-wide anxiety about disarmament and security was very much in evidence at the recent session of the Commission and the General Assembly. As you are aware, the Assembly has taken significant decisions on disarmament.
questions and has transmitted the resolutions on the items "general and complete disarmament" and "Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons" to your Conference and to the Commission. The debates on the disarmament items in the General Assembly and the decisions taken constitute an impressive registration of world opinion concerning the dangers inherent in the nuclear age and in favour of unrelenting efforts to achieve the great prize of disarmament, which we all recognize as an indispensable contribution to the preservation and consolidation of world peace. It may certainly be affirmed that the urgent task of negotiating disarmament agreements satisfactory to all States concerned goes hand in hand with the essential mission of the United Nations, namely, to lay down the basis of a secure peace under freedom and justice.

Many representatives from the less developed countries also stressed the close connexion between the success of your efforts and economic development. Such basic interests when added to the feelings of general disquiet common to all humanity are bound to keep the attention of the world focussed on your labours. It was therefore only natural for the Disarmament Commission to welcome your intention to keep it appropriately informed of the progress of your deliberations, and for the General Assembly to approve that decision.

The public discussion of reports from previous disarmament bodies in the principal organs of the United Nations has doubtless supplied an additional constructive impetus to the earnest efforts of the nations participating in the smaller committees. The deliberations of the Disarmament Commission and of the General Assembly have often been characterized by the introduction of new ideas and proposals from both the larger and smaller Powers which have helped to chart the course of new attempts to grapple with the increasingly urgent task. In this respect the work which you are commencing today is a continuation of many years of effort.

It is encouraging that in this room are some representatives who in the past have made significant contributions in disarmament discussions and who have never given up the hope of reaching agreement, as well as new representatives who bring to the conference table a varied and rich experience and, I am certain, a readiness to examine every new idea and to explore every new path.

I recall from my own participation some nine years ago in the efforts of the Four Power Sub-Committee to help bring about a resumption of disarmament negotiations, that progress in this complex field is facilitated by an approach that emphasizes the areas of agreement and of possible agreement rather than the points of difference. Such consultations and negotiations are more likely to take place and to succeed in small closed meetings than in the larger open ones. It also
It would be superfluous for me to dwell on the fact that in the past the Disarmament Commission has recognized two general approaches: one being far-reaching disarmament measures affecting both conventional and nuclear weapons under effective international control, and the other being more limited objectives viewed as possible preludes to, and partial or specific measures of, disarmament. The recent debates in the United Nations seemed to indicate a renewed interest in both these general approaches. It is equally superfluous for me to emphasize the necessity for establishing effective international control, whichever of these approaches proves most fruitful.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not take advantage of this opportunity to emphasize at this conference the great and growing risks that confront the nations and the peoples of the world in their search for security. The development and spread of the awesome modern weapons of annihilation and the extraordinary means of their delivery confronts us all with some of the most difficult problems ever faced by man. The solution of these problems requires vision, faith and a willingness to recognize that there are lesser risks and sacrifices in safeguarded international disarmament than in the traditional and uncertain attempts to achieve national security.

I am sure that I speak for the Disarmament Commission as a whole in stating that its welcome of the resumption of disarmament negotiations in this conference reflects its confidence in the Governments represented here. It also marks its conviction and expectation that some agreement will emerge from your resolute efforts.

Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) (translation from French): I am glad to be the first to speak at the opening of the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to the Secretary General of the United Nations and his staff for the careful arrangements made for our work, and of saying how gratified we are at the wishes conveyed on behalf of the Secretary General for the success of the Conference. Those wishes reflect the hopes of the peoples and the desires of all the countries of the United Nations.

The great interest aroused by the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament has found expression in the presence here, and the statement made by, the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, Mr. Padilla Nervo, whom
we thank for his good wishes and assistance. May I, at the same time, express the
gratitude of the Bulgarian delegation to the people and authorities of the
hospitalable city of Geneva which, faithful to its age-long tradition, is once more
providing us with its magnificent setting and the best possible working conditions
for this Conference.

The eyes of the peoples of all countries are today again turned towards
Geneva and towards this Conference, for on it they place their hope for the
solution of the most acute problem of our time with which mankind is faced: the
problem of disarmament. That hope is so tenacious in men's hearts that, despite
past failures, it is today more lively than ever. It is not only an expression of
the most human of man's qualities—optimism and faith in the future—it has
real foundations in the profound changes in international relations which have
occurred in recent years, and in a new attitude to the problem of disarmament
which is steadily gaining ground.

Contrary to the situation in the past, as a result of the exceptional advances
made in science and technology, no one can now reasonably assert that the
accumulation of armaments—more especially atomic, hydrogen and missile weapons—
can provide security for anyone. On the contrary, the truth, which is becoming
increasingly evident, is that the armament race not only provides no safeguards
for anyone, but is becoming a source of real and direct danger to all, and is
impelling mankind towards an unprecedented disaster. The conviction that it is
impossible to achieve peace by warlike methods, or without abolishing the means of
waging war, is becoming a real force. There is therefore no doubt that what mankind
most fervently desires—namely the preservation of peace—can only be attained
by carrying out proposals for general and complete disarmament. Hence, the problem
now is to work out constructive measures to reach agreement on general and complete
disarmament, on the basis of the realistic and concrete plan proposed by the
President of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,
Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, at the fourteenth session of the United Nations
General Assembly, and in conformity with the resolution unanimously adopted by the
General Assembly. It is thus perfectly clear that any matters tending to divert
the Committee from the search for means of achieving the aim assigned to it would
be calculated to delay the achievement of that aim, namely, the conclusion of an
agreement on general and complete disarmament in the shortest possible time, as
stated in the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly.
The peoples of all countries expect our Conference to reach agreement on the main lines of general and complete disarmament, in accordance with the actual terms of the United Nations resolution. Any attempt to direct the Committee's work toward the study of problems which have long been clear to the whole world, and on which agreement in principle could be reached at the outset on the basis of the Soviet Union proposals -- any such attempt would, to say the least, be incomprehensible. What is now essential is to reach agreement in principle on general and complete disarmament. After that it will not be difficult to agree on the detailed implementation of concrete disarmament measures within the period laid down.

Such an approach would be a major contribution to the strengthening of confidence and to an improved international climate in which it would doubtless be easier to reach agreement on practical disarmament measures. In this connexion, it is obvious that any tendency to initiate studies and discussions on the organization of armaments control, as has been suggested in statements by responsible statesmen, instead of concentrating all our efforts on the organization of control over real disarmament measures already agreed, would mean adopting anew methods which, in the past, have always led to interminable talks and negotiations, and reviving the practice which in the past has led to the continuation and intensification of the armaments race.

