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Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)
later: Mr. da COSTA LOBO (Portugal)
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50 and 116 (continued)

Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): Despite the fact that, during the debate on disarmament questions at this thirty-first session of the General Assembly, the question of the world disarmament conference is beginning to appear in a new light, the essence of the debate reaffirms the importance and necessity of convening such a conference, and although new points have been brought out which create new conditions and interrelationships with regard to the preparations for convening it, the world conference remains a topic of interest for the overwhelming majority of Members of our Organization.

The extension of the process of détente into the military field is in our view the paramount task of the policy of strengthening and fostering the easing of tension as a whole. Unless this task is carried out the process of political détente in relations among States would not of itself be able to go beyond certain limits. Regional negotiations and partial disarmament measures, which at the present time are the main instrument of progress, have not, despite their undisputed importance, so far led to the necessary break-through in solving this problem.

Disarmament questions cannot be viewed merely in isolation and only in limited forums if we wish to reach a decisive turning-point. The convening of a world disarmament conference thus does not give rise to any hesitations on the part of countries that truly want to achieve progress in the disarmament field. Only the lack of political will on the part of two permanent members of the Security Council, over a number of years now, is preventing us from getting down to the preparations of the conference in a business-like manner. It emerges from the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference that these two nuclear Powers, despite the repeated urgings of the General Assembly, are not taking part in the work of that Committee and continue to have a negative attitude to the convening of the conference.

Despite this, the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Hoveydy, has done considerable and needed work in clarifying approaches and standpoints with regard to the convening of the

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conference and in analysing various aspects of the way in which it should be held. At the same time the Committee has created appropriate machinery for a further intensification of efforts with regard to convening the conference. At present it is one of the United Nations bodies reflecting most clearly the principle of equitable geographical distribution. In our view, the mandate of the Committee should long ago have been extended in such a way that the Committee could get down to the preparations of the conference in substance, including the solution of questions of its agenda and procedure. If, however, despite all the efforts made, such a step can still not be taken, then in our view the Committee should continue next year the work it has begun, which, at a later stage and at the appropriate time, would facilitate the work of the conference. It is clear that the Committee does have the capacity and opportunities to do further work.

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The initiative of the non-aligned countries concerning the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament questions, put forward at the Colombo meeting, is quite rightly viewed in close connexion with the question of the world disarmament conference. It is precisely for this reason that the Czechoslovak delegation has had a sympathetic attitude to this proposal, born as a result of the efforts to overcome the obstacles to the World Disarmament Conference which arose as a consequence of the continuing absence of good political will in the two remaining opponents of this idea. This is not the only way to overcome those obstacles, but it is an acceptable way. The special session of the General Assembly must become a practical tool for strengthening the joint efforts of all countries in the search for ways and means effectively and comprehensively to solve disarmament questions on the broadest possible basis. It can help universal efforts for disarmament and create an atmosphere favourable for the convening of a world disarmament conference. Thus we support the decision of the non-aligned countries expressed in the final documents of their summit conference at Colombo to consider the question of a world disarmament conference at a special session of the General Assembly and reach speedy agreement on its convening with a view to promoting the solution of fundamental questions of comprehensive and complete disarmament under strict international control.

We share the view that the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament could represent a useful step in disarmament negotiations; it cannot, however, take the place of a world disarmament conference. We also share the viewpoint that the special session in itself will not solve all the questions. It is thus necessary to intensify joint efforts for the convening of a world disarmament conference and to strive by all means to convene it as quickly as possible. We agreed with the representative of Nepal, who, in his statement on 9 November, said:

"Since we hold the view that the special session should not be viewed as a substitute for the world disarmament conference, we feel the necessity of the continuation of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference." (A/C.1/31/PV.26, p. 62)

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

The delegations of the Soviet Union, the Polish People's Republic and the German Democratic Republic have put before the First Committee a draft resolution on the question of the world disarmament conference (A/C.1/31/L.9). It is clear from what I have said briefly today that my delegation would like to be considered a sponsor of this resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will note that Czechoslovakia wishes to become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/31/L.9.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Year after year both in the general debate of the plenary and in the discussions of this First Committee, special emphasis has been placed on the dangers inherent in the arms race. For more than 15 years, the General Assembly itself has pointed out that the nuclear arms race constitutes the gravest danger to world peace and the very survival of mankind. I think it only appropriate to add here that not only is there a threat of universal destruction but it also involves an unjustifiable squandering of resources and stands as a serious obstacle to the achievement of the new international world order.

