



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 42ND MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PASTINEN (Finland)

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Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): In connexion with the debate on agenda item 125 the delegation of my country, the German Democratic Republic, has already explained its position on a number of problems now under discussion. The present debate deals with important aspects of the struggle for the cessation of the arms race, some of which have been on the agenda for many years now. In the view of the German Democratic Republic the momentum generated by the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, should have a positive impact on the solution of these problems and should contribute to achieving tangible progress on the road to the cessation of the arms race and to promoting agreement on far-reaching disarmament measures.

The numerous proposals submitted by the USSR and other socialist States at the special session and in the course of this General Assembly session prove once again that the members of the socialist community are willing and determined to advance resolutely on the road towards general and complete disarmament so that the threat of war is banished once and for all from the lives of peoples. To this end, the socialist States are prepared to take radical disarmament measures or to agree to partial steps that would gradually bring us closer to this goal. In view of the danger emanating from nuclear weapons an agreement on the prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles is of primary importance. To reach such an agreement is, without doubt, a difficult and complex task which cannot be completed overnight. It should, however, be possible - as the USSR has proposed - to agree immediately on the date when the negotiations on the prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles could start.

(Mr. Herder, German
Democratic Republic)

The resolutions to be adopted by the thirty-third session of the General Assembly concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race should therefore clearly and unequivocally reaffirm the necessity of prohibiting the manufacture of nuclear arms and contain concrete decisions with regard to the date on which relevant negotiations must be started. The achievement of progress on this question is urgently needed, and it would considerably reduce the threat of nuclear war.

In the course of the debate the representative of the USSR has explained to this Committee the proposal of his country concerning the non-deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where they do not exist at present. The German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to that proposal. It lives up to present-day requirements and is an effective contribution towards the limitation of the nuclear arms race and of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It takes account of the fact that a number of States have already declared their determination not to permit the deployment of nuclear weapons on their territories. In some countries a broad popular movement against the deployment of nuclear weapons has emerged. On the other hand there are efforts by nuclear Powers to deploy - contrary to the will of the peoples - nuclear weapons on the territories of further States. Hence the problem of the non-deployment of nuclear weapons is a highly topical one which has to be solved. The thirty-third session of the General Assembly could make a useful contribution to this end. The adoption of the USSR proposal by the General Assembly and its implementation by the United Nations Member States would meet the growing need of non-nuclear-weapon States to strengthen their security. That would be another concrete step towards implementing the Programme of Action adopted by the tenth special session. The German Democratic Republic welcomes the readiness of the USSR to undertake such a commitment and to reach a relevant agreement with other nuclear Powers. It voices its expectation that all the other nuclear Powers will follow this example and advocates that at the thirty-third session there be adopted a resolution calling upon all nuclear-weapon States not to deploy nuclear weapons on the territories of States where they do not exist at present.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

At the same time non-nuclear-weapon States should be called upon to refrain from any steps which might lead to the deployment of such weapons on their territories. The implementation of this proposal not only would strengthen the security of all States but also would be conducive to improving the atmosphere and creating better conditions for substantive agreements on the cessation of the arms race and on disarmament. It would therefore be in the interest of all States if the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly fully supported the proposal regarding the non-deployment of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where they do not exist at present.

In the course of our debate reference has rightly been made to the special responsibility of the nuclear Powers for the implementation of measures to halt the arms race and bring about disarmament. This aspect was also, as all members very well remember, expressly underlined in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly. In this statement I have already expressed in a more detailed manner our views on the constructive proposals of one nuclear Power. Other nuclear Powers have submitted their ideas or initiated draft resolutions which are currently being considered in the Committee. The representative of one nuclear Power, however - one that is, as is known, a permanent member of the Security Council - has in this Committee opposed all concrete proposals on disarmament and has practically called for an intensified continuation of the arms race. At the same time, both in its content and its tone, his statement clearly demonstrated what is to be understood by hegemonism.