At the present time, when the problem of disarmament is essentially that of stopping the drift towards an atomic and missile war, such a practice may have consequences which can only be dangerous to mankind. It must not be forgotten that, while such negotiations are going on, the armaments race is continuing and the danger is increasing. At the present time, for instance, in the course of his peregrinations from the Iberian Peninsula to the Balkans, the War Minister of Western Germany is exploring the possibility of establishing bases, and of exchanges of friendly visits between the representatives of an army trained by generals who, in the still recent past, plunged all Europe, and not only Europe, into fire and bloodshed.

It has just been announced that a new plan for disarmament is to be submitted to the Ten-Nation Committee by the Western countries. We have, of course, neither the intention nor the opportunity of going into the merits and defects of that plan which, in any case, has not yet been placed before the Committee.
It should be pointed out at once, however, that in that plan there is no question of general and complete disarmament nor of time-limits for attaining the goal assigned by the United Nations to the Ten Nation Committee, namely, complete disarmament, which is a matter of capital importance in view of the actions of certain individuals and circles. It is also surprising that nothing should be said about the liquidation of military bases on foreign territory. Such facts cannot fail to make an impression at a time when we need to make the quickest possible progress towards general and complete disarmament.

The delegation of the Bulgarian People's Republic enters the negotiations of the Conference of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament with a profound sense of its responsibilities in regard to the exceptional importance of the tasks awaiting us. The Bulgarian people have most warmly welcomed the proposals for general and complete disarmament. It has noted with the greatest joy that no other international proposal has received such unanimous approval by the whole of mankind. That convinces us that the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament, by uniting the endeavours of all delegations, will fulfil the hopes of the peoples and smooth the way for an agreement on general and complete disarmament.

It is with these considerations in mind that the Bulgarian delegation supports the proposals of the Soviet Government for general and complete disarmament and will do all in its power to contribute to the accomplishment of that great and noble task.

Mr. Burns (Canada): I should like to express thanks to the Representative of the Secretary-General for the facilities which have been placed at our disposal for this Conference and for the message of the Secretary-General conveying his good wishes and wise counsel in regard to the task which lies before us. I should also like to thank the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for his presence here, for the kind wishes he has expressed and the reminder which he has given us of the interest of all members of the United Nations in the success of this Conference.

In entering on our task at this Conference on Disarmament we should look for guidance to the Resolution which was passed unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its last session: "Considering that the question of general and complete disarmament is the most important one facing the world today" the
the General Assembly transmitted the Declaration of the United Kingdom of September 17 and that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of September 18 and other proposals to this Ten Nation Disarmament Committee, and expressed the hope that measures leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control will be worked out in detail and agreed upon in the shortest possible time.

Mr. Wallace Nesbitt, the Parliamentary Secretary for External Affairs, speaking for Canada in the debate on Disarmament in the First Committee, pointed out that in the field of negotiation the initiative rests with the major powers. In the Ten Nation Disarmament Committee is created a forum in which the major powers have agreed to pursue such negotiations. In agreeing to serve on that Committee Canada has been motivated by the desire to facilitate successful negotiations and will direct every effort towards that end, and the Hon. Howard Green, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, said in the general debate on September 24 last, "the medium-sized and smaller powers must have an opportunity of being heard; for disarmament is of the deepest concern to all mankind. In Canada's work on the Committee we shall at all times keep these considerations very much in mind" (A/PV.807, para.62).

The General Assembly's resolution cited as its purpose, "to put an end completely and forever to the armaments race which places a heavy burden on mankind, and to use resources thus released for the benefit of mankind". The present and terribly dangerous form of the armaments race is the competition in building ballistic missiles and other means of delivery of nuclear explosives. The Canadian Government holds the view that it is of the greatest urgency to take early measures to stop this race in nuclear armaments. There are just two alternatives: a continuation of the race, whose only end can be nuclear war, with unimaginable death and destruction; or its cessation, a resolve to control and then abolish this kind of weapon and move towards a peaceful world.

Every nation, every alliance, claims that its armaments are for defensive purposes only. Yet fear of aggression, fear of being attacked by surprise, persists. What is the main element of this fear? It is fear of the unknown, fear of what the adversary may be doing, and this results from the secrecy surrounding armaments and other preparations for war.

So long as there is great secrecy about these matters there will be fear of the unknown, of surprise, of aggression. This fear causes nations and alliances
to strive to outstrip in armaments any possible adversary. The only way to remove the fear is mutual disclosure of actual positions, exchange of information, and, by this means, the establishment of a degree of mutual confidence in order that effective measures of disarmament may be undertaken and that the prevailing fear may eventually disappear.

It is easier to point out what we know ought to be done than to find the means of doing it. To find the means to dissolve this complex of secrecy, suspense and fear, that is the first task of this Ten Nation Committee, as the Canadian Delegation sees it.

The Canadian Government and the Canadian people regard disarmament as of the utmost importance, and the Canadian Government is determined to do all in its power to bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion, to gain substantial and early results. This will be the light by which the Canadian Delegation will be guided in its part in these negotiations.

Mr. Nosek (Czechoslovakia): The Government of Czechoslovakia and the Czechoslovak people have welcomed with satisfaction the agreement on establishment of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament. The task of this Committee is to work out means of reaching international agreement on general and complete disarmament. This fundamental task was laid down by the fourteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, which in its resolution 1373(XIV) considers the question of general and complete disarmament as the most important one facing the world today and calls upon governments to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution of this problem in the shortest time. This resolution outlines the character and scope of our work and it is the task of our Committee to fulfill without delay the expectations of nations and to meet the appeal of the United Nations Organization.

The Czechoslovak delegation is fully convinced that the most suitable basis for our attempts to achieve general and complete disarmament is the proposal of the Government of the Soviet Union, introduced by the Chairman of its Council of Ministers, N.S. Khrushchev, during the fourteenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. After having been discussed at the session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty early in February of this year, the proposal of the Soviet Union became the joint proposal of all socialist
countries for consideration by the Ten Nation Committee. Due to its concrete and realistic character and its attractiveness this proposal has gained the broad support of world public opinion, of many governments and outstanding statesmen.

The substance of the Soviet proposal is the attainment of general and complete disarmament within the period of four years, divided in three stages, during which the complete liquidation of all armed forces, weapons and military equipment should be carried out and States would maintain only strictly defined and agreed minimum contingents of armed forces for internal security, equipped with small arms and designed to maintain order in each country. Simultaneously, military research and any kind of military expenditures would be banned and the production of all kinds of arms and military equipment would be discontinued. This program of general and complete disarmament would be completed by the abolition of war ministries, general staffs and all military and para-military establishments and organizations.

Today the delegations of Canada, France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have submitted a joint proposal for the consideration of the Committee. This joint proposal will be carefully studied by our delegation. Nevertheless in the view of the Czechoslovak delegation it seems to be necessary in this connexion to stress some basic principles which determine the character and scope of our work.

For the successful accomplishment of its task, the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament must necessarily approach the consideration of all submitted proposals having in mind the basic requirement that the proposed measures really solve the question of general and complete disarmament.

