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Chairman: Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic)

CONTENTS

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Dhanapala (Sri Lanka)
Miss Dever (Belgium)
Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat (Viet Nam)
Mr. Stephanou (Greece)
Mr. Kapllani (Albania)
Mr. Dumevi (Ghana)

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

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The meeting was called to order at 1.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 46 TO 65 AND 144 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. DHANAPALA (Sri Lanka): Mr. Chairman, I shall observe rule 110 of the rules of procedure, since you are already aware of my sentiments towards you and the other officers of the Committee. I shall also be brief because this is a time for action in the field of disarmament and not for words.

Understandably, the repercussions of Reykjavik have dominated our discussions in the First Committee this week. Whether it was an opportunity lost irretrievably or the beginning of a new chapter in disarmament is still unclear. We cannot of course conceal our own disappointment that the weekend did not result in concrete agreements or even the promise of agreements to come. That failure was not caused by lack of time. However, we console ourselves over the fact that the post-mortem reports on both sides have dwelt less on mutual recrimination and more on the need to continue to work towards agreement. That is as it should be, and we are glad to see the two sides go back to negotiating in Geneva. It is a clear recognition that the issues of disarmament and security are too important to allow oneself the irresponsible luxury of sulking in one's tent.

Another positive development in the bilateral talks between the two most powerful nations on earth is the emergence of a holistic view of disarmament and security. Common security knits together the several areas of disarmament and the different geographical regions. We cannot have disarmament and security in one region and an unbridled arms race and insecurity in others. Nor can we abolish one category of weapons only to construct new weapon systems elsewhere.

A retrospective view of the much heralded International Year of Peace leads us to the conclusion that, whilst we have as yet no significant reduction in arms, the climate in the field of disarmament remains encouraging. With the resumption of

(Mr. Chanapala, Sri Lanka)

bilateral negotiations in 1985 and the important November 1985 summit, we know that a number of proposals have been exchanged. The successful conclusion of the Stockholm talks and the positive outcome of the Second Review Conference on the Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons Convention were further cause for satisfaction. There will also be fewer nuclear tests this year than before, as a consequence of the unilateral Soviet decision to have a moratorium on nuclear testing.

The initiatives for disarmament have not emerged only from those who possess the largest nuclear arsenals. In August this year, the countries of the five-continent peace initiative issued a declaration of far-reaching significance, accompanied by a document on verification measures. At Harare the Final Declaration Of the eighth summit of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries contained important principles on disarmament and international security affirmed by 101 nations. The Reykjavik meeting had the potential of realizing in large measure the aspirations of the International Year of Peace. That opportunity was missed. Whence comes such another?

The First Committee is the appropriate multilateral forum where we, nuclear and non-nuclear nations, voice our concerns on disarmament and security issues when addressing the agenda items before us. This year our discussions will necessarily be curtailed to some extent. The programme of work will still allow us a full debate on the various agenda items and provide opportunities to express our collective views through the draft resolutions we adopt.

However, it is opportune to sound a note of caution at a time when the financial crisis of the United Nations has made economies necessary. I know the subject is being debated elsewhere, but our concern to protect the machinery established by the first special session on disarmament must be expressed here. We are happy to note that in its report the Group of 18 makes no suggestions for any

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

scaling down of the existing multilateral disarmament institutions, both deliberative and negotiating. There is still a danger, however, that misconceived ideas for budgetary savings may be applied across the board seriously affecting United Nations bodies devoted to disarmament. This may serve the interests of those who have never welcomed the multilateralization of discussion and negotiation on disarmament issues. For the non-nuclear and non-aligned countries in particular, this would be a retrograde step, and we hope this is borne in mind. We have consistently upheld the principle that we have an inalienable right to discuss and negotiate our common survival, and the institutions for this purpose must be safeguarded.

This year we had looked forward to the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development being held in Paris, as originally scheduled. Our disappointment over the postponement of the Conference needs to be translated now into hard-headed preparations for the success of the Conference, which must be held in 1987. The eminent Group of Experts has furnished us with valuable and perceptive insights to the issues involved. This provides us with a basis to fashion an international consensus on a programme of action we can adopt when the Conference takes place. We hope that participation at the Conference will be universal.

The Indian Ocean, as Sri Lanka's immediate security environment, has been of fundamental importance to us. The great-Power military presence in the Indian Ocean and the tensions this generates continue to be of serious concern to the littoral and hinterland States. The Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace in 1971 set out the guiding principles of how we could insulate this region from great-Power rivalries. In 1979, the States of the region adopted 11 principles of agreement for the implementation of the Declaration. It remains for an international conference to be convened for the process of implementing the

(Mr. Ohanapala, Sri Lanka)

Declaration to go on. Sri Lanka continues to be hopeful that the Conference will be held in Colombo after the Ad Hoc Committee has concluded its preparatory work at a date not later than 1988.

The Committee has been assigned a number of agenda items for discussion and action. In a general debate it is of course not possible to touch on all of them. It is also difficult to make an invidious selection. And yet some issues stand out for urgent action. Such an issue is the cessation of all nuclear test explosions. For over three decades the groundswell of international public opinion for a comprehensive test-ban treaty has burgeoned. The achievement of a partial test-ban Treaty in 1963, followed by the still unratified threshold test-ban treaty, and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty, were undoubtedly the result of this international pressure. Treaty commitments in the partial test-ban Treaty and the non-proliferation Treaty remain unfulfilled, while nuclear testing serves the purpose of facilitating the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons.

The deficiency of a step-by-step approach is that it legitimizes a certain level of testing. Moreover, the time lag between the steps distances the prospect of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. We should remind ourselves that it is almost a quarter century since we had a partial test-ban Treaty and a comprehensive test-ban treaty has still not been achieved. The Mexico Declaration of the five-continent peace initiative made a major contribution towards the cessation of nuclear testing by the offer of assistance to achieve adequate verification arrangements. The Group of Scientific Experts in the Conference on Disarmament has shown the way to organizing an international seismic network. It is a feasible programme for establishing the verification arrangements we need.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

It is at least encouraging that the United States of America and the USSR have placed the nuclear testing issue on their bilateral negotiating agenda.

Multilateral work on that important issue remains at a standstill because of a lack of consensus in the Conference on Disarmament in regard to the final objective of all our endeavours - the cessation of nuclear testing. If that be the case, where does the step-by-step approach take us?

The prevention of an arms race in outer space has long engaged the efforts of my delegation, which has been supported by the delegation of Egypt in a modest attempt to keep space from being converted into another theatre for the arms race. We have been gratified to see over the years that the Non-Aligned resolution on that important subject has emerged as the only resolution in the General Assembly and that the number of affirmative votes has steadily increased. It is a reflection of the widespread conviction that it is urgent that space be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Developments at previous sessions implied a consensus on the basic principles underlying General Assembly resolution 40/87. Disagreement persists on the course of action we should take multilaterally as a logical sequel to this. We are at a crucial stage, for international action to prevent an arms race in space is now possible. This session presents the opportunity to begin that process while affirming that existing constraints must hold. We can surely agree on the need to ban offensive weapons like anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons, dismantling existing systems and prohibiting the deployment of new weapons. The deployment of weapons in space will be an irreversible step and is therefore a step that must never be taken.

The quest for invulnerability is inconsistent with the renunciation of the aim of military superiority. The lure of high technology warfare is a dangerous one,

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

considering recent tragedies caused by the fallibility of technology. A nuclear war by computer error is a real danger. National security is not enhanced by extending the arms race into space. It is, on the contrary, imperilled by a further escalation of the arms race. The lesson of the past 40 years is that increasing numbers of nuclear weapons have failed to ensure security.