To illustrate the squandering of the resources that I have just mentioned, inherent in the arms race, suffice it to point out that the \$US 300 billion which are yearly spent by the world on military hardware add up to more than \$820 million a day or \$34 million per hour. In other words, in the course of one of our normal morning meetings, the world is spending \$85 million on the industry of war. Very recently, three very important studies were published that eloquently describe the serious problems confronting mankind today. These works which appeared at the same time as the beginning of our discussion on disarmament, serve as a very good point of departure for consideration of item 34 of the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly, namely, the reduction of military budgets.

To deal with these three documents chronologically, the first one is entitled "Armaments and Disarmaments in the Nuclear Era". It was published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) to celebrate its tenth anniversary. This document points out that, in the three decades that have passed since the atomic explosions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the nuclear arsenals of

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the great Powers have grown and their content has been perfected until they have gone beyond any possible military or political requirement. It is pointed out, too, that according to conservative estimates, nuclear weapons stockpiled in the world have an explosive potential equivalent to 15 tons of TNT per inhabitant of the earth. This includes both strategic and tactical weapons. As an example of the destructive power of these tactical weapons, the survey indicates that the explosive capacity of the nuclear tactical weapons of the United States and of the Soviet Union amount to 50,000 bombs of the type that were dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

In Europe alone approximately 10,000 of these tactical nuclear weapons are stockpiled. Thus, too, SIPRI points out that approximately 6 per cent of the world production is devoted to military purposes and that in the world today approximately half a million research workers and scientists are engaged exclusively in military research and development.

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In the document entitled "The Future of the World Economy" -- a survey prepared by a team of economists on the request of our Organization -- the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve continued development of the countries of the third world up to the year 2000 are described. There is great stress on the need to establish this new international economic order and this is the central theme of a new survey, a recent one submitted by the Club of Rome entitled the Reconstruction of the International Order or "RIO Project". That survey presents a blueprint for the establishment of this new world order so as to reduce the imbalances that exist at present between the developed and the developing world. The goals include the creation of socio-economic conditions assuring a life expectancy of 65 years, a literacy average of 75 per cent and a mortality rate lower than 50 per 1,000. The achievement of those goals will call for gigantic efforts and will also require the investment of between \$US 15 and \$20 billion per year over the next decade -- an amount that must be added to the \$3 or \$4 billion that the developing countries are already investing annually in their programmes to eradicate wretchedness and want. The total amount of investments suggested, however, adds up to less than 10 per cent of the amount that is at present devoted yearly to military spending.

In the light of all the above, it is easy to understand the importance that we all attach to the report that was submitted to us by the Secretary-General in document A/31/222 on the question of the reduction of military budgets. That report which is entitled Measuring Military Expenditures and International Dissemination of Information was prepared this year by a group of experts pursuant to the terms of resolution 3463 (XXX) which the General Assembly adopted on 11 December 1975 with a majority of more than 100 votes. With regard to that report, I have the honour now, on behalf of the delegations of Sweden and my own delegation, Mexico, to present a draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/31/L.21. The preamble of this draft resolution not only recalls last year's resolution and takes note with appreciation of the report but also reaffirms the conviction of the General Assembly of:

"the urgent necessity that the States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other State with comparable military expenditures, carry out reductions in their military budgets."

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and, furthermore,

"that part of the resources thus released should be utilized for social and economic development, particularly that of the developing countries".

The operative part of the resolution has six paragraphs. The first two express the appreciation of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General and to the group of qualified experts for the preparation of the report and then requests the Secretary-General to issue it as a United Nations publication and ensure its wide distribution. The third operative paragraph then goes on to invite:

"all States to communicate to the Secretary-General before 31 May 1977 their comments with regard to matters covered in the report and in particular: (a) Their views and suggestions on the proposed standardized reporting instrument contained in the report; (b) Any information they wish to convey on their military expenditure accounting practices including a description of methods currently in use; (c) Suggestions and recommendations concerning possible practical approaches for the further development and operation of a standardized reporting system."

Paragraph 4 of the operative part of the resolution requests the Secretary-General with the assistance of an intergovernmental group of budgetary experts appointed by him to prepare a report containing an analysis of the comments provided by States pursuant to paragraph 3 in the light of the suggestions contained in the report reproduced in document A/31/222 as well as any other further conclusions and recommendations.

The fifth operative paragraph then goes on to request the Secretary-General to distribute that report not later than 31 August 1977.

The final paragraph is intended to ensure the inclusion of the item entitled "Reduction of military budgets" in the provisional agenda of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly.

Since the report that we are requesting in the fourth operative paragraph of our draft resolution will be a complementary document both to that prepared in 1974 and circulated as document A/9770 and to that prepared this year, it might be appropriate for the Secretary-General to consider the possibility and the

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appropriateness, in order to carry out this task, to seek the co-operation of those consultant experts that might be available from the group of special experts that helped prepare the previous two reports.