It means that they must unconditionally lead also to the complete ban of the production and use of nuclear weapons, to the complete destruction of all existing stockpiles of these weapons, and to the liquidation of military bases on the territory of foreign states, as well as to other significant measures. Any proposal which would not meet these requirements cannot, according to the opinion of my delegation, be considered either as general or as complete disarmament.

The result of the omission of this requirement would be that the Committee would not accomplish its task and there would be no cessation of the armaments race and, consequently, no removal of the danger of war.
General and complete disarmament rests on the assumption that disarmament measures would be consistently controlled by an international control organ whose competence and functions would be enlarged gradually hand in hand with the progress of general and complete disarmament so that, in the final stage, even the control and inspection would be general and complete. The control of the implementation of measures of general and complete disarmament must not be taken for, or even replaced by, control over armaments.

Exactly determined time intervals must be part of any general and complete disarmament in order to guarantee the accomplishment of disarmament in the shortest possible time. Proposals which, from the very beginning do not provide for the realization of concrete disarmament measures and, moreover, whose realization is not fixed by exactly determined time limits, cannot lead to the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

Such proposals would merely evoke erroneous ideas and hopes on the part of world public opinion. In the view of the Czechoslovak delegation, that is not the way which could lead us to the solution of the task with which our Committee has been entrusted.

The need for general and complete disarmament is so urgent and vital for the destiny of mankind that it is not possible to allow it to be discredited, or to allow its realization to be frustrated by any kind of delay or manoeuvre.

General and complete disarmament would, first of all, lead to an immediate and far-reaching improvement in the international atmosphere, and would open before mankind a clear perspective of lasting peace. It would be of extraordinary importance for the nations of central Europe — among them Czechoslovakia — which would so be freed from the danger of new potential aggression by German imperialism. The carrying out of general and complete disarmament would release tremendous material and financial means which could be used for the improvement of the material and cultural standard of life of mankind, first of all in the economically less-developed countries.

Today we are beginning to consider general and complete disarmament under much more favourable conditions than at any time in the past. The Czechoslovak Government is convinced that, in order to bring about the most advantageous atmosphere for successful negotiations towards the realization of general and complete disarmament, all countries should — in accordance with the requirement of the resolution 1378/XIV — refrain from doing anything which would undermine
the work of the Committee and which would be contrary to the interests of the peace and security of nations by hampering the achievement of an international agreement on general and complete disarmament.

As an example of a positive and effective contribution in this respect we could cite the unilateral steps which have been taken by the Soviet Union and other member States of the Warsaw Treaty who, by cutting down the levels of their armed forces by 3,796,500 men within the period since 1955, have given a reliable proof of their sincere effort to reach a real solution of the problem of disarmament and have thus confirmed their words by deeds.

In conclusion I would like to express my sincere hope that the work of our Committee will be successful and will result in general and complete disarmament. The Czechoslovak delegation is prepared to dedicate every effort to the attainment of this noble goal.

Mr. MOCH (France) (translation from French): I do not wish to repeat what has already been very well expressed by previous speakers, in particular, our delegations' thanks. Nine years of work for disarmament dispose me rather to remind you of that General Assembly of 1951, which decided to instruct a committee consisting of the representatives of four States, under the chairmanship of its President, to submit proposals for the resumption of negotiations. That President is our guest today, and I take pleasure in recalling, in the presence of Mr. Padillo Nervo, those days we spent together, which were so rich in early hopes.

Of the four men who then most courteously discussed matters in a room looking out over the whole of Paris one, Mr. Vyshinsky, then Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, whose memory I wish to recall, died suddenly in 1954, barely eight hours after dining with us. The second, Mr. Jossup, an eminent professor at Columbia University, left our sphere of work as a result of political changes in his country. The third, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, who then held the post now ably filled by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, has since discharged ministerial duties of increasing importance, until he became Secretary of State. The fourth has continued in the struggle for disarmament through all its vicissitudes.

The Disarmament Commission, which was set up on the proposal of these four men, tried, from 1952 to 1955, to produce a complete plan; then, from 1955 to 1957, it tried to agree on partial measures, until it reached a deadlock owing to circumstances of which I need not remind you. As the successor to this twelve-power
Commission and its five-power Sub-committee, the four Ministers for Foreign Affairs set up our Ten-Nation Committee. So many vain attempts in the course of nine years, following the even more numerous failures in which earlier history abounds, ought to make me very cautious.

In all these years I have, indeed, learned a great deal. First of all to be patient - I did not think I had so much patience; next to make no prophecies -- it is always the unexpected that happens; and lastly to remain confident despite our trials.

It cannot be denied that science makes faster progress than our negotiations: when we meet again after an interruption of our deliberations, our previous work is out of date and we are faced with fresh difficulties.

It would no doubt be paradoxical to say that we should be glad of this; but such is the destructive power of the new weapons that no one would dare to use them deliberately. No human stake can justify blasting humanity. Yet there remains the increasingly agonizing danger of disaster through error, accident or misinterpretation. Thus the speeding up of scientific progress strengthens our will to spare the world the dangers -- and the cost -- of the rearmament now in progress.

That is why my delegation is stressing here, as in New York, the predominance of nuclear weapons over all other kinds of armament. What the world expects of us, what it hopes for above all, is nuclear disarmament. Conventional weapons and the strength of armed forces are secondary considerations. Such, in our opinion, is the obvious result of the power -- existing or to be expected shortly -- of ballistic missiles and operational satellites.

How is the nuclear threat to be warded off? In 1946 our predecessors let slip the last chance of having all fissionable materials produced under supervision for peaceful purposes only. The problem, which would then have been easy to deal with, has since become insoluble. The exact amount of stocks will never be known.

There are, however, two ways in which our nuclear fears may be allayed.

One is to tackle -- while there is still time -- the means of carrying these weapons -- satellites, missiles, aircraft, aircraft carriers, submarines, launching ramps etc. Once the vehicles have been banned and destroyed, the military stocks will appear worthless.
There is another course open to us: to substitute for stockpiling the rapid supervised reduction of stocks -- which means stopping production of fissionable materials for military purposes, and reconverting them for peaceful purposes, on a large scale, in accordance with an agreed timetable.

I should like to stress this point: a supervised undertaking to cease production for armaments is, in our view, indissolubly linked with the rapid reconversion -- and not merely token reconversion -- of existing stocks. The cessation of production, once in force, would only remain effective as long as this reconversion was faithfully carried out; otherwise it would be mere deception. For we are aiming at nuclear disarmament for the whole world, not the sanctioning by devious means of the de facto position formerly attained by three Powers, which has now been attained by a fourth, and will later no doubt be attained by others.

Apart from these two courses there can be no nuclear disarmament. And without nuclear disarmament, how can we propose conventional disarmament, which is now of secondary importance -- so much so that certain States represented at this table are spontaneously reducing their forces below the levels provided for or ceasing to manufacture certain conventional equipment which was recently considered indispensable?

