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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

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ENGLISH

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Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /48/

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Strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament /50/

Implementation of the conclusions of the first Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons /116/

The meeting was called to order at 12.30 p.m.

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Mr. ANWAR SANI (Indonesia): My statements in this Committee in the past have tended to be rather pessimistic. I have ventured to suggest that discussions on disarmament in our Committee have become a yearly routine without much meaning, for, year after year, we have gone through the ritual of making statement after statement repeating more or less the same arguments, followed by the adoption of resolution after resolution, to result only in the increasing intensification of the arms race. My delegation has long recognized that our Organization has not functioned satisfactorily with regard to disarmament issues and has yet to find solutions to a great number of pressing problems. The innumerable resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the field of disarmament have in general been simply ignored, while some have been implemented partially, although very marginally at that.

It was against that backdrop and at the suggestion of the Secretary-General that the General Assembly, in its resolution 3484 (XXX), decided to undertake a basic review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and established an Ad Hoc Committee for that purpose. The deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee brought some encouraging results, which can only be considered as a modest beginning but which, it is to be hoped, will generate a more energetic and effective role for the United Nations in the field of disarmament. My delegation commends the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, as contained in its report, for the approval of this Committee.

There are several aspects of that report with which my delegation is largely in agreement, although, as my delegation has stated just now, we recognize that the proposals contained in it were only a beginning in the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. My delegation has also agreed with the Secretary-General's views on the need to review the procedures of the United Nations negotiating machinery as well as the relation between different bodies in the disarmament field.

(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

Moreover, I should like to advance certain views which I hope can be considered along with others already submitted. In submitting these views, I must admit that not all of them are new; some have in one form or another been brought to the attention of this Committee by other delegations.

First, my delegation is of the view that the First Committee should concern itself with a more limited agenda which would permit thorough discussion of each vital issue separately. Concurrently, the method of working groups, which has been successful in other forums in reconciling differences and finding common areas of agreement, would greatly facilitate the functioning of the Committee.

Second, my delegation feels that, in order to re-establish the co-operative working relationship that existed in disarmament negotiations between the great Powers and others during the 1950s and 1960s, the medium-sized and small Powers should be given a greater opportunity to influence disarmament talks and exercise a moderating influence in helping to bridge the gap between the different positions of the great Powers. In this context, the principle of rotating membership in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) would provide other countries with an opportunity to make contributions in that forum, while at the same time, an increasing number of issues should be considered to permit greater progress. Moreover, as such negotiations have so far been characterized by a lack of significant progress and in order to achieve a breakthrough, efforts should be exerted for the participation of other major military Powers in current disarmament efforts, together with structural and procedural changes, including a rotating Chairmanship. Finally, meetings of the CCD and other negotiating bodies may be held in different parts of the world in order to focus attention on the urgent nature of disarmament problems. Through these measures the role of the CCD as the only forum now available for multilateral disarmament negotiations would be greatly strengthened.

Third, Indonesia believes that member States should have access to up-to-date and detailed information on all aspects of disarmament. As the role of the United Nations in providing adequate information to Governments and to the public is now widely recognized, a periodical should be published at regular intervals by the Secretariat. Such a periodical would include an analytical report on disarmament issues and developments in the field, together with pertinent technical and other data as well as writings from authorities and reproduction of materials appearing in the media.

(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

Fourth, the United Nations has long been an initiator of authoritative studies and has served to focus the attention of the world on specific disarmament issues; the findings of such in-depth studies will be more credible and accepted by a greater segment of the international community if these are undertaken by the Secretariat or by experts appointed by the Secretary-General in their individual capacities rather than by experts designated by their Governments. It will also be necessary in this connexion to seek the co-operation of well-known organizations such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Fifth, in order to facilitate the central role of the United Nations, my delegation would suggest that a representative of the Secretary-General be present at all disarmament negotiations not held under the auspices of the Organization.