The objective of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.21 might be summed up with the words which were used by the experts in the conclusion of their report when, in paragraph 160, they stressed:

"that limitation and reduction of military expenditures is a universally desired objective, and progress toward it should not be further delayed. The orderly reporting of such expenditures is the first major step towards reaching the objective. The Group of Experts is confident that, given political will the analytical and operational problems involved in the establishment of a reporting system can be resolved by the exercise of due judgement and care throughout all phases of its implementation."

Finally, may I recall that in resolution 3463 (XXX) of last year the General Assembly urged all States -- but particularly the permanent members of the Security Council and all other States with comparable military expenditures -- to endeavour, by mutual agreement, to reduce their military budgets and urged the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the two countries that have the highest military budgets in the world, that, pending such an agreement, they reduce said military budgets. This, however, is neither new nor unexpected since it is an open secret that, in 1963 and 1964, those two States operated unilateral reductions of a mutual nature in what was then termed a policy of mutual example. There can be no doubt that the repetition of that policy would not only contribute to slowing down the speed of the arms race but would also have positive results since they would have a bearing on the success of the negotiations with the other permanent members of the Security Council and other States which are alluded to in paragraph 3 of the preamble of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.21.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement, in the course of which he introduced the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.21.

Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to make a few announcements. The first is that Sweden has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.14, and that Poland has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.16.

I should also like to inform representatives, after consulting the sponsors, that on Monday, 29 November, I intend to put before the Committee for decisions the following draft resolutions:

The draft resolution in document A/31/29 pertaining to agenda item 39, "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace";

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.6 pertaining to agenda item 46, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia";

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.14 pertaining to agenda item 41, "Effective measures to implement the purposes and objectives of the Disarmament Decade";

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.15 pertaining to agenda item 37, "Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a Treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban";

The draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.16 pertaining to agenda item 47, "Conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests";

And, finally, the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.19 pertaining to agenda item 44, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

On the other hand, at the request of the sponsors, I suggest that we postpone to a later date the taking of a decision on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.11, together with amendments thereto in document A/C.1/31/L.24, as the consultations on these drafts are still in progress.

Mr. HAMILTON (Sweden): I shall speak today on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/31/L.21 submitted by the delegations of Mexico and Sweden and just introduced by the representative of Mexico, relating to agenda item 34, "Reduction of military budgets: report of the Secretary-General".

Sweden welcomes every attempt to achieve a reduction in the world's military expenditures. Global and regional security would, in our opinion, strongly benefit from such a step. Furthermore, it would release resources for peaceful purposes, such as development assistance. The need for immediate action has been stressed by nearly all speakers in this Committee. The urgency of the situation is demonstrated by the huge and ever-increasing volume of resources devoted to military activities and the very much smaller volume of assistance to developing countries. Consequently, we consider this a high priority item on the agenda.

A necessary prerequisite for agreements on the reduction of military budgets is a system of military expenditure concepts, definitions and measurement procedures, along with a corresponding reporting structure. The report of the Secretary-General in document A/31/222 is an important and promising contribution towards resolving the analytical and technical problems involved. It provides a clear exposition of problems of immediate interest, presents an in-depth analysis and gives recommendations regarding further procedure.

The report defines the military sector as activities whose objects are research, development, provision, assembly, maintenance and deployment of current and future force potential. Military activities are also viewed in terms of employment of real resources, such as personnel, equipment, construction, etc. Several activities that can substitute for core military activities, such as paramilitary forces, civil defence and military assistance, are also included in the definition. In our opinion, the definition, scope and content of military expenditures recommended in the report is appropriate and should constitute the basic framework for further procedure.

The major recommendation of the report is an international reporting system on military expenditures. There is a suggested format, a matrix, for standardized international accounting and reporting. The matrix contains resource cost elements and programmes or service elements. It is our belief that the experience derived from the implementation of the recommended accounting and reporting system would constitute a very positive basis for negotiations on military expenditure reductions.

(Mr. Hamilton, Sweden)

The Swedish Government is prepared to furnish information according to the proposed reporting structure. I am, however, aware that standardized reporting in the form recommended may require a considerable effort of many States. Therefore, I share the opinion expressed by the Group of Experts that a pragmatic approach and step-by-step implementation will help overcome the difficulties encountered.

(Mr. Hamilton, Sweden)

It should be noticed that the implementation of the accounting and reporting system would in itself, by virtue of the improved flow of information, contribute to confidence-building. The Swedish delegation to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has several times focused on greater openness in the field of military expenditure accounting as an important instrument to create mutual confidence among States and thereby stimulating détente. We appreciate that the Group of Experts has focused on that fact. The lack of trust between States seems to originate largely from a lack of information. This lack of information has often led to exaggerated assumptions of the military capacity of a potential adversary, and this in turn has caused a spiralling escalation of armaments.