As a party to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, Sri Lanka is concerned at recent press reports about Israel's nuclear capability. We also remain disturbed over reports of South Africa's nuclear installations. The vital need for assurances to non-nuclear countries must be satisfied in the face of a threat of horizontal and vertical proliferation. The conventional arms race must be curbed. We are pleased at the progress made in the Conference on Disarmament. On a convention to ban chemical weapons.

Nuclear disarmament remains the priority issue in the field of disarmament. While the United States and the USSR have failed to agree on arms reduction in the course of six rounds of bilateral talks, the only multilateral negotiating body - the Conference on Disarmament - has been crippled by a lack of consensus to act on the nuclear issues on its agenda.

The complete elimination of nuclear weapons has finally been accepted as a practical goal by the United States and the USSR. A world without nuclear weapons is therefore within our grasp as we enter the twenty-first century. It will be a world where no shields are needed.

The enormous significance of Reykjavik is the mutual acceptance by the two super-Powers of the fact that nuclear weapons can be eliminated through phased and verifiable reductions. We finally glimpse a vision of a civilized world where security is ensured through disarmament arrangements and not through the fear and

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

intimidation caused by a relentless escalation of the nuclear-arms race. The achievement of that vision is our collective responsibility as equal nations striving for a better world.

Miss DEVER (Belgium) (interpretation from French) : I should like, sir, to convey my delegation's satisfaction at seeing you preside over the work of this Committee. We know the task you face is a difficult one, particularly this year, but we are all sure that you will discharge your duties in an exemplary fashion. My delegation will do everything possible to assist you in the exercise of your important functions.

The United Kingdom, in its capacity as President of the 12 countries of the European Community, presented a general outline of the problems related to disarmament. I shall highlight some of those problems which my country considers the most important.

The United Nations has proclaimed this year the International Year of Peace. Peace is the most precious resource of mankind. It must be persistently pursued despite disappointments, the conflicts that still beset some parts of the world and the difficulties found along the path to genuine disarmament in conditions of stability and, above all, of equal security for all. All these are reasons for persevering and not for discouragement. The process of disarmament can only be gradual. What is important is to set it in motion and reach a first milestone, no matter how modest.

The Geneva summit and the development of the negotiations that followed it has given rise to expectations - which were perhaps too optimistic - for the possible results of the Reykjavik meeting. The degree of disillusionment that resulted should not make us lose sight of the new and promising proposals exchanged last

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

weekend at the highest level. Those proposals remain on the table. They form a basis for progress, which we hope will be swift, particularly in the direction of an agreement on the elimination of intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

My country remains convinced that Reykjavik will come to be seen as an important stage in the disarmament process, the ultimate aim of which is gradually to free the world from the spectre of war, be it conventional or nuclear.

The Stockholm Conference ended on a positive note. This was proof that where political will exists, an objective that may have been too hastily considered to be beyond reach is, indeed, attainable.

That Conference did not, of course, cover arms reduction, but dealt with confidence- and security-building measures. But the result was no less important for that, because in the field of disarmament nothing will be achieved without mutual trust. A great deal remains to be done before true confidence will have been established among all countries - confidence which will eventually contribute to eliminating risks and consequently significantly reducing arsenals.

The measures agreed in Stockholm are going to have to be implemented, and only experience will allow us to judge their specific contribution to the disarmament process. This should not, however, keep us from thinking right now about the pursuit and furtherance of the process begun in Helsinki in 1975. That will be one of the items considered at the Vienna Review Conference, in which my country will participate in a manner both critical and positive and in an open-minded spirit of realism.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

Nor should the success achieved at Stockholm, important as it may be, make us lose sight of the fact that for 13 years now other negotiations have been taking place in Vienna relating precisely to the thorny question of the reduction of forces in Europe. It would be unthinkable for the spirit of Stockholm not to be reflected in the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions, especially since proposals have been made to extend their scope. This ambitious initiative is indeed commensurate with the challenge posed by the situation regarding conventional weapons in Europe. But the decisions to be taken, in due time, on such an extension will certainly be influenced by the stage - we hope a positive stage - reached by then in the negotiations on mutual and balanced force reductions. In respect of these negotiations too, the time has come to show the necessary political will and a spirit of compromise that takes into account the inescapable requirements of verification.

It seems to us that the Geneva negotiations have entered a crucial stage, especially those related to intermediate-range systems - which are of interest to my country as well.

Similarly, reasons for some hope remain in regard to strategic questions. To the extent that comparisons can be made, a substantial reduction of offensive arsenals is, for the first time, perhaps conceivable. As for outer space, we do not see why the parties could not show the necessary realism and agree on a solution that would maintain the anti-ballistic-missile treaty until they agreed on a system which would include a defensive element, in the desired conditions of stability - an element that we do not think it reasonable to reject out of hand.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

It is within that overall context of the negotiations on the reduction of nuclear arsenals that we should consider the problem of the cessation of nuclear tests - a problem that has been before the General Assembly for many years now. Belgium has been paying very close attention to this complex problem. We understand why it is at the centre of a debate which relates not only to security aspects but also to the balance in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which my country strongly supports.

Belgium welcomed the Soviet decision to prolong its unilateral moratorium. That was an important gesture, whose political significance we do not underestimate. The same applies to the Declaration by the six Heads of State and Government at their meeting this summer in Ixtapa.

A moratorium, praiseworthy as it may be, is still a unilateral and voluntary measure that does not offer all the required guarantees with regard to either verification or duration. The cessation of nuclear tests is not an end in itself: it should be considered within the wider scope of nuclear disarmament. Only a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, a binding juridical instrument par excellence - the cornerstone of which is a complete verification system - could guarantee absolute and universal respect.

We know that the question of nuclear testing has been discussed in contact⁵ between the super-Powers, and we welcome that. But it is important to contribute to the search for possible solution⁵ in order to spur on the debate. It was in that spirit: that the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Tindemans, in his statement in the general debate at the beginning of this General Assembly session, put forward the idea of an agreement between the super-Powers limiting the number of nuclear tests. That agreement would be linked to a system of exchange of information on scientific and technical data, something provided for also in the

(Miss never, Belgium)

threshold test-ban treaty and the peaceful-nuclear-exploration treaty. The problem of the absence of ratification by one of the parties should not prevent that party from proceeding, voluntarily and as a gesture of good-will, to an exchange of information. Such an exchange of data could prevent misinterpretations and usefully supplement information provided by national observation systems. If, furthermore, on-site observations at the necessary measurements were to become possible in conditions offering the desired guarantees of scientific objectivity, reliable data could be gathered that would allow for better control of the effective responsiveness of the international seismic detection system. Moreover, there would be fewer problems in relation to the calibration and standardization of the equipment used.

Hence, Belgium proposes that, in a first stage, the two super-Powers begin by agreeing on a minimal programme of tests, exchanges of information and opening of sites to inspection, together with the activation of the international seismic detection system, so as to establish, on as objective bases as possible, conditions for effective verification of what could be, in the long run, a system for the total cessation of nuclear tests. Such an agreement would demonstrate the determination of the two countries to seek a solution to the problem of nuclear weapons in general and the cessation of nuclear tests in particular. This proposal should not lead to any reduction in the security of the two countries. Furthermore, it would have the advantage of offering a gradual and realistic approach that could strengthen confidence by means of greater transparency.

This bilateral, voluntary approach is suggested in order to avoid the difficulty that, in the present state of affairs, the internationalization of an information system could pose. In this area too, we must proceed by stages and gradually. Obviously, nothing would prevent the other nuclear military Powers from

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

associating themselves with the agreement or from taking the same voluntary approach. Belgium would be prepared to join in the preparation of such a verification system, but, obviously, the main parties concerned should take the initiative in this.