Sixth, Indonesia attaches particular importance to the promotion of international instruments of a non-discriminatory character, including a further review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at an early date to ensure that efforts in the disarmament field respond to changing political realities and regional requirements as well as to scientific and technological progress.

The convening of a world disarmament conference would provide the international community with an opportunity for a general review of the disarmament field and an opportunity for determining ways and means of solving disarmament problems, and in general, strengthening the role of the United Nations in this field.

My delegation has in the past taken part in the exploratory work on the possibility of convening a world disarmament conference under the outstanding leadership of Ambassador Hoveyda and Minister Elias. Unfortunately, as the report of the Ad Hoc Committee makes clear, no consensus has been reached due to a basic divergence of opinion among the nuclear-weapon States with regard to the timing and conditions for convening such a conference. At the same time, the report further makes clear that the idea of a world disarmament conference has received wide support, although its realization would require adequate preparation and universal participation, including especially that of the nuclear-weapon States.

In view of these factors and the urgent need to make progress toward disarmament, my Government has endorsed the proposal of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo to hold a

(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament matters, and in that connexion, Indonesia is pleased to be a co-sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.7. Indonesia is firmly committed to the cause of disarmament and has participated actively in the efforts to promote the attainment of that goal. In this light, my Government is prepared to extend its full co-operation in the preparatory work for the special session, which we hope will generate a breakthrough in the stalemate that has so far characterized disarmament negotiations and which would adopt measures for a major strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

Of no less importance within the framework of disarmament is the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. The work of the Ad Hoc Committee established for that purpose continues to be fraught with difficulties, largely due to the reluctance of the great Powers and the major maritime users to co-operate as called for in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. To some extent, such difficulties are compounded by differences which exist among the various littoral and hinterland States.

In the context of the growing rivalry among the big Powers, which, as noted by the Fifth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, has recently focused attention on the Indian Ocean, the attainment of the goal of a zone of peace has assumed a new urgency. Indonesia firmly supports the convening of a conference of the littoral and hinterland States in order to co-ordinate efforts for the early implementation of the Declaration. It is my delegation's hope that in this way concrete progress can be made towards the realization of this objective, for the purpose of neutralizing the growing threat to the peace and security of the region.

As a region bordering the Indian Ocean, south-east Asia has a particular interest in the success of the efforts to promote the establishment of the zone of peace. In conformity with this interest and with the realization that it was necessary for the nations of south-east Asia to co-operate and stand together in order to take their destiny in their own hands and free their region from outside interference, the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) called for the establishment of such a zone of peace for south-east Asia at their meeting at Kuala Lumpur in 1971. More recently, at their meeting in Bali in February this year, they reaffirmed their determination to take active steps for its early establishment. The member States of ASEAN have worked tirelessly to secure the establishment of zones of peace in the Indian Ocean and in south-east Asia itself.

(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

My delegation fully shares the concern expressed by several delegations regarding the question of conventional arms race. As the representative of the Philippines said so perceptively before this Committee:

"It is a problem which is both complicated and unyielding to simplistic solutions, involving as it does the very fabric of international society"

(A/C.1/31/PV.22, p. 36)

Yet the problem of the conventional arms race which continues unabatedly needs an urgent solution as it constitutes a burden on the meagre resources of the countries of the third world, which could divert such resources for more productive purposes.

In summing up Indonesia believes that the involvement of the United Nations in disarmament does not measure up to the present urgency of the disarmament problem. Although disarmament has been given high priority since the first years of the United Nations, it has remained one of the most intractable problems. The dangers to international peace in ever-increasing expenditures on armaments have prompted intensive efforts at resolving this problem. Yet no breakthrough has been achieved. Six years after the declaration of the Disarmament Decade it should be admitted that the United Nations has not made progress in halting the arms race and bringing down the annual world expenditures on disarmament. Neither the United Nations nor the technical difficulties can be blamed for the lack of progress, for, underlying the lack of political will for disarmament was a whole range of complex and unresolved problems. While concerted efforts should be made to resolve those problems through negotiations, at the same time, as stressed by the Secretary-General in the introduction to the report on the work of the Organization, efforts should be made to give utmost priority to the problem of nuclear disarmament, so as to reduce the level of tensions and induce a better climate for negotiated settlement. Concurrently, certain unilateral initiatives, for instance, in the reduction of military budgets and a moratorium on nuclear weapon tests, can be undertaken by those States that had the political will to do so. Thus, concrete progress could be achieved towards disarmament when the nuclear weapon States acquired the political will to reduce the level of armaments and made vigorous efforts to resolve their differences at an early date.