The Group of Experts has also provided suggestions for price deflation and methods to convert expenditure values expressed in national currencies into a common currency. Specific proposals are made for the construction of military price deflators and appropriate surrogate indexes for different components of military expenditures. We consider the proposals valuable and it is our opinion that further procedure could be based on them. It should be noticed, however, that price deflation and international comparisons in a common currency is not a part of the first operational step as scheduled by the Group of Experts. At the point of implementation, it will be necessary to carefully consider the availability and accuracy of price information.

To sum up, we consider the analysis and the recommendations of the Group of Experts an essential analytical step forward towards the goal of military expenditure reductions. It is our firm belief that we now have the framework of the technical instruments in our hands. The task before us is to translate the recommendations in the report into practical ways and means. All Member States should thus be given an opportunity to give their views and suggestions on this important item.

Draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.21 submitted by the delegations of Mexico and Sweden calls for views and suggestions on the standardized reporting instrument, information on accounting practices and methods and suggestions and recommendations on further practical procedure. Besides, the draft resolution requests the appointment of an intergovernmental group of budgetary experts to analyse the comments provided by Member States and thereby prepare further procedure.

(Mr. Hamilton, Sweden)

Finally, may I add that the technical problems involved must not give rise to hesitation at the thought of proceeding in accordance with the intentions expressed in this draft resolution as well as in the report reproduced in document A/31/222. In my opinion, reduction of military expenditures is of such importance to the international community that progress in this direction must not be delayed.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker I should like to announce that Morocco and the Philippines have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.14, and that Ecuador has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.20.

Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Today I should like to speak on the draft resolution on the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This draft has been circulated as document A/C.1/31/L.19. It was submitted by Egypt, Iran and Kuwait and was co-sponsored by Bahrain, Mauritania and the United Arab Emirates. My colleague, Ambassador Hoveyda, was good enough to present this document to the Committee officially on 23 November, and I feel that his presentation truly and fully respects the spirit and the letter of the draft resolution. I should briefly like to recall some of the main points which, in the view of Egypt, should be stressed in connexion with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the prevailing circumstances in the Middle East and the implementation of the very principle of the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region. When Iran and Egypt jointly presented their draft resolution to the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, we did so in order to avoid the threat of nuclear war in the region, from either outside or within the region, and we felt that such a threat could be removed if the countries of the region assumed certain obligations and the nuclear Powers carried out the responsibilities incumbent upon them. We considered that the non-proliferation treaty was the point of departure of any such efforts and that the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones should not be offered as an alternative but as a means in itself of completing the non-proliferation treaty. Starting from that approach we developed our concept of the modalities for establishing a nuclear-weapon-free

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zone in the region of the Middle East. As is known and as revealed by the detailed examination of all the aspects of the creation of denuclearized zones, the circumstances permitting the continued existence of nuclear-weapon-free zones can contribute to the strengthening of security. To a large extent these circumstances vary from region to region, just as the views and ideas of security themselves may vary from region to region.

With these considerations in mind, we have endeavoured to ensure that the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone should translate into reality the objective pursued, namely, that of the banning of nuclear weapons from the region and the maintenance of such a ban through the participation of all countries of the region and the development of special arrangements within the framework of an effective system of verification of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, together with commitments on the part of the nuclear Powers vis-à-vis the countries of the region. But we did not want merely to make a declaration and announce our principles. We wanted also to include a mention of the circumstances prevailing in the region, and we have therefore proposed the appropriate modalities in the light of those circumstances.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Once again, we support the content of the study, made, namely that the nature of the negotiations for the establishment of such nuclear-weapon-free zones should reflect the particular features of the region and of the contracting parties. We feel that special arrangements should be devised to this end; this idea was supported by the Ambassador of Iran in introducing the draft resolution a few days ago, when he said that the circumstances of the region should prompt us to adopt an unconventional approach to this problem.