The intentions behind this are obvious. The representative of a small country which for many years had friendly relations with that nuclear Power recently came to the conclusion that the policy of that nuclear Power is directed at plunging the world into the holocaust of a new devastating world war. It was officially declared that the nuclear Power concerned wants to see Europe become the scene of the third world war, in which the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the European countries are to clash with and destroy each other while that nuclear Power itself keeps away from the conflagration.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic is convinced that this policy, which is hostile to the interests of the peoples, will meet with a proper rebuff and that the Committee will unswervingly continue its search for concrete ways to stop the arms race.

(Mr. Herder, German
Democratic Republic)

The First Committee and the Geneva Committee on Disarmament have for several years now been dealing with the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, as proposed by socialist States. Although discussion of this question has contributed to the clarification of positions and to the achievement of certain progress, no agreement has been reached as yet on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of such weapons. It is, however, incontestable that the latest scientific achievements are being used to an ever greater extent for the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. Therefore the need effectively to put an end to this process becomes more and more evident. This awareness has become even stronger as a result of the development of the nuclear neutron weapon, production of which could send the arms race spiralling again and thus impede progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the tenth special session and all other efforts aimed at disarmament.

The representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Adeniji, addressing this Committee on 10 November of this year rightly pointed to the danger emanating from the nuclear neutron weapon. Other delegations have done so also.

We fully agree with Ambassador Adeniji's assessment that the development and manufacture of nuclear neutron weapons would inevitably open the road to an escalation of the arms race, particularly in the nuclear field. Therefore the beginning of negotiations on mutual renunciation of the manufacture and deployment of nuclear neutron weapons, as proposed in a draft convention submitted by eight socialist countries to the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, should not be delayed any longer.

The German Democratic Republic would appreciate it if the demands for strict prohibition of nuclear neutron weapons made at this session of the General Assembly were to be reflected in relevant recommendations - also at this session - to the Geneva Committee on Disarmament. The German Democratic Republic, as a member of the Geneva Committee on Disarmament, will in the future work actively for the effective prohibition of nuclear neutron weapons.

(Mr. Herder, German
Democratic Republic)

The dangers emanating from the development of the nuclear neutron weapon should give rise to intensified efforts with a view to achieving a comprehensive prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. It is well known that certain NATO States, now as before, reject the elaboration and conclusion of a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

Their position is merely to keep the development of new types and systems of such weapons under constant review and to start negotiations on specific agreements to ban specific categories of new weapons only after such categories have been clearly identified. The facts, however, prove that such an approach is not conducive to the cessation of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. What is necessary is to agree, from the very beginning, on the prohibition to develop such weapons, as has repeatedly been substantiated by the socialist States. It is only in this way that the arms race with new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons can be effectively stopped. The German Democratic Republic expects that as a result of the debate on this question in the First Committee the Geneva Committee on Disarmament will be called upon to start, without delay, the elaboration of a comprehensive agreement on the prohibition to develop and manufacture new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

Chemical weapons belong to those weapons of mass destruction, the prohibition of which has been on the agenda for a long time. Despite certain progress and active endeavours of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, it has still been impossible until now to bring negotiations on this subject to a successful conclusion. The representative of the Hungarian People's Republic, Mr. Domokos, has referred before our Committee to a statement which was recently made by the Commander-in-Chief of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces according to which NATO might be contemplating a considerable reinforcement of its offensive chemical potential. Such statements illustrate what dangers could arise if in the foreseeable future no agreement is reached on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Therefore it is necessary to intensify efforts in order to settle the questions still open. The current session of the General Assembly should give new impetus to this effect.

It is an important task now to translate into practice the many various ideas and concrete proposals relating to the cessation of the arms race and to disarmament. The point is to reach agreement on steps which

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

would effectively curb the arms race and bring about a break-through in this field. An ever-increasing number of proposals and projects for the study of certain aspects of the arms race or for the establishment of new institutions cannot and must not serve as a substitute for real steps leading to disarmament. I would like to raise the following question: is there not a risk that this might distract attention from the task of reaching effective progress in the struggle to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament measures?