(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

We have arrived at a crucial turning point in our annual debate on disarmament. Indonesia continues to consider the United Nations as the principal forum in which to focus world attention on the question of disarmament and in which nations might exchange views on disarmament matters. Furthermore, the role of the United Nations in encouraging the examination of those problems should be further strengthened. We shall have an open mind about all proposals relating to a review of disarmament activities and evaluate them on the basis of whether they are likely to overcome the impasse in existing arrangements. It is in this context that my delegation pledges its support to efforts to find ways to make the United Nations more effective in carrying out its role in the disarmament field.

Mr. SCHØN (Denmark): Since this is the first time that I take the floor in the First Committee during this session, I should like -- on behalf of the Danish delegation -- to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues on your election to your high and burdensome posts. I wish you every success in the performance of your significant tasks.

The Secretary-General, in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, observes that "the problem of disarmament in all its aspects remains of the highest and utmost importance". Nobody would contest that statement, and yet the many and arduous disarmament negotiations of the past thirty years have not resulted in any decisive progress. On the contrary, the arms build-up proceeds at an unprecedented pace.

Bright spots have been few and far between. The international treaties on disarmament and arms control signed so far have proved inadequate to curb the arms race. Increasing numbers of weapons are being produced, new sophisticated weapons of immeasurable destructive power are being developed, and international trade in arms has reached an all-time peak. This is indeed a depressing result of all our endeavours. And yet it would be unfair to blame our Organization for the few and meagre results. No international organization can acquire any greater importance or influence than its member States give it. This is undoubtedly a major reason for the lack of results. But in all our pessimism and frustration we should not overlook the positive features. It is due mainly to the United Nations

(Mr. Schön, Denmark)

that the idea of disarmament is being kept alive and that the conscience and sense of responsibility of Member States remain alert. Moreover, the results achieved along the thorny road, however modest they may be, could hardly have been brought about without the existence and participation of the United Nations.

Therefore, we should not give up hope or slacken our efforts. The existence and the threat of weapons of mass destruction make disarmament and arms control more urgent than ever before.

It is sad to note that not only is the nuclear arms race continuing unabated, quantitatively as well as qualitatively, but the hazard of nuclear proliferation is growing.

Conventional weapons, too, are undergoing development to a degree that the distinction between conventional and nuclear weapons is losing its practical significance.

The adverse effects of the arms build-up and the barren arms race on the economic and social development of nations have assumed alarming dimensions. It has been stated several times in this Committee that the world spends around \$300 billion a year on armaments. This huge sum could have been put to better use in advancing the economic development of States improving considerably the standard of living of their peoples.

It remains a primary goal of Denmark's foreign policy to assist in all serious efforts to obtain practical and durable results in the disarmament field. Accordingly, we support, in principle, all draft resolutions to this effect tabled in the United Nations, provided that they are realistic, that is to say practicable and commanding sufficiently wide support, including, in particular, the support of the permanent members of the Security Council.

(Mr. Schön, Denmark)

We ardently hope that the United Nations will intensify its efforts to halt the senseless arms race in the nuclear as well as in the non-nuclear field. We therefore welcome the Swedish initiative presented last year under the title "Strengthening of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament". We believe that such a strengthening would enable us to make better headway towards the realization of our ultimate goals. We recognize, however, that the all-determinant factor is the political will of the individual States. We therefore urgently appeal to all Member States, especially the States with nuclear potentials, to demonstrate such will. We realize that we cannot expect progress by leaps and bounds. But we would like to see greater forward strides than in the past. To this end we will support any initiative designed to strengthen the role of the United Nations. We appreciate, as a means to this end, the work that has been initiated by the Ad Hoc Committee. We find the report of the Ad Hoc Committee valuable, and we hope that it will be endorsed by a majority of Member States, but this work is, of course, only a beginning. We must continue our efforts to make the United Nations a truly effective tool for halting the senseless arms race. In the view of my delegation much would be gained by concentrating on fewer and more realistic proposals.