The draft resolution invites States to enter into precise commitments on the basis of reciprocity among the countries of the region and assigns the International Atomic Energy Agency a role in keeping with its Statute and the reason for which it was originally created. Furthermore, it invites the Secretary-General to explore the possibilities of making progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the area of the Middle East. The co-sponsors of the draft resolution provide for realistic measures in keeping with the prevailing situation of the region with a view to taking more vigorous action and imparting fresh impetus to the efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In this connexion, as can be gathered from our comments on the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, Egypt notes that the general trend is that the initiative for the creation of such zones should come from the countries of the zones themselves. We fully support that trend. Moreover, the practical implementation of the idea of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones requires mutual commitments within the framework of appropriate arrangements. Furthermore, the regional aspects may be such that the modalities of establishment have to be flexible and that alternatives have to be provided in the light of the peculiarities of each region. Here the United Nations, through its different organs or agencies -- and particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency, in accordance with its system of safeguards and its Statute -- can play an important role, namely a supervisory role. We are all aware of the fact that, for a zone to be free of nuclear weapons, there must exist an effective system of verification and control that will guarantee the denuclearized status of that zone. Moreover, the countries belonging to the region have to take appropriate measures to promote confidence among themselves and between themselves and countries outside the region by entering into

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arrangements whereby each country of the region would refrain from any action that might lead the other countries to violate their commitments. The system of verified safeguards is a means of creating this climate of confidence among States. Verification and control measures should extend to all nuclear activities in the countries of the region in order to ensure that those countries only use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and not for any other reason.

To place this statement in the appropriate context, may I refer to the circumstances at present prevailing in the Middle East. The reality is that Israel is occupying territory belonging to three Arab countries, denying the rights of the Palestinian people and in addition practising nuclear blackmail. Israel's representatives here talk about creating confidence and conducting negotiations in order to reduce armaments in the region, but Israel is standing alone, isolated before the international community, as the only country in the Middle East that has rejected the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. Israeli leaders state that Israel possesses nuclear weapons. The President of Israel stated two years ago that Israel possesses a nuclear capability, and when public opinion rose in indignation against this, the President of Israel stated "Let the world worry about that." The representative of Israel in the First Committee welcomed the draft resolution backing the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968, but last year we received the answer of the Israeli Government which stated, more than seven years later, that Israel was still considering the legal implications of that Treaty.

As far as Egypt is concerned, we signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1970 and we continue to state in all sincerity that we are ready to ratify that Treaty as soon as Israel has adhered to it. Yet, Israel continues to implement its nuclear programme and we receive report after report indicating the number of the nuclear weapons and atom bombs in Israel's possession.

Egypt is applying the system of safeguards in its nuclear agreements, whereas Israel refuses to subject its activities to any verification, control or safeguards and rules out any visit to the nuclear reactor at Dimona. Israeli leaders tell us that what they have said is enough and that they will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the region.*

* Mr. da Costa Lobo (Portugal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

Egypt would like to develop its country by using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and for this reason we are not afraid to accept the system of international guarantees and safeguards, whereas Israel continues to carry out its nuclear programme for military purposes, for hostile reasons and therefore will not accept the system of safeguards and guarantees. I should mention here Israel's refusal to allow Senator Ribicoff and his colleagues, members of the United States Senate, to visit the reactor in Dimona during their visit to Israel a few weeks ago.

The discussions which have taken place in Israel over the last two decades prove that nuclear energy is being used for strategic purposes. The representative of Israel, in statements in this Committee, has cited certain statistics that have been published on the question of the arms race in the Middle East. Allow me to refer to data published in the same source as that cited by Israel, namely, the yearbook for 1976 of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). It is stated in that yearbook that Israel's military expenditures in 1967 amounted to 14.9 per cent of the over-all GNP. In 1972 these expenditures amounted to 33.3 per cent of GNP -- the highest level in the Middle East. While Israel is occupying the territories of three Arab States, its military expenditures in 1976 have risen to \$4,214 million, that is 35.9 per cent of its gross national product. This means that the average per capita is 1,200, which is the highest per capita average in the world as far as military expenditures are concerned, and this at a time when the per capita average of Israel's neighbours is \$417 per year. These figures are taken from the publication, "The Military Balance in 1976-1977", published this autumn by the Centre for Strategic Studies, in London. Allow me to recall once again what was published in the SIPRI yearbook:

"A related concern in the case of Israel is the country's demonstrated ability to modify and improve imported weapons and equipment and thereby offer competitive systems in the international market for arms."

The same publication, concerning the military industry, refers to:

"... a significant and a growing indigenous weapon development and production capability".

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

I shall not dwell on this at great length, as I do not wish unduly to prolong the meeting of the Committee; but this means that what the SIPRI yearbook is telling us is that the export of weapons from Israel, which is occupying Arab territories, has tripled in the last three years.