Disarmament comprises more than nuclear questions, however important they may be. The proliferation of conventional weapons, including the most advanced ones, and their use in conflicts, wars and various armed confrontations which the world has unfortunately been experiencing, makes it more than obvious that the conventional arms race must also be controlled.

In an increasingly interdependent world, these efforts designed to achieve a balanced reduction of forces, like the confidence- and security-building measures, cannot be limited to Europe. In our opinion, a regional approach to those questions remains the best way to contribute effectively not only to disarmament but also to the security of all-

At the international level, so far there is only the Geneva Conference on Disarmament - a forum where multilateral diplomacy is endeavouring to prepare solutions to the various disarmament problems on a worldwide scale, by the elimination of entire categories of weapons. Belgium finds that forum as important as ever, and we hope that everything will be done to enable the Conference to continue to play its role.

The session of the Conference on Disarmament that has just ended has not entirely met the expectations of all its participants. Some items on its agenda were not taken up, despite the hopes of some countries. But the picture is not completely dark. It should be noted that, thanks to contacts between the super-Powers, some progress has undoubtedly been made.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

On the **question of chemical weapons**, the recent work on a future **convention for a total prohibition of chemical weapons** has made **possible progress on some elements** - basically on the **destruction of ● stockpile of chemical weapons and production installations and on some institutional aspects of the convention**, as well as on the **drawing up of lists of chemical substances** which are **covered** by the convention and are reproduced in the **annexes**.

We must, however, conclude that in the **crucial area of verification a great deal remains to be done**. The **principle of "challenge inspection"** is still open for **discussion**. All the **parties involved in these negotiations must make concrete proposals** on that **precise point** - and we are expecting **this of the socialist countries**.

(Miss Dever, Belgium)

The decision to extend the work on the convention on chemical weapons beyond the usual sessions of the Conference on Disarmament further points to the urgent need to undertake a total ban of such weapons. Repeated violations of the Geneva Protocol, which have been pointed out for several years now, show that this action is necessary.

One is entitled to ask what should be done to bring an end to those violations while we await completion of the work of the Conference on Disarmament on this subject. For its part, Belgium believed in a system of control of international trade in a series of chemical substances as an effective means of hampering the use and possession of chemical weapons.

As the Committee is no doubt aware, the twelve European partners have just decided on an extension of the list of chemical substances subject to export controls in all its member States. That decision is by way of implementation of the Twelve's decision to put an end to the danger of chemical weapons. Surveys by the Secretary-General within the framework of the mission entrusted to him have proved useful, and Belgium wishes to take this opportunity to thank him and assure him of its full co-operation.

While the Conference on Disarmament has made encouraging progress in the area of chemical weapons, its record on other items on its agenda is discouraging. This year the work on nuclear tests has not been resumed, owing to a lack of mandate. I would mention in passing the work of the international group of seismic experts, which has continued its activities in the area of verification. It is essential for that work to be carried out in the coming year. A definitive solution to the problems of verification with regard to a nuclear-test ban must be sought with the co-operation of that group of experts, which has already a considerable amount of scientific and technical knowledge.

(Mine Dever, Belgium)

What has proved to be impossible in the area of nuclear tests has not been so in the area of outer space. On that agenda item an agreement was quickly reached to reinstate the ad hoc group with an exploratory mandate. Last month in Geneva the Review Conference on the Convention on Biological Weapons was held, and the final document issued at the close of that Conference is the very expression of the will of all parties to the Convention to maintain and strengthen its authority. Everything should be done so that the furtherance of science and biological knowledge is not used for purposes of biological weapons, which represent a terrifying threat to mankind and the effects of which are not entirely known.

The picture I have just sketched is, of course, incomplete, but it faithfully reflects the priorities my country has established in the area of arms control and disarmament. While so many other aspects could have been broached, Belgium prefers that stress be put on what is realistic and attainable in the context of international relations.

Mr. BUI XUAN NHAT (Viet Nam): On behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, I wish first of all to extend to you, Sir, our warmest congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Committee. Your unanimous election manifests not only the trust placed in your diplomatic skills and experience but also the high appreciation of the contributions made by the German Democratic Republic to the common struggle for peace and security in Europe and the world as a whole.

I should like also to extend our felicitations to the other Officers of the Committee and to associate myself with preceding speakers in thanking Ambassador All Alatas of Indonesia for his efforts in guiding the work of the First Committee during the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

The year 1986, the International Year of Peace, began with the shared hope of the international community for a healthier international atmosphere, after long

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

years of tension and confrontation. The summit meeting between the Soviet Union and the United States in Geneva, in November 1985, was welcomed as an important premise for improving relations between the two countries and thereby as a contribution to lessening tension in international relations. In this year of 1986 the world has once again witnessed further untiring efforts by all peace-loving countries towards promoting dialogue and curbing the arms race. Peace initiatives of great importance to the destiny of mankind have been advanced on every continent.

Of particular significance is the proposal to remove nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the world by the year 2000. The agreement reached at Stockholm constitutes a positive development, which not only enhances stability in Europe but also contributes to a healthier atmosphere throughout the world. Achieved in Europe, where at present the two largest opposing military alliances and the highest concentration of nuclear weapons in the world exist, the Stockholm agreement shows that with goodwill on all sides and serious efforts a framework for peaceful coexistence and the relaxation of tension can be found. The Reykjavik meeting between the Soviet Union and the United States is an important event in itself. Regrettably, the results of the meeting have not yet met world-wide expectations, in spite of the goodwill evinced by the Soviet Union. The Reykjavik meeting opened up a realistic possibility. We hope that the chance which has been missed will not be altogether lost and that the only remaining obstacle will soon be removed so that agreement may be reached, thus paving the way for mankind to return to a nuclear-free world.

It can be said without exaggeration that the international situation currently prevailing is very complicated, fraught with the danger of an annihilating nuclear war. The policy of "neo-globalism" of the imperialist forces has created continued tensions in the world and led to acts of State terrorism, intervention and

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

aggression in various regions. The racist attempt by the United States to upset the present strategic balance between itself and the Soviet Union has resulted in intensive arms-race programmes on Earth as well as specific material preparation for the "star wars" programme. And, what is more, disarmament negotiations remain deadlocked; disarmament agreements, including the important agreements, signed between the United States and the Soviet Union, such as the anti-ballistic missiles Treaty (ABM) and the SALT II Treaty are being threatened with nullification. With the present rapid pace of the arms race, and its new directions, disarmament negotiations will not only continue to lag far behind the arms race but will also never be able to control it.

International peace and security has always been the deepest aspiration of mankind. It has also been the objective of the international community's struggle for the past 40 years. During that period we have witnessed both the peaks of the cold war and the outbreaks of hot wars in many regions of the world. We have also seen rounds of a frenzied arms race, under various military and political doctrines which bear different names such as "massive retaliation" or "nuclear deterrence" but are in fact all aimed at gaining military superiority, running counter to the principle of equal security between States.

It has become increasingly evident that, in the nuclear and space age, the peace and security of a State cannot be ensured through the accumulation of armaments; rather the peace and security of each individual State, as well as that of the whole world, can be ensured only on the basis of a new, realistic and comprehensive approach to international issues and safeguarded within a comprehensive framework of security, embracing all aspects - military, political, economic and humanitarian.