In his intervention in Plenary on 28 September, the Danish Foreign Minister said:

"during this session we shall once more consider a large number ... of agenda items in the field of disarmament, in our opinion far too many".

(A/31/PV.8, p. 40)

In illustration of this statement it might be appropriate to point to some statistical data.

On this year's agenda, 19 items, or one sixth of the total number of agenda items, are devoted to disarmament. Last year, the figure was the same. In 1970, the agenda included only six items on disarmament. Last year the General Assembly adopted no less than 25 resolutions on disarmament -- all by a large majority. On the face of it, this wide support is, of course, gratifying. On these 25 resolutions, including the eight on which a consensus was reached the total number of negative votes was only 34, which is less than 1 per cent of the votes held by the entire membership. And these negative votes were cast on few drafts.

(Mr. Schön, Denmark)

Abstentions totalled 272. Taking all resolutions as a whole, 90 per cent of the membership voted in favour; however, the many resolutions and the great support for them did not bring us nearer to a solution of the many problems facing us. A review of the individual resolutions reveals that most of them related to marginal fields. Many were merely repetitions of drafts tabled in previous years. Others were of a purely procedural nature, such as referring questions to deliberation in other fora. Finally, some matters were not ripe for adoption of resolutions in the United Nations.

My question is: Would it not be preferable and more rational to adopt fewer resolutions and not to spend time on routine or propaganda resolutions which seem to pass into oblivion the moment they have been adopted? I admit, however, that the annual sessions of the General Assembly, perhaps, are not the best suited forum for securing realistic and in-depth deliberations on the many complex -- technically or otherwise -- questions of disarmament. My delegation finds that the CCD in Geneva in most instances would be a more practical tool.

I shall now turn to some of the major questions before us.

While we should not, as I have already stressed, underrate the dangers inherent in the so-called conventional weapons, our first priority should be to halt the nuclear arms race which presents the greatest threat ever to mankind. According to the most recent research findings, life on earth has existed for two billion years. Our generation has the option between preserving life on earth or eradicating it within the matter of a few hours. Is it not quite clear then that our option must be to halt the nuclear arms race and eliminate instruments of mass destruction wherever they exist?

A comprehensive test ban would, as often stressed, be a most important step towards this goal. We welcome that developments in this respect have lately taken a favourable trend. I have in mind, in particular, the two special accords between the United States and the Soviet Union; the threshold test ban treaty of 1974 and the related treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions of last May. We hope that these two treaties will soon be ratified.

These treaties are of great fundamental importance. Especially gratifying is the progress in the question of verification borne out by the treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions (PNE). We appreciate the statements on a possible compromise

(Mr. Schøn, Denmark)

as to verification of nuclear weapon explosions, which the Soviet Union has made during this session. By such a compromise a major obstacle to a comprehensive test (CTB) ban would hopefully be removed.

We are aware, however, that a CTB cannot be achieved right away. We must proceed by stages. Various approaches could be chosen. In this context my delegation has noted with interest the idea put forward by the Japanese delegation to expand the Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) into a multilateral treaty. Also, we support the idea of lowering the threshold of 150 kt provided for in the treaty, a limit which we consider too high.

The group of seismological experts set up under the CCD will hopefully be able to contribute to a solution of the problem of verification. Denmark takes part in this work. Considering, however, the great importance of a unanimous scientific appraisal, we would like to see a broader participation in the work of the group of experts, especially from parts of the world which are not represented on it.