The representative of Israel has come here to give us statistics that do not reflect the true situation. This reminds me of what was said by Israel, namely that there are three types of lies: the ordinary lie, the big lie and statistics. Trust cannot be created by ignoring truth and by creating and stockpiling nuclear weapons and occupying foreign territory. Trust is not created by insisting on negotiations while aggression and occupation continue under the cover of nuclear threats. Trust can be created only by declaring acceptance of obligations contained in the draft resolution submitted to this Committee; it can only be created if Israel applies a clear policy in keeping with valid principles: first of all, by adhering to the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and implementing all its provisions; second, by committing itself unequivocally to abstain from producing or acquiring nuclear weapons; third, by ceasing to create and acquire sophisticated weapons which can only be used to wage war, to carry out aggression and to continue the occupation of Arab territories and increase its nuclear capabilities; and fourth, by subjecting all its nuclear activities and conduct to the safeguards and guarantees set forth and applied by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): In the course of the general debate the delegation of the German Democratic Republic has already expressed its support for draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.5, submitted by Finland, on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. At the same time it requested the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4 not to press for a vote on that draft resolution.

In view of the grave threats to international peace resulting from the increase in the arms race it cannot be in the interest of anyone, including the co-sponsors of this draft, to delay the coming into force of the convention by referring it back to the CCD or, perhaps, to prevent it altogether. The present draft of the convention, which constitutes a compromise and is the result of

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

lengthy and complicated negotiations, is to prohibit under international law from the outset the extension of the arms race to new non-conventional means of warfare.

This would mean progress in curbing the arms race and offer a chance that must not be missed. Any delay in the coming into force of the convention would in the long run help only those imperialist circles which dispose of the relevant prerequisites for the development and military use of environmental modification techniques. Any misuse of such possibilities for the arms race must be prevented by a prohibition under international law which should become effective as soon as possible.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that a great number of States, by convincing and clear arguments, have shown appreciation of the positive aspects of the present draft convention. They have expressed their concern, doubt or rejection with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4, which is before us, and recommend that it should be referred back to the CCD. We share these views all the more, since we have considered in more detail the arguments that the co-sponsors of this draft resolution have put forward here.

We do not fail to see that the co-sponsors undoubtedly had positive intentions when demanding a clear, unambiguous and comprehensive prohibition of environmental warfare. This was the concern of all who actively participated in preparing and elaborating the present draft text. The arguments and conclusions put forward here in connexion with draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4 are in our view politically and legally untenable.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

We can, by no means, follow the legal arguments expressed by the representative of Mexico in his statement before this Committee in support of his rejection of the draft convention.

May I remind you of the statement made by the distinguished representative of Mexico on 1 November 1976 in which he gave the following interpretation of article I of the present draft convention with reference to a legal position:

"Each State Party to this Convention shall be entitled to engage in military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques as the means of destruction, damage or injury to another State Party, provided that such techniques do not have widespread, long-lasting or severe effects."

From this he drew the conclusion:

"We consider it extremely alarming that anyone can think of legitimizing such monstrous acts ...".

I stress: "legitimizing".

Such a conclusion appears to be logical at first sight and strikes one as being shocking for it would, indeed, be alarming if the convention contained provisions legitimizing the military use of any means of environmental warfare for any State.

However, this conclusion drawn by the representative of Mexico cannot be followed. It would have had a certain degree of justification at a time when the supreme principle in the relations between States was the so-called jus ad bellum (right to war), i.e. at a time when war was in a way sanctioned as a means for settling international issues. Today, however, war of aggression is prohibited under international law. The United Nations Organization adopted a definition of aggression and the United Nations Charter not only provides for the prohibition of aggression, but also for relevant sanctions against the violation of such prohibition.

It cannot be denied that the military use of environmental modification techniques against any State, even if they do not have widespread, long-lasting or severe effects, would be an act of aggression and is, therefore, in contradiction to international law.

There is a gap in the present draft convention in so far as it fails to concretize in detail the generally acknowledged prohibition of aggression in regard to environmental warfare. This, however, does not in any way legitimize even the slightest act of aggression.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

Anyhow, this cannot be and is not the purpose of the present draft convention, since it otherwise would be in contradiction to the generally acknowledged principles and norms of international law, especially the Charter of the United Nations. That would mean injustice, and there is a well-known principle which also holds good for international law: ex injuria jus non oritur (from injustice justice cannot be derived).

Thus, our concerns and objections are of a principle nature. The conclusions drawn by the representative of Mexico, in practice, deny the binding force of the generally acknowledged principles and norms of international law in general and the prohibition of aggression in particular.

But nobody can deny that the prohibition of aggression is one of the greatest achievements of the United Nations Charter which, in the meantime, has found legal expression also in a great number of documents of international law.

Therefore, the conclusion drawn by the representative of Mexico that the present draft convention expressly legitimizes the military use of environmental modification techniques having not widespread, long-lasting or severe effects, is untenable and unfounded from the legal point of view. Relevant fears of States in this regard are, therefore, not justified. They should restrain nobody from voting in favour of that draft convention. Furthermore, the text of the draft convention itself offers the possibility for further concretizing in the course of time the scope of the prohibition by means of amendments or review conferences.