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

At their recent summit Conference held from 1 to 6 September 1986, the Heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries reiterated:

"Historically, States have considered that they could achieve security through the possession of arms. The advent of nuclear weapons, has, however, radically changed this situation. Nuclear weapons are more than weapons of war; they are instruments of mass annihilation. The accumulation of weapons, in particular nuclear weapons, constitute a threat to the continued survival of mankind. It has therefore become imperative that States abandon the dangerous goal of unilateral security through armament and embrace the objective of common security through disarmament."

The threat of a nuclear war can be permanently removed only with the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. The comprehensive disarmament programme put forth by General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev on 15 January 1986 - the gist of which is the step-by-step liquidation by the year 2000 of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction - provides us with a practical framework for attaining that goal.

The eighth summit Conference held in Harare welcomed that highly important proposal and considered that:

"The objectives and priorities of this programme, which aimed at the complete elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth by all nuclear-weapon States by the end of this century, were largely in line with the stance which the non-aligned countries have consistently taken on these matters."

We concur in the universal rejection of the "nuclear deterrence" doctrine, which, in fact, is aimed at legitimizing the use of nuclear weapons and the unremitting intensification of the arms race. Recent studies on "nuclear winter"

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

have further proved the absurdity of those contentions which, after all, would have international peace based on the permanent existence of nuclear weapons.

International peace and security cannot be secured solely through sophisticated military technologies. The arguments in justification of the strategic defence initiative (SDI) programme are in contradiction with the conclusions drawn from the arms race during the past 40 years. Coupled with the development of nuclear weapons, the strategic defence initiative programme enhances first-strike capability, which gives rise to the illusion that such a strike can be launched without retaliation and therefore increases the danger of nuclear war. There is only one way to safeguard the security of all peoples, and that is by abolishing existing types of weapons, rather than creating new ones.

The most effective way to forestall the emergence of new types of nuclear weapons is to prohibit all nuclear-weapon tests immediately. We agree with the assessment made by the Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania, which was reiterated in their Mexico Declaration of 7 August 1986, that:

"no issue is more urgent and crucial today than bringing an end to all nuclear tests." (A/41/518, p. 4)

Regrettably, some people still seek to negate the important significance of the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests in quantitatively and qualitatively limiting the arms race, paving the way for nuclear disarmament and eliminating the danger of nuclear war.

While the Soviet Union has undertaken a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing and extended it four times, the United States has, continued with repeated nuclear-weapon tests disregarding world public opinion - including in the United States. The arguments of the United States justifying the need to conduct

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

nuclear-weapon test aimed at guaranteeing "the safety and reliability of the nuclear deterrent" are, by nature, arguments for perpetuating nuclear-weapon testing. Those arguments are inconceivable, as are also contentions regarding verification as an obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Numerous new proposals related to verification systems were put forth, including that of on-site inspection.

The leaders of the Delhi Six have outlined some additional measures to facilitate the verification of such a treaty, and they have received a positive response from the Soviet Union. The Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries strongly declared at the summit Conference held in Harare that a comprehensive test ban was a matter of the highest priority for the non-aligned countries and called upon the United States to join the Soviet Union in the former's moratorium on nuclear testing. The continuation of nuclear-weapon tests by other nuclear-weapon States, in whatever environment they may be conducted, is unjustifiable. A moratorium by all nuclear-weapon States on nuclear testing constitutes a major step towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests through bilateral talks between the Soviet Union and the United States, trilateral talks between the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, or through negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The United Nations has now adopted numerous resolutions on other important measures to avert nuclear war. World public opinion has for a long time now emphatically demanded that all nuclear-weapon States assume a commitment not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, to be followed by the signing of a legal instrument prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons and international arrangements at an early date to assure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

or threat of use of nuclear weapons. At its fortieth session, the General Assembly once again adopted three resolutions - two introduced by the non-aligned or neutral countries and the other by the socialist countries - calling for a nuclear freeze and stressing the existing propitious conditions for such a freeze. A qualitative and quantitative freeze on nuclear-weapon arsenals of all nuclear-weapon States would greatly help ensure stable factors for bilateral or multilateral negotiations for the reduction of nuclear weapons. We regret that one more year has passed without the Geneva Conference on Disarmament - the only multilateral disarmament negotiating body attended by all nuclear-weapon States - entering into any negotiations, or even enjoying appropriate working mechanisms for the two top priority agenda items, namely, cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, and prevention of nuclear war.

(Mr. **Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam**)

We hold that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, taking into account the characteristics of each region, assumes growing significance in the conditions of the present international situation. We are in favour of plans to create nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. In the same vein, Viet Nam strongly supports the desire of the peoples of the South Pacific to convert the South Pacific into a nuclear-free zone. The Powers within as well as outside the South Pacific region should recognize their responsibility to refrain from causing a new round of the arms race, especially in its nuclear aspects, and to contribute to the establishment of a framework of peaceful coexistence and stability in the region. In this spirit, Viet Nam has stated its support for the Indonesian proposal to make South-East Asia a nuclear-free zone.

In contrast to the attempts by the warlike forces to create military and political confrontation in the South Pacific region, the comprehensive system of security for Asia and the Pacific advanced by the Soviet Union in Vladivostok earlier this year constitutes an important and practical initiative aimed at achieving a framework of peaceful coexistence in the region, corresponding to the profound aspirations of the peoples living in the region, including the Vietnamese people.

As asserted in the Harare appeal by the Heads of State or Government of 100 non-aligned countries whose populations occupy two thirds of the world:

"in fact, the alternative today is not between war and peace, but between life and death. This makes the struggle for peace and for the prevention of nuclear war the principal task of our time".

The time has come to back up the flowery words about good-will and peace with specific actions. As declared by the head of the delegation of Viet Nam during the general debate at the forty-first session of the General Assembly:

(Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat, Viet Nam)

"In a world that must choose between life and death, any rejection of peace initiatives that could be decisive for the survival of our planet constitutes a crime against humanity." (A/41/PV.25, p. 83-85)

Mr. **STEPHANOU** (Greece) (interpretation from French) : Mr. Chairman, I wish to **begin by congratulating** you on **behalf of** my Government **and** on my own behalf **and at** the same time to **emphasize** your **long** experience in the disarmament **field** and your contribution over the years to the work of this **Committee**. I am **well** aware of **your abilities because** of your past performance, and I **wi**sh you **success in** your task. I also **congratulate** the two Vice-Chairmen **and** the **Rapporteur**.

Let me take this opportunity to refer **to** the **exemplary** manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador Alata, conducted our proceedings last year and also his personal contribution to making the **Committee's** work more productive.

Mr. **Renton**, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the **United Kingdom**, set forth on **14 October** in a **succinct and detailed** manner the views of the 12 States of the European Community with **regard** to disarmament. While I entirely **endorse** Mr. **Renton's** remarks, I wish **also** to present some **supplementary** views of the Greek Government on **certain matters**.

Greece, a country which has **been traditionally and firmly dedicated to peace** and **procedures** for the **peaceful** settlement of disputes, **could not fail to support any effort** or initiative **conducive to** the **speeding up of** the **disarmament process**. On the other hand, we oppose any act or omission impeding the disarmament process **and liable to result in increasing** the **number of** pretexts **for** the **use** or the threat of the use **of force, military intervention, occupation of territory by** foreign **forces and facts accomplis**.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

In that spirit, the Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Andreas Papandreu, took an active part in the initiative of the Heads of State and Government of six nations of five continents, set forth in the statements made on 22 March 1984, in New Delhi on 28 January 1985 and in Ixtapa on 7 August 1986, with the aim of co-operating with the Governments of the nuclear States and making every effort for the common security of mankind and for peace.