If, indeed, we propose reductions in conventional armaments to the peoples of the world, and fail to concentrate our main effort on nuclear disarmament, we shall dash their hopes and bitterly disappoint them.

Thus the immediate future differs profoundly from the recent past to which I referred just now. Let us all try to keep abreast of the times and deal with the problems as they arise in 1960, not according to the obsolete lessons of 1957.

Mr. MARTINO (Italy) (translation from French): On behalf of the Italian Government I, too, warmly thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who has been good enough to send to our Conference a personal representative of whose great ability we are well aware. Mr. Hammarskjöld has kindly placed the Palais des Nations at our disposal, and we have accepted this offer in the conviction that such visible ties with the international organization in whose principles we most sincerely believe must ensure the fulfilment of our hopes.
A distinguished man, Mr. Padilla Nervo, has spoken to us on behalf of the Disarmament Commission, over which he presides with the prestige acquired through long experience of international affairs. Italy believes that in serving on the Ten Nation Committee she is working for a cause which is that of the whole world. The great majority of the nations of the world are today represented on the United Nations Disarmament Commission, to which the Charter assigns major responsibility for the great problem whose solution the Ten Nation Committee is to study.

We wish to express our deep gratitude to the Swiss Federal and cantonal authorities for the very kind and cordial hospitality they are offering us during this Conference.

We have met here in order to free the peoples of the world from the cruel threat that haunts them. For too long now the world has been living between fear and hope, and yet with confidence that in the long run a higher common interest can and must prevent supreme disaster.

This is not the place or the time to recall the episodes of the past which have too often brought international tension almost to breaking point. During the "cold war" the absence of an agreement on the main problems of international relations led us into the armaments race referred to by the Secretary-General's Representative. The purpose of this race was to reach and maintain a certain balance of power, which would preclude any aggressive design.

The nations have gained a measure of security behind defences which the conditions of a divided world have forced them to build -- security which is not the outcome of confidence and peace, but of terror. That is precisely what Sir Winston Churchill said in a memorable speech in the House of Commons some years ago.

For too long it has been believed that security based on fear could be the only safeguard for mankind, which was thus unfortunately taken back to that distant past when it was seeking to emerge from the darkness and advance towards the light of a civilized world.

A balance of power can certainly be very useful, but it cannot be the final objective in building peace. When a lethal weapon is brandished too long there is always a danger that it will go off. That is why men of wise counsel and good will have always preached the absolute necessity of disarmament, for that is the best solution and the only one that can prevent irreparable disaster and open the way for lasting peace.
The endeavour to reach agreement on disarmament has been a feature of international relations during the endless post-war years, but unfortunately it has not been successful. The present historic phase has afforded us an opportunity to meet and achieve something. This phase is now called relaxation of tension, and the mere mention of it puts hope into our hearts; but it is clear that we cannot be sure we have thrust back the dangers of the past until a final and complete agreement on disarmament has been concluded. To prevent the outbreak of a conflict of unimaginable proportions is the hope and desire of us all; yet all this is not enough to allay our fears, which are the bitter fruit of the opposition of two social and political systems as well as of the increase and improvement of nuclear weapons.

While it is true that if there were no relaxation of tension our talks might be merely inanum strepitus vocis nostrae, it is also true that only disarmament can produce a real détente.

So long as vast wealth and untold legions of men are used to build engines of war, peace can be neither assured nor fruitful.

Of course, it is not enough to reach agreement on the general principles of a problem; it is also necessary to agree on detailed solutions. For to bring about disarmament we need to settle many complicated technical questions and these are reefs on which all negotiations may founder.

It is comforting, however, to believe that a clear and tenacious will to achieve peace, acting within us and through us, will open the way to satisfactory solutions.

Disarmament is a test-bench for finding out whether we really wish to establish a new trend in history or, on the contrary, to keep the existing situation substantially unchanged, though veiled by an outward show of relaxation.

I wish to repeat here, on behalf of my Government, our solemn promise to spare no effort, to neglect nothing, to hold nothing beneath our notice, in order that "something accomplished" may result from this Conference. I say "something accomplished" in all humility, in view of our great responsibilities; for we shall be working here towards the supreme goal of a disarmament satisfying the unanimous wish of mankind. We nevertheless believe that any step towards this great achievement would be welcome and would facilitate the real relaxation of tension which could, of itself alone, dispel many clouds and much anxiety.
The mere fact that we are starting talks is encouraging: we must make every effort to ensure that we do not fall back into the shadows. True, we may only usher in the dawn after a long night made more agonizing, like Macbeth's, by the fear that the day might never dawn again.

The joint proposal which we, the Western Powers, will have the honour of placing before the Conference, seems to me -- contrary to what the representative of Bulgaria has said, before even seeing it -- to satisfy all the requirements of trust and realism (two qualities which are perfectly suited to our task): disarmament that is gradual, balanced, guaranteed, rapid and extensive both in width and in depth.

Therein lies salvation for us all.

It is in this spirit of trust, sincere trust in what men can achieve, in their intelligence and goodness of heart, that we shall begin our work.

Mr. Naszkowski (Poland) (translation from French): On rising to speak I should like, first of all, to thank the Swiss Government and the authorities of the Canton of Geneva for the hospitality extended to our Committee. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretariat for the facilities granted to us. I would also thank Mr. Padilla Nervo, Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, for the kind wishes he has addressed to our Committee.

This is not the first time that representatives of various countries have met in order to find a solution to the problem of disarmament. Each of us present here knows the history of the efforts made towards this end -- from the schemes dating back some two hundred years ago to the conferences of the period between the two World Wars and finally to the negotiations which have been held within the United Nations during the last few years. A new and extremely important fact is that today, for the first time, a real possibility presents itself to achieve this goal and to achieve it fully.

In the past the prerequisite conditions, material and otherwise, for making disarmament a reality were no doubt lacking, although the countries which cherished a will for peace never relaxed in their efforts to prevent war and to end the armaments race.
Today we note with satisfaction that the road to disarmament has been cleared of many obstacles and that the climate of international relations is improving. The peoples await with hope the forthcoming conference of the heads of the Great Powers.

Apart from the atmosphere itself, which is at present favourable to agreement, our negotiations are made easier at the outset than was the case with previous conferences of this kind. Hitherto, negotiations centred on the problem of partial reduction of armaments. Today we are called upon, in accordance with the wish of the peoples expressed in the unanimous resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, to work out measures for the achievement of general and complete disarmament, that is to say, the elimination of the material possibilities of any war at all, whether great or small. If we consider the problem in this light the differences on many matters that have hitherto impeded all progress in negotiations should disappear or, at least, be considerably reduced.

The success of our efforts should also be made easier by the very absurdity of war in the present age. It is hardly necessary to explain to this Committee that the solution of international disputes by force of arms, in the present state of military technology, would have quite incalculable consequences and would result in the annihilation of the whole material and cultural heritage of mankind.