Moreover, it would in our view be desirable if, while the negotiations for a CTB are going on and until further notice a moratorium be instituted for all nuclear explosions. We would greatly welcome an initiative to this effect, preferably by the leading nuclear Powers. I see no objection to including peaceful nuclear explosions in a moratorium. No country would suffer any harm from such a moratorium.

I realize that peaceful nuclear explosions might be a complicating factor in bringing about a CTB, but the Ad Hoc Group on PNE set up under the IAEA in Vienna will hopefully be able to clarify many of the problems involved. We fear, however, that the advantages of peaceful nuclear explosions will not outweigh the great risks they entail of proliferation of nuclear explosive capacity.

Against this background my delegation reiterates its appeal to the countries which have not yet done so to accede to the partial test ban treaty and the non-proliferation treaty, and we urge the nuclear Powers to take steps to restrict the vertical proliferation.

There is, the world over, a growing awareness that the existing safeguards against proliferation of nuclear weapons are inadequate and that it is imperative

(Mr. Schøn, Denmark)

to tighten the control of exports of nuclear material and technology so that no link in the chain is left uncontrolled. We consider the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) one of the most important treaties ever concluded. The objectives are today more obvious than when it was signed. It is not perfect, however, and I wonder whether its content would be the same if it were to be negotiated today.

We remain of the opinion that the IAEA safeguards are of paramount importance, but we admit that developments have proved that they need to be tightened.

(Mr. Schøn, Denmark)

We therefore welcome every initiative to that end and I am glad to say that we have seen several in the last year. I have in mind the London arrangement of January 1976 concerning nuclear exports; further, the communiqué issued on 11 October by the recently established French Committee on Nuclear External Policy. Most interesting are also the measures proposed by President Ford and by the incoming president, Mr. Carter. We are looking forward to seeing how these projects will be put into effect.

Let me add in this context that much could be gained if the exporting countries exercised more stringent self-restraint in the supply of these most sensitive exports of nuclear material. It would be a tragedy if commercial competition were to ruin what has been achieved so far in this field.

Another important question before us is that of B and C weapons. After the entry into force last year of the 1972 Convention on Biological Weapons, the principal task ahead must be to strengthen that Convention and the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925. We therefore call upon the countries which have not yet acceded to these instruments to do so as soon as possible.

With regard to chemical weapons, we follow attentively the work of the CCD. We hope that it will soon prove possible to bring about an agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and for the elimination of such weapons. We agree that if all States are not ready to prohibit forthwith all chemical means of warfare, a first step should be to ban and eliminate the most dangerous, lethal types. We are aware of the problems related to verification and to distinction between chemical substances for military and civil uses. It must be ensured that the agreement provides for adequate safeguards as to observance of the ban. We hope that the new British draft that recently has been tabled in the CCD may give a renewed impetus to the negotiations. We call upon the CCD to continue its deliberations on this crucial question as a matter of high priority. Also, we are looking forward to the announced joint United States/Soviet initiative.

The CCD has now presented a draft convention on the prohibition of environmental warfare. We are aware that there was not full agreement in the Committee concerning the draft, but we feel fully justified in congratulating

(Mr. Schön, Denmark)

the CCD on its accomplishments. Further negotiations at this point would scarcely be of any avail and there is in our opinion no prospect of attaining a broader solution by returning the draft to the CCD for renewed consideration. We think that the CCD now should devote its time to the many other unsolved issues before it. We recommend, therefore, that the draft convention prepared by the CCD be approved and opened for signature and ratification at the earliest possible date. Finland has tabled a draft resolution to this effect, of which Denmark is a co-sponsor.

One of the more important reasons why we feel that at this stage we should not allow the best to stand in the way of the good is the introduction into the draft convention of the provision contained in its article VIII. The review conference -- indeed the series of review conferences -- foreseen in that article will make it possible to continuously check the substance of the convention against the scientific and technological realities as they evolve, and to introduce into the text such amendments as the development would make appropriate. The efficiency of the review procedure provided for in article VIII in a large measure depends on the support which the international community will give to the convention. That is why we recommend substantial adherence to the draft convention here and after its opening for signature.