The problems we are confronting are such that, if we sincerely wish real progress in the strengthening of international peace and security, we must maintain a balance in the search for measures to increase confidence between the two blocs.

The mistrust prevailing among States must be dissipated. Greece is firmly dedicated to the principle that disarmament and international security are closely interrelated, all the time so since security in this nuclear age has world-wide dimensions. In response to the present threats to international security, it is absolutely necessary that all States take every possible measure to promote international peace and security.

Therefore my Government hopes that the two super-Powers, taking account of the imperative need for the maintenance of the strategic balance, will heed the fervent aspirations of the people of the world for the early attainment of nuclear disarmament. In this context, Greece subscribes to any initiative designed to achieve the mutual and gradual reduction of nuclear weapons of both East and West to the lowest possible levels, with a view to their total elimination, and supports all efforts to seek effective verification mechanisms.

In that spirit, Greece, which was looking forward to progress at the Reykjavik meeting on 12 October, is inclined to believe that the obstacles encountered will prove to be only a temporary setback. Consequently we hope that the differences in views which came to light can be overcome in subsequent negotiations. Settling such

(Mr. Btephanou, Greece)

negotiations in motion would be a constructive and timely contribution to raising the hopes of mankind for the strengthening of international peace and security.

As we believe that adequate verification measures form an indispensable part of arms control and disarmament agreements, the Greek Government is glad to note that some progress is discernible in regard to verification. Major differences which had seemed insurmountable are now being dealt with in serious negotiations, both multilaterally at the Geneva Disarmament Conference and in the dialogue between the two super-Powers.

This year the work of the Disarmament Conference has, as always, been followed by Greece with close attention. The negotiations on the concluding of a treaty banning chemical weapons have been encouraging, and we have the greatest hope for the concluding of such an agreement in 1987. Our optimism is attributable to, inter alia, the patience, imagination and spirit of continuity demonstrated by the negotiators of the States participating in that Conference.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The importance of an agreement on chemical weapons is so great that any progress in the area of verification, which currently is the moot contentious point in the negotiations, will pave later to be a positive precedent for negotiations on the verification of agreements on nuclear-arms control. With regard to the latter, allow me to refer to the document on verification measures published in Mexico City on 7 August 1986 on the occasion of the Ixtapa summit meeting of the six Heads of State from five continents, where it was stated:

"It is the responsibility of the nuclear Powers to halt nuclear testing as a significant step to curb the nuclear-arms race. The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, being the two major nuclear Powers, have a special responsibility to initiate the process of nuclear disarmament by immediately halting their nuclear testing. To facilitate such an immediate test, the six nations of the Five Continent Initiative are prepared to assist in the monitoring of a mutual moratorium on a test ban." (A/41/518, p. 7)

As a staunch opponent of any proliferation of nuclear weapons, whether horizontal or vertical, Greece is firmly committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The number of States adhering to the Treaty has been rising steadily, but we cannot fail to note that little progress has been made in the implementation of its article VI whereby

"Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament ...".

As was correctly pointed out in the 7 August Ixtapa Declaration of the six Heads of State,

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

"... it is clear that continued development of nuclear weapons by those who already possess them is detrimental to the efforts to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by other States which have until now refrained from acquiring them." (A/41/518, p. 4)

To this end the Greek Prime Minister, Mr. Andreas Papandreu, declared at the Mexico city meeting of 7 August 1986:

"We are determined to do our utmost to help bring about a nuclear test-ban as a first step towards the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty."

The Chernobyl accident, moreover, has served as a warning against the dangers which can arise from the gap between progress in technology and the unforeseen consequences of human error. In this regard we can but subscribe to any initiative to be taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency towards improving the System of safeguards and for the prevention and mitigation in the future of the negative impact of such accidents. Moreover, the Agency has been contributing actively within the sphere of its competence to the limitation of armaments and to disarmament. The verification of non-proliferation commitments through its safeguards system is a major confidence-building measure.

Greece is always ready to participate with goodwill and an open mind, in any disarmament effort. While recognizing that the States possessing the largest military arsenals bear a special responsibility, Greece believes that that does not reduce the responsibility of other States to participate in the maintenance of stability at any level - international or regional - thus contributing directly or indirectly to arms reduction efforts. The positive outcome of the Stockholm Conference, with its encouraging contribution to the reduction of the risk of war

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

in Europe, has bolstered our hope that the Vienna review meeting of the Conference on security and co-operation in Europe will, with its much broader mandate, prove to be able to reach tangible solutions.

Disarmament is a multi-dimensional process and the danger of nuclear war is but one side of the coin. Destruction of human life is caused essentially by conventional weapons, and their destructive capacity has been increasing steadily. Hence, as we have solemnly declared on a number of occasions, Greece supports any effort to bring about a reduction of conventional weapons to the lowest possible level, taking into the account the security interests of all States. Moreover, we share the conviction that a substantial reduction in current levels of conventional arms would reduce the risk of nuclear conflict. Thus progress in the area of conventional disarmament will constitute a decisive step towards the reduction of tension and the prevention of war at any level of hostility.

The Greek Government also attaches special importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and to the expansion of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The spread of the arms race to outer space would bring a dangerous dimension to the arms race already taking place on Earth. My Government is pleased to see that the agenda of the bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union also includes space weapons. We hope that those negotiations will lead to agreements preventing an arms race in space. If such a race were to continue - and this is true of course for any arms race - it would serve to exacerbate economic inequalities between peoples as well as social injustice.

Greece is firmly committed to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. That is why it has voted for all resolutions designed to bring about the conclusion of agreements setting up such nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard, the Hellenic Government has made every effort to promote the proposal to make the

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

Balkans a nuclear-weapon-free zone. We have done so out of the firm belief that such zones can make a major contribution to the process of effective disarmament and significantly strengthen the non-proliferation régime.

Greece advocates the conclusion of an agreement on the total prohibition of chemical weapons; however, pending the conclusion of such an agreement it supports the proposal for the establishment in the Balkans of a chemical-weapon-free zone, which we view as a step in that direction.

Moreover, Greece is particularly alive to developments in the Mediterranean. As a Mediterranean country with a tradition stretching back 3000 years, it follows closely any focal point of tension that could affect not only international relations but also any developments concerning the security of the region itself. Consequently, it has supported efforts to strengthen peace in the region. Hence it is ready to participate in any initiative for broader co-operation and the unimpeded development of all the peoples of the Mediterranean. Greece hopes that the region will be turned into a genuine zone of peace, friendship and co-operation among peoples.

As I conclude my statement on the views of the Hellenic Government on some of the agenda items of the First Committee, I reiterate that Greece, faithful to the establishment of a harmonious order based on the United Nations Charter, will spare no effort to ensure that any dialogue or negotiations for international peace and security will be completed successfully. In this spirit, it seems to me that the work of the Committee could not be based on a better principle than that enunciated in the United Nations study on security concepts, where it is stated: "If the fundamental provisions of the Charter were strictly observed, the international situation would thereby be greatly improved."

Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania): Sir, since this is the first time my delegation has spoken in the Committee, allow me, on behalf of the Albanian delegation, to congratulate you warmly on your election as Chairman of the First Committee.