In our view, we should not allow movement to be simulated and illusions created by a host of new proposals for studies and institutions, and that forces hostile to disarmament exploit this situation to conceal their lack of political willingness for genuine disarmament measures and to prevent any progress in this field. We should take due account of this aspect when formulating practical steps towards the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the tenth special session.

The Political Committee has before it the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference. We agree to this report and should like to thank the Chairman, Mr. Hoveyda, and all other representatives of the Committee for the work they have done. It is encouraging to note that the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Belgrade from 25 to 28 July this year, reaffirmed the need to convene a world disarmament conference. This without any doubt reflects the broad support for holding a world disarmament conference.

The German Democratic Republic reiterates its position that the holding of further special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament questions cannot be a substitute for a world disarmament conference. It believes that this session of the General Assembly should take new steps in order to make headway in the practical preparation for that conference. For instance, it should be possible to reach agreement now concerning the date for convening the conference and for the establishment of a preparatory committee for the world disarmament conference. At any rate, in our view the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee should be renewed by this General Assembly session.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

I should like, in conclusion, to express the hope of the German Democratic Republic that common sense and goodwill will prevail and that the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly will make a constructive contribution towards the cessation of the arms race and the implementation of disarmament measures

Mr. KOCHUBEY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): In the discussion taking place in the Committee we frequently hear the view expressed that in the interests of the further development of the process of détente and in order to make that process irreversible we must take all possible measures to supplement political détente by military détente. Once again the discussion has shown that the concrete practical task of disarmament is the major requirement of the day. It is entirely understandable that the attention of the United Nations has been focused on questions of disarmament. Outside the United Nations intensive bilateral and multilateral talks on disarmament are taking place. All kinds of meetings, conferences and other assemblies are being held in which representatives of Governments and public organizations take part.

An important contribution to the discussion of the problems of disarmament was made by the special session of the General Assembly. Public organizations also took part in its work and spoke out from the rostrum in favour of peace and disarmament. A positive result of that session was the adoption of the Final Document, a dominant feature of which was the desire of international society and all the peoples of the world to put an end to the arms race.

The present period, which immediately follows the special session, is a time for testing the seriousness and responsibility of States and their readiness to undertake concrete steps to perform the tasks set by the session.

We are firmly convinced that in order to achieve that ideal, which must be attained by mankind if we are to reach disarmament, we must use every possible means available. In this regard, we continue to favour the convening at the earliest appropriate date of a world disarmament conference. That is a proposal which was supported by the special session as well as by many delegations at this session. The convening of a world conference, of course, would not mean giving up tried and true methods of negotiating on questions of disarmament.

(Mr. Kochubey, Ukrainian SSR)

It is no secret that the proposal for convening a world conference served as a fillip which brought into play the necessary forces and made possible the convening of a special session devoted to disarmament. However, the convening of the world conference itself would make it possible, we hope, to take a serious step towards real disarmament. First and foremost, it would be a universal forum; that is, all the States in the world would take part in the discussions on disarmament questions and solutions to them. Also, it is not excluded that the work of the conference could be organized in such a way that those States which were primarily concerned would be the ones to take part in the consideration of a given problem. Secondly, an important feature of a world conference would be the empowering of the delegations taking part in it to do the actual practical work of producing the appropriate documents with, if necessary, the assistance of experts. Thus, the world conference on disarmament could be a forum which would make it possible to embark on practical steps in order to reach accord on measures in the field of disarmament. Of course, the decisions of the world conference would have binding force and would not be just recommendations.

To prepare for the world conference and its decisions time will be required. We should not waste time and, therefore, we should decide on the date for the convening of the conference and also set up a preparatory committee.

The First Committee has been holding intensive discussions on the Soviet proposal for the Conclusion of an International Convention on the Strengthening of Guarantees of the Security of Non-nuclear States. Other proposals have been put forward along the same lines.

The delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, which whole-heartedly supported the proposal for conclusion of an international convention on this question, would like once again to draw attention to a no less urgent problem directly linked with that question, namely, that of the territorial limitation of the deployment of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Kochubev, Ukrainian SSR)

It is being proposed in this regard that agreement be reached on the non-emplacement of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where they do not exist at present. There are in practice no real technical obstacles to the solution of this problem, and of course a lot depends on the nuclear Powers. The Soviet Union has already declared that it is ready to assume the necessary obligation, and the General Assembly should promote and support the idea that similar obligations should be assumed by the other nuclear-weapon States, too. Ultimately this would make it possible to erect one more obstacle to the preparation of a nuclear war and would avert the possible destabilization of the situation.

We support the proclamation by all nuclear Powers of their assumption of such obligations. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic delegation would like to draw attention to the fact that this would be the first step towards the solving of a broader problem, that is, the total withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territories of other countries. Many, if not an actual majority, of the States in the United Nations have pronounced themselves in favour of this latter step.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic would like to state its conviction that this session of the General Assembly will take decisions which, in actual practice, will promote progress in the area of international détente and buttress it with real measures designed to bring about both a halting of the arms race and disarmament.

Mr. ORTIZ DE ROZAS (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The list of items for consideration by our Committee this year is even longer than in past sessions. The very intensive debates that took place before and during the special session devoted to disarmament focused the attention of Governments on those items and gave rise to the emergence of a large number of new ideas that we now see reflected in the draft resolutions that are before the Committee and in many others that are still the subject of consultation. This abundance of initiatives, which is valuable in itself because of the vigour it shows and the concern which it reflects, should, however, not cause us to depart from our central objective, namely, the determination of effective disarmament measures.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

This same wide spectrum of proposals, because of their complexity and diversity, brings us face to face with the danger that we might forget that the consensus already achieved on the most important items may become a dead letter if old attitudes are not changed and if declarations are not turned into positive deeds. The implementation of political will still eludes us. During the special session on disarmament my delegation expressed regret that the negotiations in progress had not produced a draft treaty on the total prohibition of nuclear weapons. We said:

"We should like to think that this delay is due to the laudable desire to consider all the precautions and safeguards which are essential for all nuclear weapon Powers to sign such a treaty, and likewise to prevent vertical proliferation." (A/S-10/PV.5, page 52)

Today we reiterate that view, while awaiting some results from those negotiations; but perhaps the repeated postponement of the conclusion of the draft treaty might have one positive aspect, namely, that it will afford an opportunity for its consideration by the new, revitalized negotiating body in Geneva. Undoubtedly the democratic and more representative structure of the Committee on Disarmament, with the participation of France and of eight new members, and perhaps even of China, will offer better guarantees for ensuring that the document will be dealt with in a manner commensurate with its importance. Argentina attaches the greatest importance to the consideration of the draft treaty by the Committee on Disarmament and to the way in which it will be considered.

All States represented here have agreed by consensus, as stated in the Final Document of the tenth special session, that the result of the negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests

"... should be ... submitted for full consideration by the multilateral negotiating body ..." (resolution S-10/2, para. 51)

I emphasize the words "full consideration", which were chosen after lengthy discussion in order that we should not lose sight of the fact that the

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

functions of the Committee in Geneva should not be those of a mere intermediary between the negotiating parties and the General Assembly. The competence of the Committee on Disarmament involves the receipt of any draft treaty submitted, its consideration in detail and in depth, and the whole negotiating process that is called for, including that of amendments to any provisions, in order that a consensus may be reached among all the Committee's members. Any restrictive interpretation of the functions we have assigned to the Committee on Disarmament would be detrimental to its role and would even cast doubt on the need for its very existence. Only after the negotiating body has, in the opinion of all its members, completed its full consideration of the draft international treaty will it be in a position to bring that draft before the General Assembly for its consideration. Apart from any other merit, that procedure will serve to ensure, in principle, wider acceptance by the most representative body in the United Nations.