It is imperative in the interest of preventing the extension of the arms race to support every progress made in this field and not to do anything inducive to delaying it. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic will vote, therefore, against draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4, if it is put to the vote. My delegation is convinced that the majority of States will do everything to make it possible that the convention on the prohibition of military and any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques comes into force.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker I should like to announce that Mongolia has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.16.

Mr. ERDENECHULJUN (Mongolia): I should like to make a few comments in connexion with draft resolutions A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.1 and A/C.1/31/L.4 on the question of the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques introduced in this Committee.

The Mongolian delegation, as one of the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.5/Rev.1, has already set forth the position of its Government with respect to the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques presented by the CCD at this session of the General Assembly.

The negotiations that took place in the CCD on the elaboration of the text of the draft convention were characterized by a constructive approach and by the efforts made to achieve broadly acceptable formulations.

Most delegations who spoke on this matter in this Committee, including my own, favoured the commendation by this General Assembly session of the convention in question and its opening for signature and ratification at the earliest possible date.

Unfortunately, some delegations hold different views on this matter. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4 proposed that the negotiations on the text of the draft convention should be continued. That would mean referring the text of the draft convention back to the CCD. As we know, these delegations consider that the convention should provide for the complete prohibition of environmental modification for military purposes. We have no doubts as to the sincerity of their desire. We sympathize with their determination to have a convention which would stipulate the complete prohibition of military or any other hostile use against man of the phenomena of his own environment by its deliberate manipulation.

However, my delegation is aware that the distinctive features of, and a limited amount of research on, the subject of prohibition compel us to limit the definition of the scope of prohibition. The problem of the implementation of such a prohibition should also be taken into account. The definition of the scope of prohibition together with the practical possibilities of verification constitute, in our view, the core of the problem, the more so as the convening of the review conferences is stipulated in the draft convention.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

My delegation cannot agree with the proposal to omit from article I of the draft convention the phrase "having widespread, long-lasting or severe effects". The omission of these words, in our view, might lead to various ambiguities which might hamper the application of the convention in practice. It should be noted in this connexion that the scope of prohibition envisaged in the draft convention, together with the agreed understandings, might be useful in preventing ambiguous situations from arising in the application of the convention.

Account should also be taken of the fact that the elaboration of many articles of the draft convention required considerable efforts to achieve a balanced and a compromise solution. Therefore, we cannot but express our concern that the reopening of discussions on article I of the draft convention might endanger all that has been achieved in the other articles of this draft. This will most likely lead to protracted debates, which might prejudice the priority tasks facing the CCD.

We hope that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/31/L.4 will not insist on sending back the draft convention to the CCD and will not oppose the commendation by the General Assembly of the draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile uses of environmental modification techniques.

The statements made by the majority of delegations, both in the CCD and here, show that the text of the draft convention, as it stands, is a document widely acceptable to the Members of the United Nations.

The Mongolian delegation believes that the approval by this session of the General Assembly of the draft convention as it stands will serve the interests of all States and become an important international legal instrument aimed at limiting the arms race and disarmament.

Mr. CHOU (China) (interpretation from Chinese): In their speeches at the plenary meetings and in the First Committee of the current session, quite a number of representatives expressed their serious concern over the two super-Powers' intensified nuclear arms race, nuclear threat and nuclear blackmail which endanger the security and development of various countries. They pointed out that since the super-Powers had the largest nuclear arsenals, the super-Powers should be the first to start nuclear disarmament, and they expressed strong dissatisfaction at the failure of the super-Powers thus far to take any practical and effective measure for nuclear disarmament. These criticisms and complaints are fully justified.

(Mr. Chou, China)

We have always held that in order to really eliminate the nuclear threat it is imperative to prohibit completely and destroy thoroughly the nuclear weapons. This includes the renunciation of the use, import and export, test, manufacture and stockpiling of all nuclear weapons as well as the destruction of all nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. As a first step, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. The Chinese Government has undertaken this obligation on its own initiative and openly declared that at no time and under no circumstances will it be the first to use nuclear weapons. Many countries have repeatedly asked the super-Powers to do the same. In our opinion, the above position of ours and many other countries is truly conducive to the struggle of the world people against the super-Power policy of nuclear threat and nuclear blackmail.

In discussing the question of nuclear disarmament, the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons can never be attained by leaving aside the crucial issue of non-use of nuclear weapons and capitalizing on "nuclear non-proliferation" and "nuclear test ban".