For decades now the United Nations, and various organs and mechanisms within and without it, have been holding meetings, talks and discussions on disarmament issues. But the bitter reality is that the more there has been talk about disarmament, the more there has been proliferation of armaments and the more the arms race has been intensified. The simple truth is that there has never been any real disarmament. We are faced with a situation in which a number of big Powers, first and foremost the two super-powers - the United States and the Soviet Union, along with the political and military blocs they lead - have from year to year continued to increase their military budgets and arsenals of all types of weapons. The arms race between the two super-Powers has become today one of the most negative features of international life, causing great concern to the whole of mankind. This is a legitimate concern since the stockpiles of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, are capable of destroying our planet several times over - as they themselves admit. There is no doubt that the stockpiles they have accumulated far exceed what is required for self-defence. Yet they keep on arming, and the arms race continues to spiral, from a preceding level to a higher qualitative and more dangerous level, as is the case with the current militarization of outer space, which is being turned into a theatre of confrontation and rivalry from which our planet Earth could be struck.

Well, then, can the rest of us trust the super-Powers when they state they have no greater concern than the cause of freedom, peace and international security? For, in spite of our great concern, our appeals and our condemnations, they continue the manufacturing and stockpiling of destructive weapons. Does it

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

not mean that they have built their security on the insecurity of the rest of the world, to say the least?

The arms race, which goes on unabated, is accompanied by intensive propaganda from the two super-Powers, each trying to portray itself as the real champion of disarmament and blaming the other for the lack of disarmament. This war of words has become so ritualistic and stale that one can hardly find anyone so naïve as to believe them and not see what is really happening.

At least let us not forget the fact that they themselves are now increasingly saying that nuclear war cannot be won, that the use of only a fraction of the nuclear arsenals would bring about nuclear winter on Earth, which would make our planet practically uninhabitable. Naturally, this question arises: If a nuclear war cannot be won, why should the super-Powers then continue their arms race, the accumulation of stockpiles of nuclear and other weapons? We are inclined - justifiably so - to suspect that, since they alone have the capacity to destroy Our planet and since they remind us of that time and again, all this is aimed at forcing mankind to accept the status of being hostage to their nuclear blackmail and to behave submissively and act according to their wishes.

If our planet is the habitat of all mankind, then who gives them the right to make it uninhabitable for all of us? Nations and peoples will not allow themselves to become hostage to the super-Power nuclear blackmail, for if this were to happen, the latter would then be given a free hand to decide the fate of other peoples and countries.

The super-Powers should not be allowed to play on the sincere desires and aspirations of the peoples for genuine disarmament and avoiding the threat of war, particularly a world conflagration. It is also equally important to tell the peoples the truth and to speak realistically to them about this threat, so as to

(Mr Kapllani, Albania)

avoid creating a distorted and illusory picture or idea about the problem of disarmament, world peace and security.

It is a fact that the world situation has been exasperated: new hotbeds of tension and conflicts have been added to those that already existed, making it even more explosive in some regions. The continuous accumulation of war arsenals of the aggressive blocs of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty on the European continent, the increasing military presence and activities of the super-Powers' fleets in the Mediterranean, the continued occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, the open interference and threats of aggression by the United States against Nicaragua, the

'gues and plots hatched up by the super-Powers in the Middle East and elsewhere - all are clear proof of the growing aggressiveness of American imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, of their reliance, as never before, on the force of arms and nuclear blackmail for the attainment of their hegemonistic goals.

Their frenzied arms race should also be viewed in this context, as part and parcel and a concentrated expression of this policy. The huge stockpiles of weapons, whether conventional or nuclear, were not accumulated by themselves or accidentally. They are the direct consequence of a definite policy which cannot do without these weapons - the policy the super-Powers are pursuing today. Weapons cannot make war of themselves and by themselves. Someone has got to use them to start war. War is the continuation of policies by other means, that is, by means of weapons. This is precisely what is happening in our days: The super-Powers are embarked on a road along which they are bound to continue, prompted, as they are, by their policies that seek world domination also by means of war.

These dangerous developments in the international situation cannot be concealed or ameliorated by the super-Powers' demagoguery about arms control, peace

(Mr. Mplani, Albania)

and disarmament, nor by the big fuss they make about meetings and encounters they hold in Vienna, Geneva, Stockholm or Reykjavik.

There was a time when mankind hailed the fact that the human mind and intellect had been able to conquer outer space. There was hope that such great accomplishments - though there were many problems calling for solution here on our planet - would serve the cause of real scientific progress and would redound to the service and benefit of mankind. Unfortunately, just the opposite has happened. Outer space has been filled with the super-Powers' spy satellites, space orbiting stations, missiles and anti-satellite weapons. We are witnessing the misuse of outer space for military purposes, as if the weapons deployed on Earth, in unprecedented amounts and proportions, were not enough. Hence mankind is now being threatened from another direction: outer space, which the super-Powers are turning into a new place d'armes from which to hit the planet.

The recent summit meeting between the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union in Reykjavik, in which arms control was allegedly the main topic of the talks, showed very clearly that militarization of outer space represented the main bargaining chip.

(Mr. Kapllani, Alhmia)

the Soviets, proceeding from selfish interests and NOT from their concern for disarmament, insisted on confining for the time being the experiments on this programme to laboratory research, the American Administration made it explicitly clear that it would go on with its own programme. Both super-Powers are undoubtedly not worried about the danger this new qualitative stage in the arms race presents for mankind.

What they are actually worried about is that one side should gain supremacy over the other. They are also concerned about the calculations each has made at this time, to extract maximum profit in the military, economic and political fields by engaging itself, fully or partially, in a programme of militarisation of outer space. All the fuss following upon the Reykjavik meeting aims also at creating the psychosis that everything in our world depends on the super-Powers, that it is they who make rain or sun shine; and that, hence, the rest of us should wait for them to come to agreement and be generous enough to bring disarmament or peace as a gift to us.

As the Chairman of the delegation of the People's Socialist Republic Of Albania put it, when speaking in the general debate before the General Assembly on 30 September last:

"We cannot allow the role of the international community and the United Nations to be reduced to providing a backdrop for the scenarios the super-Powers are preparing or acting as an audience which will take note of the results of their secret diplomacy." (A/41/PV.17, p. 32)

The Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, along with the Stockholm document it produced, have lately been described as a big success. In this connection, mention is made particularly of the 42-day advance notice about military exercises, the inspection of military activities and

(Mr. Kapilani, Albania)

zones, the participation of observers in certain exercises and so on. It was not in vain that the super-Powers concentrated their effort⁸ to come to an agreement, especially on the issue of inspection. This was insisted upon under the pretext of the verification of military exercises.

We think this in fact legalizes the super-Powers' military control over the European countries; it legalizes the American and Soviet interference and diktat on issues having a direct bearing on those countries' defence and sovereignty. In reality, the Stockholm Document did nothing to reduce or restrict military exercises what it really did was to define rules on how to carry out military exercises, that is, go on with war preparations in a civilized manner. And the fact is that military exercises and manoeuvre⁶ by the two super-Powers and their military blocs have been constantly intensified and their offensive character accentuated. At present it is becoming ever more difficult to tell military exercises from a possible military attack. Such exercises are becoming preludes to acts of war and aggression, as was the case with the American air raids against Libya in April of this year.

The seas and oceans, which cover 70 per cent of our globe, have also become the scene of intensive military activity by the two super-Powers. The Mediterranean is a typical case in point. The military fleet⁶ and warships of the two super-Powers have for years now been criss-crossing this basin and threatening, with their gunboat policy and over-acts of aggression, the countries and peoples of the region. The super-Powers would like the Mediterranean to become accustomed to the permanent presence of their fleets near the territorial waters of its countries - something which is tantamount to accepting de facto extension of the super-Powers' boundaries close to Mediterranean shores. However, the Mediterranean peoples cannot but see that the super-Powers' presence and the military activity of their fleets and warships in this basin brings about its military and political

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

pollution, which is even more dangerous than pollution of the environment. about which they are rightly worried. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to cleanse the Mediterranean of the first kind of pollution. so as to facilitate its cleansing of the second kind.