I turn now to the question of certain conventional weapons and the efforts being made to reach agreement on the prohibition of or limitations in the use of such weapons in particular those which have indiscriminate effects or may cause unnecessary sufferings. This problem was dealt with in 1976 both at the Conference of Government Experts in Lugano and in the Ad Hoc Committee of the third session in Geneva of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflicts. As a result of this work in which the Danish Government has taken an active part, certain concrete proposals have emerged in areas such as fragmentation weapons, mines and booby-traps, and limitations in the use of incendiary weapons. It is the sincere hope of the Danish Government that further study and consideration of these proposals eventually can lead to the adoption, on humanitarian grounds, of effective prohibitions or limitations in the use of this category of weapons.

(Mr. Schøn, Denmark)

A matter to which much attention will be given in the months ahead is the preparation of the special session on disarmament. We have previously voiced some scepticism as to the value of such a session. Let me say that we remain sceptical. But if a large majority of the membership is in favour of holding such a session, Denmark would, of course, be ready to take a constructive part in it. We hope that all the major military Powers will participate and we anticipate that the session will be thoroughly prepared. It should therefore not be convened until some time in 1978 at the earliest.

The steady growth in exports of weapons, even of the most sophisticated type, is a matter for grave concern. There is unquestionably in world public opinion a growing awareness of the need to restrict these exports. We therefore note with great interest the Belgian Foreign Minister's statement in plenary on 29 September, that the United Nations could help especially areas in the third world to avert such developments by bringing about regional agreements on arms export restrictions. It is gratifying that a number of delegations have endorsed this idea.

In this intervention I have sought to present the views of the Danish Government on disarmament in general and on some of the major questions before us. Later in the course of our deliberations I shall explain our stand on the various other questions that come up for debate. I want to conclude in the same vein as I started by pointing to a remark in the introduction to the Secretary-General's report which underlines the gravity of the situation: "The struggle for disarmament may well be a struggle for nothing less than human survival".

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Denmark for his kind words addressed to the officers of the Committee.

Before calling on the next speaker I should like to announce that Brazil and India have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.1.

Mr. UPADHYAY (Nepal): The question of nuclear disarmament has been accorded topmost priority by the Members of the United Nations in the belief that failure to resolve this question will jeopardize the whole process of general and complete disarmament. Nuclear disarmament is regarded by many to be the main foundation on which to build and pursue the lofty goal of complete disarmament. However, the results of the past eight years of efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament do not give us any reason to be satisfied. Many countries, to date, have not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the Treaty banning tests in the atmosphere is ignored by some, and the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) remains as elusive as ever.

In the absence of any hopeful progress in universalizing these treaties and also in the negotiations on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests, countries which cannot, by themselves, meaningfully contribute to the success of such negotiations have been prompted to take certain initiatives which might have an indirect influence on the process of denuclearization. The proposals for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones are one example of such initiatives. Similarly, since the question of denuclearization cannot be isolated from the question of general and complete disarmament, the idea of establishing zones of peace should be taken as another constructive initiative which contributes to the relaxation of tension and helps to generate a better climate for negotiations to achieve the goal of disarmament.

My delegation has shown its interest in the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the belief that the establishment of such zones will contribute to international peace and security in general and help to maintain peace or reduce tension in such zones. The establishment of such zones can be regarded as a practical step which would preserve nations within the region of the zone from the grave risk of involvement in nuclear war, and also as a positive step towards halting the nuclear arms race.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

Although this concept in itself is nothing new except with regard to proposals for its application in different geographical areas, it had been felt for some time now that it needed a thorough elaboration and a comprehensive study in all its aspects. My delegation is happy to note that a very important and useful study has been made in this field and has been available to us all for a year now. This study, carried out by an ad hoc committee of qualified government experts and transmitted through the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD), will indeed be very useful in our deliberations regarding the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Although various proposals had been made as far back as 20 years ago, the first agreement concluded in this respect was the Antarctic Treaty of 1959. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was the first international agreement which sought to prohibit nuclear weapons in an extensively inhabited area comprising the entire continent of Latin America. African nations have been trying for the last 15 years to declare Africa a nuclear-free zone. After the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit of 1964, which adopted a "Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa", the General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions providing that the continent of Africa should be considered and respected as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. More recently, we have had proposals for establishing such zones in other parts of the world, like the Middle East, South Asia and South Pacific.