That being so, armaments too become an anachronism, an absurdity; the more so, as armaments at the present time constitute a burden absorbing astronomical amounts of money, and so stand in the way of possible improvements in the living standards of the peoples. Yet the struggle for a better life should be the driving force of human endeavour.

Poland, which has been called upon to participate in the deliberations of the Ten Nation Disarmament Committee, has a special interest in eliminating any threat of war once and for all. We recall and we shall continue to recall that the last World War, which began with an attack on Warsaw and other Polish cities, threatened the biological extinction of our people. It has taken us until now and will take us many years more to repair the consequences of that war. As we build a new life on the ruins of our cities and villages, we wish to give millions of mothers and fathers the complete assurance that the threat of an atomic death will never overshadow their children's future. We do not believe that we shall reach this goal by postponing decisions, by failing to fix the
time-limits within which disarmament shall be carried out, by treading the twisty paths of technical casuistry which in the past have always led to an impasse. The road we should follow is that of showing mutual goodwill and adopting a constructive attitude on the substance of the problem.

Our purpose has been clearly laid down by the United Nations General Assembly. It is that of working out a plan for general and complete disarmament.

We are convinced that the proposal submitted to the United Nations by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics -- the proposal for general and complete disarmament -- constitutes the basis for such a plan. Unlike the partial solutions proposed, this proposal represents a most far-reaching programme for the complete suppression of armaments and armed forces, and by that token for the elimination of war from the life of the peoples. The Polish Government gives its full support to the USSR proposal for general and complete disarmament, because it is the proposal which corresponds most closely to the vital interests of Poland.

The plan submitted in writing yesterday by the United States delegation raises some preliminary doubts in the mind of our delegation with regard to the achievement of the main goal -- that of general and complete disarmament.

We are particularly concerned to note that this plan does not set any time-limit for the implementation of the measures for which it provides.

The disarmament plan submitted by the United States calls, of course, for detailed examination and analysis. We shall have occasion to state our position with regard to this plan more exactly in the course of later discussions.

In entering upon the work of our Committee, the Polish delegation feels sure that the negotiations which are about to begin will yield favourable results and that all the members of the Ten Nation Committee will show a spirit of constructive co-operation and understanding. We are confident that common sense will prevail in international relations, which should be centred on problems worthy of mankind, on peaceful co-operation in the struggle for economic progress and for the advancement of science and culture in the service of mankind.

Mr. MARIOLA (Romania) (translation from French): The Government of the People's Republic of Romania and the Romanian people attach very great importance to the work of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament.
Basing itself on the principle of the peaceful co-existence and co-operation of all countries, regardless of their political and social regimes, the Romanian Government has always spoken, and has always acted, within the limits of its possibilities, in support of disarmament and the elimination of force and violence from international life.

In expressing my Government's satisfaction to see the long-awaited beginning of the work of the Ten Nation Committee, the Romanian delegation would, first of all, like to stress the interest with which all the peoples of the world view the mission entrusted to our Committee.

Attempts have often been made in the past to justify the armaments race by reasons of so-called national or international security or by the desire to maintain the balance of power. But the great importance which the peoples of the whole world attach to the work of our Committee, and especially to its results, stems from the fact that, far from having increased the security of peoples and of States, the armaments race has considerably augmented uncertainty, suspicions and international tension.

Far from having given anyone a feeling of security, the armaments race has only reinforced the certainty of the horrors and unprecedented destruction of war which it could generate.

The agreement of four of the greatest world powers to set up our Committee and, consequently, to resume disarmament negotiations on a fresh basis was rightly welcomed by world public opinion as a sign of the relaxation of tension which is beginning to appear in international relations and which, we hope, will continue.

We have reached the point where elimination of the material means for waging war has become a basic task which the international community must accomplish without delay.

This is the correct interpretation, as we see it, of General Assembly Resolution No. 1378, adopted at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly. This resolution states:

"Considering that the question of general and complete disarmament is the most important one facing the world today".

This being so, the delegation of Romania has no doubt whatsoever that the aim of the work of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament should be precisely to conclude an agreement on general and complete disarmament which would then be accepted by all States.
The only criterion by which the effectiveness of the work of our Committee can be judged should be the extent to which it will succeed in approaching this goal.

The evolution of modern military technology and the danger represented by the virtually unlimited accumulation of weapons of mass destruction mean that in any programme of disarmament the time factor assumes an importance which affects the very essence of the problem.

Humanity cannot any longer allow the armaments race to continue without running formidable risks.

Any programme of general and complete disarmament that our Committee may adopt necessarily lays down specific time-limits for its execution.

It is, of course, desirable that those limits should be as short as possible.

The resolution of the United Nations General Assembly recommends this Ten Nation Committee to consider the proposals which were laid before the General Assembly of the United Nations.

By the courtesy of the United States delegation we were able a few hours ago to acquaint ourselves with the plan put forward by the five Western members of our Committee. This plan will apparently replace that which was submitted to the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly by the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Romanian Government has already had occasion to give its views on the general and complete disarmament plan which was submitted to the fourteenth session of the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union. In the opinion of the Romanian delegation the Soviet Union's plan is the one which best meets the requirements of our Committee's work as set forth in the General Assembly resolution. It might form a good starting point for constructive negotiations aimed at the conclusion of an agreement acceptable to all countries. The Romanian delegation considers that the principle of general and complete disarmament should be put into effect by a concrete programme of actions judiciously planned and balanced, which would lead fairly soon to the abolition of all armed forces and armaments under appropriate international control, and to the elimination of military rivalries between States. It should include practical measures which, as soon as the plan is adopted, would substantially contribute to stopping the armaments race and to a favourable expansion of international relations.
our judgment will be based on the extent to which the various proposals put before us comply with the aims of the Committee's work, i.e. the conclusion of an agreement on general and complete disarmament, but we shall examine in a constructive spirit the new plan submitted by the United States, Canada, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.

In the short time we have had at our disposal for studying this plan we have, nevertheless, noted that the aim it proposes to achieve falls short of the task which the Ten Nation Committee was given under the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly already mentioned. It is not, as would appear at first glance, a plan of general and complete disarmament to be implemented within a specific time-limit, but rather a collection of preliminary conditions to be accepted and studies to be made before starting negotiations on an agreement for general and complete disarmament.

It can hardly be overlooked, for example, that nothing more is said in the new plan of the only concrete measure of disarmament that was included in the former British plan for the first stage — the extension to all countries of the agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear tests which the three nuclear Powers are now negotiating here in Geneva. Nor can we overlook the fact that the levels proposed for the armed forces are, at least in the case of one of the four great Powers, higher than the levels to be reached after a short lapse of time and that no limits whatsoever are mentioned for two other great Powers.

Again the authors of this plan have not dropped the idea of replacing control of the concrete measures of disarmament adopted by control of the armaments and the military and security installations of the different States. This attitude, as we know only too well, has for a long time past blocked the path towards any disarmament agreement and cannot possibly help to bring about an agreement in future.