On the day of the production of the so-called treaty of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons concocted by the super-Powers, we pointed out that it was nothing but a major conspiracy of the super-Powers designed to maintain their nuclear monopoly and nuclear hegemony and to bind and control the non-nuclear States. According to this treaty, the super-Powers are free to continue to possess, develop and manufacture nuclear weapons, whereas the numerous non-nuclear States are deprived of their right to self-defence. The super-Powers will for ever brandish the nuclear weapons and even place them at the doorstep of other countries while prohibiting the non-nuclear States from developing their own defence capabilities. Is this not an obvious attempt to force the numerous non-nuclear States to recognize the super-Powers' perpetual status of nuclear overlord and grant them the privilege of nuclear threat against the numerous countries with few or no nuclear weapons? Small wonder this treaty is being resisted and opposed by an increasing number of countries.

The so-called complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests is all the more a trap set by the super-Powers in a naked attempt to maintain their status of

(Mr. Chou, China)

nuclear monopoly after the concoction of the treaty of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The two super-Powers conducted no less than several hundred nuclear tests. When they had enough atmospheric nuclear tests, they put forward partial nuclear test ban; when they have conducted about enough underground nuclear tests, they start to talk profusely about the complete and general prohibition of all nuclear tests. This in effect means: When they have a need, they can conduct the tests in whatever way they like; when they no longer have the need, others are not allowed even to conduct the tests; they are free to threaten others, while others are not even allowed to act in self-defence. What on earth is this kind of logic? At no time and under no circumstances will China recognize such a right on the part of any super-Powers.

It is common sense that the mere cessation today of all nuclear tests without the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons can only serve to obstruct the countries with few or no nuclear weapons from developing their nuclear defence capabilities and cannot in the least prevent the super-Powers from continuing their development, manufacture, deployment, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons. This can neither eliminate their nuclear monopoly nor prevent a nuclear war. In preaching feverishly the complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests, the Soviet Union is evidently trying to exploit many countries' desire for peace in order to protect its status of nuclear superiority so as to have a free hand to carry out nuclear threats and nuclear blackmail against the countries with few or no nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons can serve neither as food nor as clothing. China is a developing country, and it is definitely unwilling to spend a penny more on this stuff. China is compelled to conduct nuclear tests which are limited in number. We are ready to cease all nuclear tests at any time, but this can happen only on the day when the super-Powers and all the nuclear States completely prohibit and thoroughly destroy their nuclear weapons, and definitely not before.

Basing itself on the above position, the Chinese delegation will vote against the draft resolutions contained in documents A/C.1/31/L.15 and L.16, and we wish to state our reservations on all the references and paragraphs concerning "nuclear non-proliferation" and "prohibition of nuclear tests" contained in other draft resolutions on disarmament. We request that these reservations be put on the record.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to announce that the German Democratic Republic has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.16 and that Afghanistan has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/31/L.10/Rev.1 and A/C.1/31/L.15.

As no other representative wishes to speak on the draft resolutions concerning disarmament at this time, I call now on the representative of Israel in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. EILAN (Israel): Israel does not believe that the introduction of acrimony and recrimination into this debate such as we heard this morning from the representative of Egypt will be particularly conducive to a constructive solution of any of the problems before this Committee. We made our views on the general problem of disarmament known in our statement of 17 November. We shall state our views on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/31/L.19 when it is put to the vote and we shall do so in a clear, non-contentious and constructive manner.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Mexico, also in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): With regard to the statement made this morning by the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Herder, I should like to make a brief comment.

As we stated both at the beginning of our debate on the question of disarmament on 1 November of this year and in subsequent statements, the position of the Mexican delegation on the matter of the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques is precisely the same as that adopted by the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly when, by 126 votes, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3264 (XXIX), which took note of the draft submitted by the Soviet Union on that prohibition.

In the course of the next summer, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic, in a speech delivered in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) by Ambassador Herder himself, said the following -- and I quote from the record of the 676th meeting, held on 29 July 1975:

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

"In our view, the importance of the Soviet initiative is to be seen in the fact that environmental warfare would be more devastating than the application of conventional military weapons we know so far and that the arms race can be prevented in its initial stage." (CCD/PV.676, p. 11)

At a later date, he specifically referred to the Soviet draft and told us, a mere 15 months or so ago:

"The draft convention itself furnishes a general criterion in this regard. For all States to live up to their responsibility in a spirit of profound humanity, they must clearly commit themselves to renunciation of the use of environmental weapons by concluding a comprehensive preventive international convention completely banning these weapons." (CCD/PV.678, p. 10)

I am repeating what Ambassador Herder said on 5 August 1975: "completely banning these weapons". And he went on to add: "Basic political will is the pre-condition for the regulation of all relevant scientific and technological aspects".

I think that the Mexican delegation and the overwhelming majority of the countries represented in the First Committee have demonstrated that they possess that basic political will.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.