The unbridled arms race, which is gobbling up every year colossal ■ abrial resources and highly qualified human forces, is taking place at a time when tens of millions of people die of hunger, disease and epidemics and when hundreds of millions of others live in conditions of extreme poverty and misery. It is therefore no accident that the imperialist Powers, primarily the two super-Powers, being aware of this fact, and that this year alone they will spend around \$600 billion for military purposes, have made it a point to preach about the great value of allocating the funds freed from disarmament to be used for development. But reality has shown that these are ccooodile tears. As of now, not one penny has been taken from their war budgets and given to other countries for development. What the imperialist Powers have been doing is robbing other countries, especially the developing countries, of great financial and material resources through arms sales. The United States and the Soviet Union are at present the biggest arms dealers. They account for 75 per cent of this ugly trade on a world scale. They sell the largest number of weapons to the most sensitive regions where there are ongoing local conflicts and wars, which they themselves often incite in order to prepare the ground for their military presence, to sow death and to reap profits and to pave the way for their domination.

Albania has always been and remains in favour of real disarmament. It has supported and will continue to support any constructive and realistic step in the direction of true and effective disarmament, in favour of peace and stability in the Balkans, Europe and the world at large. But genuine and effective disarmament can be possible only if it is begun by eliminating the aggressive super-Power

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, and if American and Soviet troops, missiles and military bases are packed off and sent home.

In expressing its viewpoint and position on disarmament issues, which are of great concern to the whole of mankind, the Albanian delegation will, as it has always done, be making at this session too its modest contribution to the debate and the discussions on this problem in an objective and realistic manner.

Mr. DUMEVI (Ghana): May I first of all congratulate you, Sir, and the other officers of the Committee, on your elections to such high and demanding posts. The Ghana delegation is confident that under your able leadership the Committee will carry out its work successfully.

Statements made so far have again underscored the urgency of curbing the arms race. In spite of the General Assembly's objective of general and complete disarmament, the arms race, particularly the nuclear-arms race, continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

A year ago today the General Assembly proclaimed 1986 the International Year of Peace. The aim was to focus attention and encourage reflection on the requirements that would bring peace to our contemporary world, in particular the speedy elimination of the deep mistrust and suspicions that have fuelled the arms race.

Against this background, Ghana had hoped that the talks last weekend between Secretary-General Gorbachev and President Reagan would lay solid grounds for meaningful arms control and disarmament, particularly in the area of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

Indeed, we viewed that weekend meeting as particularly important because those two leaders represent the countries that possess 95 per cent of the world's total nuclear arsenals. We were therefore disappointed by the outcome of the talks. Our disappointment was all the greater since the two leaders came very close to reaching what could have been a significant agreement, had they but approached Reykjavik with much greater flexibility and with open minds.

Instead of seeking to apportion blame for what went wrong in Reykjavik, Ghana is of the view that the two countries should exert further efforts to narrow their differences through the bilateral negotiating forum in Geneva. The issues involved are so important for all that the international community expects that the talks will be put back on track before too long.

This Committee is therefore meeting at a critical time. Its work will come under close scrutiny more, perhaps, than at any time since its inception. People will be asking what this Committee will do in the present situation of stalemate and uncertainty.

In the view of the Ghana delegation, the Committee should renew its appeal to all countries - particularly those possessing nuclear weapons - to reaffirm their commitment to the principles and purposes of the Final Document adopted at the end of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament eight years ago. In short, the Committee should remind the major nuclear Powers and their military allies of their special responsibilities, as contained in paragraph 28 of the Final Document of that General Assembly session.

Over the past decade, the General Assembly has given specific mandates to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to initiate appropriate negotiations with a view to producing draft treaty texts on the priority disarmament items agreed upon in paragraph 45 of the Final Document. Following the renewed commitment to the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter expressed during the fortieth

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

anniversary celebrations, one would have thought that the specific mandates transmitted to the Geneva multilateral body by General Assembly resolutions 40/80 A, 40/94 L and 40/152 Q, urging, among other things, the elaboration of a comprehensive test ban, would have provided further impetus. It is therefore a matter of deep regret, as one can see from the report contained in document A/41/27, that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to take concrete action because of the attitude of a few delegations which, as in the past, apparently continued to insist that the negotiations proceed in a bilateral forum.

A comprehensive test-ban treaty remains a key issue for disarmament; it is the first practical step to curbing the qualitative development of nuclear weapons. The Ghana delegation supports the six-nation initiative in this regard and welcomes the positive response by the Soviet Union, which has extended its unilateral moratorium to January of next year.

Admittedly, bilateral negotiations are important, since they provide a platform from which the two countries with the largest nuclear arsenals can face each other and negotiate in detail. It is Ghana's view, however, that progress in bilateral talks could be greatly accelerated in a multilateral forum which, being neutral, is well placed to narrow differences which the two might not be able to resolve in a bilateral forum because of national biases and commitments. The fact of the matter is that the survival of mankind cannot be left to the perceived security considerations of a few nations.

Verification is, as is now widely acknowledged, no longer considered an insurmountable obstacle to concluding a comprehensive test-ban treaty. The Group of Scientific Experts of the Conference on Disarmament has demonstrated that there are no verification problems to which technical solutions cannot be found. Indeed, recent joint initiatives by scientists from the USSR Academy of Sciences and their

(Mr. Duménil, Ghana)

counterparts from the United States have further demonstrated that no one can continue to insist on verification as a pre-condition for meaningful progress towards a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Ghana urges the nuclear-weapon States, particularly the major States, to heed the appeals of the international community and to freeze their weapons arsenals, enter into a mutual comprehensive test ban and cease the manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

The growing arms race continues to absorb resources that could have been used for meeting the pressing social and economic needs of millions of people. It is for that reason that Ghana had welcomed the international conference on disarmament and development which was to have been held last July in Paris.

We were not expecting the non postponed Paris international meeting to be a pledging conference. On the contrary, we in Ghana had thought that the Paris conference would provide an opportunity for evolving a common approach on how to start correcting existing contradictions in our contemporary world, in which millions go without shelter, medical care and the basic necessities while the world continues to refine and stockpile instruments of destruction.

We hope that the current session of the General Assembly will decide a new timetable for the conference. It is also Ghana's hope that the postponement has provided an opportunity for reflection and that Member States which have been sitting on the fence will now extend the support necessary for the success of the conference.

A comprehensive ban on chemical weapons remains another pressing disarmament issue. Ghana notes with satisfaction the systematic negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the issue of a chemical weapons ban. It is Ghana's hope that outstanding technical and political issues will be resolved and a treaty capable of attracting universal adherence will be prepared. Similarly, we welcome the outcome

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

of the ~~second~~ Review Conference on ~~Bacteriological~~ (Biological) Weapons and the m-going negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament with respect to radiological weapons.

We share the deep concern about the current trend pointing to an extension of the arms race from this planet to outer space. Ghana remains committed to the peaceful uses of outer space and is therefore naturally concerned that if the present trend is not reversed it will set in train reactions that could seriously undermine United Nations disarmament efforts.