The Romanian delegation considers that the exchanges of views which will take place in our Committee should highlight both the provisions likely to be included in an agreement for general and complete disarmament and the positions which must necessarily be abandoned if an agreement is to be possible.

In concluding these few general remarks the delegation of Romania wishes to thank the Government of Switzerland, and the Geneva authorities, for the hospitality which they have extended to us. It also thanks the representative of
the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for their warm welcome and the good wishes expressed. It also voices the hope that the interest shown and the trust placed by the peoples of the world in the work of the Committee will be fully rewarded by the success of our work, that is to say, by the conclusion of an agreement on general and complete disarmament.

Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): Mr. Chairman and fellow delegates, I am instructed to deliver a message of greetings, dated 14 March 1960, to the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament from Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union:

"On behalf of the Soviet Government and on my own behalf I extend greetings to the participants of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament, which is beginning its work at Geneva.

The Ten Nation Committee is entrusted with a most important and responsible task, namely, to work out within the shortest possible time practical ways of bringing about general and complete disarmament, thus putting into effect the recommendation of the General Assembly at its fourteenth session, which was unanimously approved by all Members of the United Nations. Today, when weapons of terrible destructive power — atom and hydrogen bombs and inter-continental missiles — have been created, the question of disarmament has become the major and most vital problem of the present time.

The Soviet Union is doing all it can to move the disarmament problem forward from its state of standstill. Last September the Soviet Government submitted to the United Nations for consideration proposals for general and complete disarmament, which were transmitted to the Ten Nation Committee for thorough consideration. It is general and complete disarmament that is the most reliable and surest means of eliminating wars forever from the life of human society. The Soviet Union is fully determined to make general and complete disarmament a reality. It has demonstrated its desire to back this determination with positive deeds by the recent decision to reduce its armed forces further by 1,200,000 men, and this, in our view, is bound to contribute to the creation of favourable conditions for the negotiations on general and complete disarmament for which you are now gathered at Geneva."
The Soviet Government has given instructions to its representative on the Ten Nation Committee to contribute in every possible way to fruitful work by the Committee, and to strive for the speediest preparation of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. On behalf of the Soviet Government I should like to express the hope that the other participants of the Ten Nation Committee will also make their contribution to the practical solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament. The Soviet Government, for its part, is ready to give careful consideration to all proposals aimed at the achievement of this goal.

I send to the participants of the Committee our wishes for successful and fruitful work for the good of the peoples. I am deeply convinced that the day is not far off when the age-old dream of mankind will come true and the world will live without weapons and without wars.

N. Khrushchev,
Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR."

Allow me now, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, to express, first of all, our gratitude to the Swiss Government and to the authorities of the Canton and City of Geneva who have made it possible for us to hold the meetings of the Committee in Geneva.

At the same time, the Soviet delegation extends sincere greetings to the representatives of all countries who are meeting at this Conference of the Ten Nation Disarmament Committee.

We note with satisfaction also the presence at the opening meeting of our Committee of Mr. Padilla Nervo, the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, whose statement shows the great importance the Commission attaches to our work.

Our Committee is faced with a task of tremendous historical importance, namely, to prepare an agreement on the implementation of general and complete disarmament under international control. This task stems from the resolution unanimously adopted by the fourteenth session of the General Assembly in which it was recognized that the question of general and complete disarmament "is the most important one facing the world today" (A/RES/1378/XIV). This resolution also called upon the governments of all countries to make every effort for the earliest achievement of "a constructive solution of this problem" (ibid).
(Mr. Zorin, USSR)

Only such a radical solution of the disarmament problem can rid nations of the threat of nuclear war with its unprecedentedly serious consequences for mankind and can create sound guarantees for the safety of all States both great and small. Under a system of general disarmament the development of peaceful relations between States will be ensured fully and for all time, and all possibility of some States resorting to force against other States will be ruled out.

General and complete disarmament is consonant with the interests of all States. It places all States in an equal situation. It will make it possible to overcome also those difficulties in the solution of the question of control which invariably arose when attempts were made to solve the disarmament problem partially. General and complete disarmament will provide the possibility of switching huge material and human resources from the production of weapons of death and destruction to satisfaction of the peaceful needs of the peoples. It will make it possible to render assistance to less developed countries on such a scale as will ensure an early liquidation of their age-old economic backwardness.

These considerations form the basis of the now universally familiar proposal for general and complete disarmament in three stages over four years, which was submitted on 18 September 1959 on behalf of the Soviet Union by Mr. N.S. Khrushchev, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, at the fourteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Soviet Government and the entire Soviet people are firmly convinced of the necessity and feasibility of this programme of general and complete disarmament. The idea of general and complete disarmament is finding ever-increasing support in the world. As was recently stated in the declaration of the member States of the Warsaw Treaty, the proposal on disarmament put forward by the Soviet Government expresses the common view of these States, of all the socialist countries.

The Governments of India, Indonesia, Burma and Afghanistan have expressed high appreciation of, and support for, the Soviet proposals on general and complete disarmament. This is testified to by the joint communiques of these countries and of the Soviet Union published in connexion with the recent visit of the Head of the Soviet Government to those countries. General and complete disarmament is supported by the immense majority of the population of all the continents of the globe, of all States.
The Soviet Government, on its part, is doing its utmost to bring the programme of general and complete disarmament into effect at the earliest possible date. By reducing its army by 1,200,000 men, unilaterally, without waiting for an international agreement on general and complete disarmament, the Soviet Union is doing its utmost to facilitate and bring nearer the attainment of such an agreement.

We are, of course, aware that difficulties too may arise on the way towards a solution of the problem. There still exist in the world forces which offer stubborn resistance to general disarmament. Without venturing to come out openly against general and complete disarmament at the present time, they are trying to evade a practical solution of this problem. Instead of agreeing on concrete measures for the implementation of general and complete disarmament within a definite time-limit, they are putting forward, for instance, the objective of a lengthy study of various technical problems and forms of control over armaments, as well as measures for allegedly ensuring the security of States, while leaving the practical solution of the question of general disarmament to some indefinite date in the far-off future.

These circles are not only trying to hinder the implementation of general and complete disarmament; they are also taking steps to intensify further the armaments race. Surely this is shown by such steps as preparing to create combined nuclear forces of the NATO military bloc, or arrangements to establish military bases for the Federal Republic of Germany in Spain and a number of other States, and by the persistent effort to evade the complete discontinuance of all nuclear weapon tests in spite of the universal demand by the peoples of all countries to stop such tests for all time.

What is the trend of events going to be next? Will the world be witnessing a continuation of an unrestrained race in nuclear missile armaments, and a further increase of the threat of war with the use of weapons of mass destruction, or will there be drafted and concluded an agreement on general and complete disarmament, that is to say, an agreement for the complete destruction of all instruments and means of war?