The ineffectiveness of the NPT and the lack of progress towards a CTBT have contributed to the growing desire for the establishment of such nuclear-weapon-free zones in different areas of the world. The phenomenon of peaceful nuclear explosions and the increasing spread of nuclear technology and know-how have added an additional dimension of urgency to the establishment of such zones. My delegation supports the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas where the countries of the region desire such a zone. My delegation believes that this concept might also help to reduce tension in areas which do not enjoy complete peace and tranquillity. The total elimination of any possibility of introducing nuclear weapons in an area of conflict by the application of this concept may very well help to reduce the feeling of insecurity. We should not overlook the possibility of eliminating pockets of hostilities by introducing such concepts.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

I mentioned above that the ineffectiveness of the NPT is one of the reasons motivating the growth of this concept. However, my delegation agrees with the view that this concept should not be regarded as an alternative to the NPT. If that is done, it will prove to be an obstacle to the universality of the NPT. I do not intend to dwell upon the technicalities of the concept of the nuclear-weapon-free zone at this stage. My only intention is to reiterate our support of the over-all concept of such a zone and to express our appreciation to the group of qualified experts who have made a very valuable study in this respect.

My delegation stated during my previous intervention that, while the danger of nuclear war remains supreme, the number of wars that have occurred during the last 28 years have also demonstrated the horror and devastation caused by conventional armaments. While supporting the NPT, we have made it clear that it should be viewed only as a step towards the goal of a CTBT and that both these should be considered only as links in the chain of general and complete disarmament. All these efforts have to be made with the over-all objective of complete disarmament.

My delegation feels that it will not be out of place here to examine the question of the urge of nations to declare certain areas as zones of peace. Such proposals for the creation of zones of peace, we believe, have been motivated by a desire to contribute to the relaxation of international tension. They are also in keeping with the objectives of the United Nations, in particular, the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States and abstention from the threat or use of force.

(Mr. Upadhyay, Nepal)

General reduction of armaments is a prerequisite for a world order in which the use or threat of force could be eliminated, and such general reduction of armaments depends upon the relaxation of international tension. A feeling of insecurity leads to armament which, in turn, leads to a feeling of further insecurity. The circle is so vicious that any proposal, however modest it may be, should be given due support by the international community, since it has the effect of relaxing tension and should be welcomed as a step contributing to the goal of disarmament -- nuclear or conventional.

In fact, this process of declaration of zones of peace should be regarded as a process of horizontal reduction of armaments. While it directly benefits a country or a group of countries declared as a zone of peace, inasmuch as they can devote their whole attention to economic development, it will also benefit other nations, which will have fewer areas to remain preoccupied with and, to that extent, feel their security strengthened. It reduces the areas of possible conflict and also removes the needs for rivalry and influence. The creation of such zones will greatly contribute to reducing tension.

This view in no way suggests that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones should be firmly linked with the concept of zones of peace in general. The importance of each should be studied and emphasized, while separate efforts in both directions should be multiplied. Nuclear war has the potential of destroying the whole world and therefore the question of denuclearization has to be given paramount importance, but there should not be any imbalance in our approach to the whole question of disarmament.

Let me reiterate our position, as stated in the past, that "the establishment of peace zones, although they do not directly constitute a disarmament item, do greatly contribute to the restoration of international peace and security, which is the main purpose of all nuclear moves. We are therefore of the opinion that any move or initiative by any country or a group of countries towards the creation of such peace zones which stems from their genuine desire and aspiration to live in peace, free from tension, should receive the serious consideration of the international community".

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.