That is why we are somewhat surprised at the time-table which is implied in draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.7. From a perusal of paragraph 6 of the draft, it seems that the Committee on Disarmament would at best have but a few months to consider a draft treaty which, it can reasonably be assumed, will affect the legitimate interests of all the members of the international community. The history of negotiations on disarmament conventions, including those relating to collateral measures, does not give us cause for optimism. The delegation of Argentina shares the intentions of the authors of the draft resolution concerning the urgency of the matter, but would still prefer, because it is more realistic and more in line with the role to be played by the Geneva Committee, the language used in draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.11.

We believe, further, that when the time comes the negotiating body should consider, in equal depth and with equal thoroughness, the long-delayed treaty on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. We reiterate our faith that the results of those long and thorough negotiations will justify the time they have taken with the submission of a document which proposes and enlists general support while avoiding the errors that have undermined the credibility and acceptance of other treaties.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

My delegation wishes to reiterate Argentina's full support for the objective of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Without detriment to the support of that goal but with the greatest sense of urgency we repeat that first priority should still be given to nuclear disarmament. It would be illusory to think that without the gradual elimination of nuclear weapons it would be possible to avoid the risks implicit in both vertical and horizontal proliferation. There is no better proof of the accuracy of that assertion than the failure of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The time that has elapsed since it was opened to signature enables us to state categorically that it has neither prevented the possibility of horizontal proliferation in certain areas of conflict nor halted vertical proliferation, which is already rather considerable; nor, of course, has it contributed in any way to nuclear disarmament or to facilitating the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

With regard to the latter aspect, the experience of the developing countries is especially regrettable. They are subjected to a whole series of restrictions and controls whenever they wish to take the few small steps that their technological capacity enables them to take, on the pretext of the safeguarding of world security - a security which is every day endangered by precisely those who possess nuclear weapons. It is demanded of the developing countries that they assume binding international commitments, such as accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in exchange for illusory security and a technology that is not always transferred, and which when it is placed at their disposal has to be paid for very dearly. Those demands appear to be based on two considerations: first, the desire of some of the developed countries to preserve their monopoly over the production of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and, secondly, the doubts which some of those countries have that the developing countries might not accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or similar commitments. Here we find a strange paradox. On the one hand, one of the conditions to be imposed for the non-use of nuclear weapons against our countries - and here I paraphrase the statement of the United States representative on 3 November last -

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

is that we should not possess nuclear weapons and that we should be parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, or that we should have accepted similar internationally binding commitments not to acquire nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

On the other hand, the same representative told us immediately afterwards that:

"... this statement should dispose of one of the issues which recurred from time to time in our current deliberations on this issue" - he is referring to item 128 - "that is, whether there should be a 'legally binding treaty obligation' or whether individual declarations are satisfactory. The United States does not consider this to be a real issue. A formal statement by the President of the United States is not something that is made lightly or without careful consideration of all its implications and the obligations it imposes. And its effect is immediate, not at some future date." (A/C.1/33/PV.28, p. 21)

These assertions appear to me to contain surprising disparities. On the one hand a unilateral statement by a Head of State or Government should be taken as sufficient to guarantee the security of non-nuclear weapon States. On the other hand, in the case of the latter, more is needed than statements, however solemn, made by their Governments - and there are a number of Governments which have made such statements - concerning their intentions not to acquire or produce nuclear weapons. They must sign and ratify formal internationally valid commitments.

In short, it means that in the area of nuclear problems the credibility of countries is measured by a different yardstick. This is somewhat of a novelty in respect of an item where even the capacity to be astounded appeared to have been exhausted.

In this statement I have confined myself to a few remarks. The delegation of Argentina will give further specific views on the items under consideration in the First Committee when we have to take a decision on the various draft resolutions before us.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to a number of new draft resolutions, and revisions of others, which have been distributed today. First of all there is draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.22, which concerns new weapons of mass destruction. Secondly, there is draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.23, which concerns effective measures to implement the purposes and objective of the Disarmament Decade, under agenda item 40. Then there is a revised version of draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.7, under agenda item 38, which refers to implementation of General Assembly resolution 32/78. Finally, there is a revised version of draft resolution A/C.1/33/L.16, which refers to agenda item 125, and more precisely to paragraph 125 of the Final Document of the special session on disarmament.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.