The Soviet delegation believes that, in the interests of ensuring stable peace and of peaceful co-existence among States, the Ten Nation Committee should promptly proceed to the practical implementation of the General Assembly's decision which endorsed the idea of general and complete disarmament and transmitted the Soviet
proposals on this question to the Committee for detailed consideration. In our view, a treaty on general and complete disarmament should be elaborated in the course of such consideration and, as a priority, agreement should be reached on the basic provisions of such a treaty.

The Soviet delegation will determine, in the light of the above facts, its attitude towards all proposals on disarmament problems which may be submitted by other delegations for the Committee's consideration. With regard to the proposals which, as already announced, our Western partners intend to put forward and to which certain delegations have referred already at this meeting, our first impression is that these proposals will not contain the realistic provisions needed for carrying out general and complete disarmament, and that the actual approach to this problem leaves its practical solution open to question.

We count on the businesslike cooperation of all delegations in finding a constructive solution of the problem facing us of drafting an agreement on the general and complete disarmament of States. The Soviet delegation, for its part, is prepared to consider any additions and amendments to the Soviet programme of general and complete disarmament, as well as other possible proposals directed towards a practical solution of this lofty and noble task.

As is said in today's message of greeting from Chairman Khrushchev, the Soviet Government has given instructions to the Soviet delegation "to contribute in every possible way to fruitful work by the Committee, and to strive for the speediest preparation of a treaty on general and complete disarmament." The Soviet delegation will strictly adhere to these instructions.

The peoples of the world expect a practical solution of the question of general and complete disarmament to result from the work of our Committee. A great responsibility has thus been placed upon us and we must make every effort to justify the hopes of the peoples.

Mr. GRAYSBY-GORE (United Kingdom): As others have done, I too would like to express the thanks of my Government to the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the very extensive help that the United Nations is providing for this conference. We are extremely grateful to him for these facilities and for the encouraging message from the Secretary-General himself which he has read out to us.
I am also very glad to add my own words of welcome to Senor Padilla Nervo who is present with us on this occasion as the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. He has personally been a staunch and energetic supporter of the great cause of disarmament for many years, and it is only fitting that he should be here as a reminder to us of all those other nations who, though not present at this conference, have a deep and abiding interest in our proceedings. I trust that we shall none of us forget during our negotiations all those who will be waiting patiently, or perhaps impatiently, for us to succeed in our important task.

We are also grateful to the Swiss Government and to the authorities of Geneva for another display of their unfailing hospitality.

I am sure we all hope that the opening of this Conference will constitute a turning point in post-war history. For it can mark the day upon which after so many fruitless attempts we start down the road to disarmament. No one looking back on the sad tale of lost opportunities and successive failures can avoid wondering whether it is possible for us to make this major break-through, but I have gained the impression that our negotiations on this occasion take place in an atmosphere more favourable to success than at any time since the end of the war. That both East and West have an overwhelming mutual interest in disarmament is beyond dispute. The problem is: how are we to give all the nations concerned the assurance that the process itself will not endanger their security? How do we ensure that at each stage the balance of military power is not significantly changed? For if the balance, precarious though it may be, is upset we shall not have diminished the risks of war, we shall have increased them, and thus betrayed the aim and purpose that have brought us here.

Nevertheless, no sane or rational man can be satisfied with the present state of affairs in the world when, in a time of peace, arms budgets are many times higher than they were just before the outbreak of the second world war. It would be a depressing commentary upon the intelligence of the human race if we could find no better way of safeguarding peace and the security and independence of nations than by a huge expenditure upon a vast range of powerful armaments which everyone prays will never be used.
I do not intend today to go into the reasons for this present state of affairs; the lack of trust between one country and another; the lack of confidence in each other; and the political differences which divide us. But this condition exists and any proposals, if they are to be acceptable, must be such that they give equal security to all. Our goal of comprehensive disarmament must therefore be arrived at by successive stages, each of which preserves a satisfactory military balance between countries and groups of countries. The balance must be retained, but at a steadily decreasing level of forces and armaments.

This process once started should itself generate an increasing momentum, because the very existence of a disarmament agreement which was being faithfully implemented would have a beneficial effect upon the whole international political atmosphere. Confidence would grow, political problems would be more easily solved and the very factors that now compel nations to provide themselves with such formidable armed forces, would tend to disappear. As in so many things it is the first step that presents the greatest difficulty. If we had once made a start and were then able to experience the effective operation of a disarmament plan, confidence would grow and we might well find the next steps far less daunting than they now perhaps appear.

Nor should we overlook the other real benefits which would flow from the process of disarmament. At the moment we all expound what to most people seems a deeply shocking proportion of our resources in minds as well as in materials in order to equip our forces with ever more sophisticated weapons of war. This misuse of human talents and the world's wealth is something we all recognize should be brought to an end. Everyone of us can think of a thousand things that cry out to be done and which could be done if only the resources were available to us. The needs of the less developed countries in which the majority of the human race still lives are particularly in our minds. We know that if through disarmament we can divert some of our energies to meet these urgent needs we can bring benefits to all mankind. This in itself should increase our determination to reach a worthwhile agreement at this Conference.

It is in this spirit that the United Kingdom has jointly sponsored the Five-Power Disarmament Plan which was published today. This is a plan for comprehensive disarmament which we regard as a development and expansion of the outline plan put forward by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd in his speech to the United Nations General Assembly on 17 September 1959. On that occasion the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary said:
"Our aim is to move forward by balanced stages towards the abolition of all nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction, and towards the reduction of other weapons and armed forces to levels which will rule out the possibility of aggressive war" (A/PV.798, para.47).

This aim is reflected in the Five-Power Plan and we hope that it will provide a foundation upon which all the ten nations assembled here can reach a fair and practicable agreement.

In this connexion I would like to draw the attention of certain of our colleagues who have spoken here this afternoon to a statement made by Mr. Khrushchev in Moscow on 28 September last. He said on that occasion:

"Let us not make hurried statements. Let us be patient and give the statesmen time to consider our proposals".

I think those were very wise words. And I think that quick reactions to new proposals put forward by any of us will not be useful in the working out of an agreement at this Conference. If we do reach a Ten-Power agreement we hope that flowing from that we can extend the process of disarmament and place it upon a world-wide basis. We feel fortified by the knowledge that this is the goal for which the people of all nations long, and we must prove worthy of their trust in us.

I personally regard it as a great privilege to be attending this Conference. I can think of no finer task, no higher aim to which a man might dedicate himself than to bring peace to the world through disarmament. My country sincerely believes in the need for disarmament. It has the will to achieve it. In this spirit we shall work patiently and diligently until as we hope our labours are crowned with success.