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

Ghana **therefore** urge8 that the **existing bilateral and multilateral** agreement8 **regulating the use of space be seriously re-examined** for any **improvements in order** to ensure that **outer space remains the common heritage of mankind.**

I now turn to the **report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission,** contained in document A/41/42, before the **Committee.** In spite of the **excellent efforts exerted** by the **Commission's Chairman, Ambassador Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany,** the **conclusions of the Commission on the various agenda items** fall below expectations. **This is particularly true as regard8 agenda item 6,** relating to **South Africa's nuclear capability.** The problem of South Africa's nuclear **capability** is the **result of betrayal of trust on the part of some** nuclear Member **States of the United Nations.**

Tw decades ago African Read8 of State and Government **unanimously resolved** at a **summit meeting in Cairo to keep the continent of Africa free from nuclear weapons.** That resolve was an **expression of the collective commitment to the strengthening of international peace and security, the concern for the effects of the spread of nuclear weapons, and support for the objective8 of disarmament.**

In document A/5730 of 10 September 1964, containing the Declaration adopted at **Cairo, Africa requested,** among other things, the convening of

"an international conference for the purpose of concluding an agreement on the denuclearization of Africa (A/5730, p. 2)

Not only is 't a fact that the **requested conference never took place, but it is also obvious that the assurances upon which the African leader8 based their declaration - namely, that**

"nuclear State8 would undertake to refrain from relinquishing control of nuclear weapons and from transmitting the information necessary for their manufacture to States not possessing such weapons",

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

while

"States not possessing nuclear weapons would undertake not to manufacture or otherwise acquire control of such weapons" (A/5730, p. 2) - were, at best, pious intentions which the nuclear Member States were not ready to carry out.

The fact of the matter is that, in spite of the declared good intentions, some nuclear Member States have, because of the needs for South African uranium, unwittingly encouraged and assisted the racist régime to develop a nuclear capacity. The result is that Africa now has a nuclear Frankenstein ever ready to create a disaster on our continent.

Africa views with serious concern obstacles posed by South Africa to the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our continent. The possession of nuclear weapons by the racist South African régime constitutes an ominous threat to African States and International security.

It is the view of the Ghana delegation that, notwithstanding the failure of last spring's session of the Disarmament Commission to reach a unanimous conclusion on the issue of South Africa's nuclear capability, it remains the primary responsibility of Members of the United Nations to monitor closely the activity of the racist régime and to take appropriate collective action to eradicate apartheid and eliminate the racist régime's nuclear power.

The work of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the sole multilateral negotiating body, inevitably comes into sharp focus when we assemble in this Committee. We have a duty to make observations that could facilitate the work in that important body. In that spirit, my delegation has observed that last year a total of 67 resolutions were transmitted by the General Assembly to the Conference on Disarmament. Those resolutions reflect the importance of the question of disarmament. However, it may be asked whether, in the time at its disposal, the

(Mr. Dumevi, Ghana)

Conference on Disarmament was able to carry out an in-depth examination of all the resolutions. This question is particularly pertinent since the Conference would seem to be already over-burdened by outstanding disarmament issues involving long and protracted negotiations. Perhaps the Committee would wish to give this matter serious thought when submitting its recommendations to the General Assembly. We certainly want disarmament; but perhaps it would be realistic if, in selecting what should be transmitted to Geneva, we concentrated on key issues that could be cleared quickly rather than sending everything to the already over-burdened Conference on Disarmament.

Those were the preliminary remarks of the Ghana delegation. We shall speak on other specific disarmament issues at a later stage of the deliberations.

The CHAIRMAN: We have heard the last representative whose name was inscribed on the list of speakers for this afternoon. However, the representative of Romania wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

I should like once again to remind members that, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly decision, the number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply by any delegation at a given meeting is limited to two; the first intervention should be limited to ten minutes and the second to five minutes.

I now call on the representative of Romania.

Mr. TINCA (Romania): I have asked with some reluctance to be allowed to speak now. The Romanian delegation has had the privilege of never having exercised its right of reply in this body, which all of us wish to maintain as a respectable body. Today, however, I have been forced to break new ground - I can even say that I have been provoked into doing so.

My delegation sincerely regrets that during the meeting this morning two delegations referred to a subject having no bearing on the serious and complex issues concerning disarmament and international peace and security which this

(Mr. TILUS, Romania)

Committee has been considering From the beginning of the general debate here. The accusations and allegations made by those two delegations were, regrettably, careless and rash. They cannot be - I emphasize: they cannot be - viewed, to say the least, as a constructive contribution to the Committee's debate this week. Even less - I emphasize again: even less - can they be viewed as a contribution to a satisfactory solution to the so-called problems related to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) - solutions which, I can inform the Committee, are being sought by the Secretary-General and Romanian authorities, who remain in contact.

(Hr. Tinca, Romania)

It would be impolite of me to take the time of the Committee at this late hour in elaborating any longer on this subject. We are concluding a week of interesting debate and a well-deserved weekend is before us. Nevertheless my delegation reserves its right to return to this matter at a later stage if the need should arise.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: As we come to the end of the first week of our Committee's deliberations, I hope I may be permitted to make a few remarks, mainly of a procedural nature.

First of all, I should like to take this opportunity to express gratitude to delegations which have made statements during this period for the constructive manner in which they have focused their attention on the items being dealt with by the First Committee, issues which are of such vital significance to the international community at large.

I am grateful also that in the course of our proceedings delegations have made sincere efforts to comply with the appeal I made earlier, to organize our work in a manner that would ensure the effective utilization of the time and resources made available to the Committee. As a result of the co-operation of delegations in this respect, the Committee was able to hear no fewer than some 41 • □□□&M□ during the first week of the general debate.

Based on this commendable effort, I feel emboldened now to urge delegations to try even harder, so that we may be in a position to exceed the fine record that we have established to date. In this context I could perhaps point out that, on occasion, certain difficulties have emerged as a result of last-minute adjustments by delegations with respect to inscription on the list of • peakare, although I am sure that that has occurred for valid and unavoidable reasons.

(The Chairman)

While I am on the subject of the optimum use of the conference facilities accorded to us, I should like also once again to underline the importance of starting our meetings very punctually as scheduled, so as to avoid the possibility of a spill-over beyond the time allocated to us, and with a view to obviating the need for any night or weekend meetings, to the extent feasible.

At this stage, I should also like to point out that this year more delegations than in the past appear to have indicated their wish to make statements in the general debate on disarmament items on the agenda. I would therefore at this stage, once again recall that the Committee's programme of work, as contained in documents A/C.1/41/3 and Rev.1, does not preclude the right of any delegation to make a statement of a general character during the period to be devoted to statements on specific disarmament items, which will commence on 24 October 1986. The Secretariat has already taken note of the delegations that wish to avail themselves of that opportunity. I urge those delegations which wish to make statements on specific disarmament agenda items to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

Furthermore, as I pointed out at our organizational meeting on 8 October, I should like once again to urge those delegations which intend to submit draft resolutions on various disarmament agenda items to do so at the earliest possible date and to proceed also to introduce them, if possible, even during the second phase of the Committee's work which is, inter alia, to be devoted to statements on specific disarmament agenda items, so that other members of the Committee may address their comments to those draft resolutions. While I am on this subject I wish once more to reiterate that the Chairman and the other Officers of the Committee are fully at the disposal of the various delegations, as considered necessary, for purposes of carrying out the consultations that may be required with respect to any particular draft resolutions.

(The Chairman)

Finally, I should like to inform the Committee that the Bureau of the Committee is scheduled to hold its next meeting on Tuesday, 21 October, at 9.30 a.m., when it will address a number of issues in connection with the Committee's programme of work and timetable. In addition, it could take up the question of the modalities to be pursued with respect to the suggestion advanced at the Committee's organizational meeting by Ambassador Ali Alatas of Indonesia, Chairman at the last session, and subsequently referred to by some other delegations.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform the Committee that the following delegations are inscribed on the list of speakers for Monday morning's meeting: Malta, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.