Mr. REYNOLDS (United States of America): I wish to express my thanks, and those of my Government, for the hospitality which is being accorded to us by the Federal Government of Switzerland, by this city, and by the Republic and Canton of Geneva. We are most grateful to the Secretary-General for the facilities made available by the United Nations. I share the appreciation expressed by my colleagues for the helpful message from the Secretary-General and the welcoming remarks of Dr. Protitch and Mr. Padilla Nervo. It is appropriate that this Conference should convene in a country which for so long has been at peace with the world, whose people enjoy those freedoms which we hold sacred,
We share a heavy burden. We must, in the words of the Foreign Ministers of September last, "explore, through mutual consultation, avenues of possible progress toward ... agreements and recommendations on the limitation and reduction of all types of armaments and armed forces under effective international control." (U.N./4/)

We must patiently address ourselves to the task of designing a workable plan of general disarmament, in a world in which man can live at peace with himself, where freedoms will flourish, secure from the fear of invasion by forces of oppression. A world of peace under law, this is the goal -- disarmament, a means of achieving it.

There is, throughout the world, an all-pervasive yearning for security and peace. But peace -- merely the absence of armed conflict -- is not in itself sufficient. My country could have enjoyed such a peace during the past two wars. It chose, rather, to fight to preserve our freedoms.

These past wars and the fear of nuclear war tend to distort our values. We must be ever-mindful that a disarmed world is not necessarily a secure world, a world in which man's way of life shall be of his own choosing -- where thought and action and expression shall be determined by each individual, limited only by those minimum restraints necessary for the preservation of those freedoms, a world in which the right of privacy is respected, in which the individual can pursue his own life unhampered by the intervention of the State, a world which venerates the dignity of man.

We must design a plan broad and promising in scope, and yet realistic in conception, a plan which moves by measured, safeguarded steps toward an attainable goal. Not one which raises false hopes of a sudden and easy solution to one of mankind's oldest problems -- the problem of abolishing war among nations -- but a plan which will bring to a halt this frightening race to create even more massive means of destruction.

Existing forces and armaments must be gradually but surely reduced, under proper safeguards, until no nation shall possess the power to destroy its neighbours.

Although we have a great distance to travel, the initial steps must not be overly ambitious. For until there is some greater degree of confidence and experience with arms control, only carefully-measured first steps are feasible. From these can come some reduction in the tensions, for which the world so anxiously waits.
Effective verification will be required. This is a difficult problem — more difficult for some than for others. It has been said that there must be no inspection without commensurate disarmament. Conversely, the security of the free world requires that there be no disarmament without commensurate inspection. We must patiently find our way through this difficulty.

Our speed will be determined by the willingness of States to permit verification of the fulfilment of their commitments.

We would only deceive ourselves and those millions who are hungering for peace, for relief from the horrors of a possible war, if we were to place our names on some grand, but hollow, design, some ambitious but unenforceable scheme, some unrealistically timed programme of disarmament.

Our most urgent task is, therefore, to sort out, to define, and to agree on those initial steps which will bring increased security to each nation, steps which will provide the experience and the evidence of performance that are essential to the more far-reaching measures to come.

We must determine those arrangements by which military forces can be limited and reduced.

We must arrange for reduction of armaments as forces are reduced.

We must find means to halt the uninhibited growth of nuclear stockpiles.

We must take immediate action to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space.

We must develop arrangements to afford greater protection to all States against surprise attack and to lessen the danger of war by accident or miscalculation.

We must agree on measures which will reduce the threat of missile attack.

We must establish an international disarmament organization to supervise and verify the performance of these arrangements.

When these first steps have been agreed, we should then proceed to design those final measures necessary to attain the ultimate goal. National armaments and forces should be radically reduced. The production of weapons of mass destruction should be prohibited, and, so far as scientific knowledge makes verification feasible, we should move toward their final elimination. Offensive military missiles should be brought under control, to the end of their elimination from national arsenals.
As arms are reduced, international arrangements must be strengthened for settling difficulties among nations in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Certain universally accepted rules of law must be established, backed by a universally recognized international court. For although in the time of those now alive general disarmament may be achieved, differences among nations will remain.

The call to arms has been the historic means of settling such differences.

There must therefore come into being, as national armaments diminish, an international force within the framework of the United Nations to preserve the peace, a force to ensure that seeds of conflict shall not mature to the point where small nations less endowed with the elements of national power, or even large nations, would be threatened by a more powerful and more highly-organized State.

The establishment of such a force will be fraught with great difficulties, but how much more difficult and unhappy the alternative — the continuing mounting diversion of the efforts, energies and lives of men to the production of the means of their own self-destruction.

These problems affect not only the ten nations assembled here in Geneva, but all of the United Nations. Happily, the world is not without a foundation on which to build such indispensable machinery. The United Nations Charter contains this mandate:

"to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace . . . and to bring about . . . adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace."

For the past fourteen years the United Nations has been gathering valuable experience in these fields. This Disarmament Committee, comprised of only ten of the members of the United Nations, cannot finally decide upon matters relating to the improvement of the international peace-keeping machinery of the world community as a whole. It is, however, our task to help identify the kind of international machinery necessary for the settlement of disputes and for the safeguarding of the peace in a disarmed world.
With the reduction of expenditures for armaments, even greater means can be devoted to human welfare and to the further development of those new and growing nations in the world which are so in need of assistance.

While we are engaged here, and until, as we hope, the agreements which we shall set down are implemented, my country will continue to maintain the strength necessary to assure its security and to meet its commitments to the world. Past experience has taught us the tragic lesson that to relax prematurely, to permit an imbalance of military power, is not conducive to disarmament and to the just and secure peace which we seek.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", our most precious possession. We shall not let our liberties erode, nor shall we bargain them away. We shall proceed carefully, lest, in the course of our quest, we lose those freedoms which we cherish more deeply than our lives.

I should like to close our opening day with a message from the President of the United States:

"The ten nations which will begin disarmament discussions at Geneva on 15 March, 1960, have both the opportunity and a great responsibility to serve mankind. The interest of the United States in disarmament and my own strong personal feelings on this subject are well known. I want to take this opportunity to emphasize that the United States is prepared to explore every possible avenue to find a way toward general disarmament."

"We must not be pessimistic because of the lack of success in past disarmament negotiations. Nor should we necessarily expect immediate, dramatic, and far-reaching strides, although we would certainly welcome such progress. Rather, it should be our objective in these negotiations to contribute by carefully balanced, phased and safeguarded arms control agreements to the ultimate objective of a secure, free and peaceful world in which international disputes will be settled in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter."

"As the United States representative to the Ten Nations Disarmament Conference, I know that you will exert every possible effort to reach agreement on measures which will lessen the danger of another armed conflict, ease the burden of armaments and thereby contribute to the attainment of the ultimate goal of general disarmament and a peaceful
world. I should like you to convey to the other delegates at the Ten Nations Disarmament Conference my earnest hope that the Conference will discharge its solemn obligation to mankind and thus contribute to this goal."

Mr. PROTITCH (Representative of the Secretary-General): This meeting of the Conference stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.