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Chairman: Mr. Piero VINCI (Italy).

In the Chairman's absence, Mr. Galindo Pohl (El Salvador), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEMS 27, 28, 29, 94 AND 96

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament *(continued)* (A/7189-DC/231; A/C.1/L.443, L.444 and Add.1-5, L.445 and Add.1, L.446 and L.448)

Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament *(continued)* (A/7189-DC/231; A/C.1/L.447 and Add.1-2)

Elimination of foreign military bases in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament *(continued)* (A/7189-DC/231)

Memorandum of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning urgent measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament *(continued)* (A/7134, A/7223; A/C.1/974; A/C.1/L.443)

Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States: Final Document of the Conference *(continued)* (A/7224 and Add.1, A/7277, A/7327; A/C.1/976)

1. The CHAIRMAN *(translated from Spanish)*: Before calling on the first speaker for this afternoon, I have to

announce that Belgium has joined the sponsors of resolution A/C.1/L.444 and Add.1-5, thus raising the number of sponsors of that resolution to twenty.

2. U CHIT MYAING (Burma): As this is the first occasion on which the delegation of Burma has intervened in this Committee, I should like to take this opportunity to convey to you and your colleagues on the Bureau my congratulations on your respective elections.

3. The item now before the Committee is one of the most important on this year's agenda, or indeed, on any year's agenda inasmuch as the problems associated with disarmament, and the degree to which the Assembly succeeds in considering them constructively, have a direct bearing on the preservation of the peace of the world, in the interests of which the founding fathers of the United Nations had dedicated the Charter.

4. The issue of peace today has changed but little, in essence at least, from that of 1945, though it would, unhappily, appear that the experience and devastation of a general world war is more conducive to a political will for peace than the prospect of future war. This lack of political will may perhaps be a natural development but is not thereby rendered the less ominous since it is accompanied today by the technological developments that have made possible a whole arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. That there have nevertheless been some limited gains in the field of disarmament has been an encouragement, and the peripheral progress that has been possible is a welcome sign that there exist many areas where mutual interest between the armed Powers prevents negotiations towards disarmament from becoming a series of totally fruitless exercises. Burma has, indeed, welcomed the partial test ban Treaty¹ in the hope and expectation that that limited agreement would pave the way to a comprehensive test ban treaty. We have, however, had to take a second look at the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty² because, to my delegation's thinking, the passage of that Treaty is merely one side of the coin and, as it is presently drafted, is certainly less meaningful as a disarmament measure than it could have been. My delegation would like, accepting the non-proliferation Treaty at face value, to see article VI of the Treaty implemented early, so that the mutually accelerating arms race between the two major nuclear Powers may be brought to a halt.

5. This leads us to the thought that the question of security guarantees for non-nuclear signatories of the

¹ Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964.

² Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (General Assembly resolution 2372 (XXII), annex).

non-proliferation Treaty, which has been spelled out in a resolution of the Security Council [*resolution 255 (1968)*], might perhaps have been solved in a more effective manner had the major nuclear Powers signatories to the Treaty pledged that they would not be the first to utilize nuclear weapons against any nation, nuclear or non-nuclear. Even if such assurances are termed negative guarantees, we are confident that their categorical nature will prove to have a positive usefulness.

6. The Burmese delegation would like to welcome the statements made in July 1968 by which the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to enter into bilateral discussions on the limitation and reduction of both offensive strategic nuclear weapon delivery systems and systems of defence against ballistic missiles. We are confident that the discussions such as were envisaged at the time of the statement will lead to substantive negotiations between the two major nuclear Powers and will prove to be integral to the implementation of article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty, an obligation to achieve which now lies on both the United States and the Soviet Union. Therefore we are hopeful, as most other delegations assembled here are, that the initial impetus towards discussions on disarmament represented by the announcement of July must be renewed and carried forward.

7. In this connexion, the Burmese delegation considers that it would not be inappropriate to refer to the memorandum presented by the Soviet Union concerning measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament. If that memorandum should, in fact, represent an assurance of political will on the part of the Soviet Union, it may perhaps be considered more significantly within the frame of reference of the statement of July, and the views which crystallize here in the General Assembly may prove useful for the further consideration of this matter.

8. The wide-ranging measures which the delegation of Burma considers could be discussed profitably, given a renewed will for peace and disarmament among the major nuclear Powers, include those which are already on the agenda of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.³ I should merely like to say here that the Burmese delegation has joined other delegations in co-sponsoring a draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/L.448, which would request the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to pursue renewed efforts towards achieving substantial progress in reaching agreement on the question of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

9. Though nuclear armaments and their abolition have, of course, been the subject of major preoccupation at all negotiations in the field of disarmament, a related subject, that of bacteriological and chemical warfare, merits, in the view of my delegation, almost as great an attention in the field of disarmament. Its longer lineage indicates the difficulty of controlling it, and its more insidious nature as well as its easier utilization makes bacteriological and chemical warfare a fit subject for early and sustained international effort at control and abolition.

³ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/231, para. 17.

10. Another subject being considered in this Committee is that of the elimination of foreign military bases in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The delegation of Burma considers that the existence of military pacts and blocs, which has given rise to the establishment and maintenance of foreign military bases in many countries around the world, is responsible in a very large measure for the tension that exists today in relations among nations. My delegation, therefore, views with disfavour the establishment and maintenance of foreign military bases, particularly if they have been established and maintained against the expressed will of the people of the nations on whose soil the bases are established. There are, of course, instances where the indigenous people as a whole, in what they conceive to be their over-all interests, welcome the presence of these bases on their soil, and such instances must be the exceptions to the principle that foreign military bases should not be established on the soil of other nations.

11. I should like again to refer to the partial nuclear test ban Treaty and the need to have it extended to underground testing also. When we welcomed that Treaty in 1963 it was with the expectation that that limited step would lead in the not far distant future to a comprehensive test ban. In the thinking of my delegation, the continued underground testing negates to a large extent the effect of the partial nuclear test ban Treaty and, moreover, casts doubt on the intent of the non-proliferation Treaty. It would appear to the delegation of Burma and other like-minded delegations that the major reason cited against banning underground tests, namely, the difficulties of enforcing satisfactory inspection measures against clandestine testing, has now been reduced to manageable dimensions. I refer with admiration to the initiatives that Sweden has taken in the field of the utilization of seismic methods to detect underground nuclear testing. Perhaps no method of detection is absolutely foolproof, but my delegation believes that a stage has now been reached which would make the banning of underground tests feasible and therefore my delegation joins the delegations of Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Sweden and the United Arab Republic in commending for adoption by the Committee the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.447 and Add.1 and 2, urging all nuclear-weapon States to suspend nuclear-weapon tests in all environments.

12. There is a further area in which my delegation believes that it may be possible for the two major nuclear Powers to reach a degree of understanding which would lead to the achievement of collateral measures in the field of disarmament. I refer to the possibility of a cut-off in the manufacture of fissionable material used in the production of nuclear weapons. Both the United States and the Soviet Union have by now accumulated such large reserves of fissionable material that they can well afford to arrive at a mutual agreement as to a cut-off on further manufacture of the same. It would be even more fitting, in the opinion of my delegation, if the existing stocks of this material should be diverted to peaceful uses.

13. In conclusion, my delegation considers that though all progress in the field of disarmament must necessarily be achieved through a series of limited gains and the achievement of those gains, which are indeed essential for creating an atmosphere in the relations between nations favourable

for disarmament, depends ultimately on the presence of political will among the nuclear Powers, it is the hope of the delegation of Burma that this political will and this objective will not be lost in the ramifications attendant on the various preliminary processes connected with disarmament.

14. The CHAIRMAN (*translated from Spanish*): I thank the representative of Burma for his congratulations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee and the other officers.

15. Mr. RAKOTONIAINA (Madagascar) (*translated from French*): At its last session, the General Assembly referred to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament a number of recommendations on arms control and disarmament measures.

16. In its report to the current session, the Eighteen-Nation Committee states that, because of its relatively short session, it has not been able to make a complete examination of the questions referred to it, but that useful and valuable discussions were held on certain agenda items.

17. The report states further that the Eighteen-Nation Committee has heeded the General Assembly's request that it should urgently pursue negotiations on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, and to nuclear disarmament.

18. Members of the First Committee who have familiarized themselves with the reports and records of meetings of the Eighteen-Nation Committee will agree with me that it would not be in the interest of the discussions which have been begun and which, I hope, will be continued in the Eighteen-Nation Committee to draw any conclusions from them at this point. Nevertheless, my delegation would remark—without wishing in any way to infringe the rights of the Eighteen-Nation Committee or question the General Assembly's decisions—that it might be better for that Committee in future to concentrate on a small number of questions on which agreement appears possible within a reasonable time rather than to scatter its efforts on many subjects at once.

19. The items on the First Committee's agenda are not really new, so that my comments shall be very brief.

20. In fact, there is very little left to say, as my delegation has repeatedly expressed its views on disarmament problems in recent years.

21. With regard to general and complete disarmament, I would associate my delegation with the view that a solution of this vast and complex problem is urgently needed, and would urge the Powers whose armed superiority has conferred on them additional responsibilities to redouble their efforts to that end.

22. There is no need for me to enumerate the reasons why this task is so urgent; a look at the international situation should be evidence enough.

23. It is essential that, as we progress along the path towards disarmament, all States should strictly observe the

provisions of the Charter in order to create an atmosphere of greater mutual trust. There can be no such trust and, consequently, no progress towards disarmament, if States in their international conduct disregard the commitments they have freely undertaken.

24. Well-informed delegations have told us about technical advances which now make it possible to distinguish between underground explosions of a certain magnitude and earthquakes.

25. Thus far, the main obstacle to the cessation of underground testing has been lack of agreement on matters of control.

26. My delegation nevertheless wonders whether the true difficulties are not essentially political. In that case, a political decision would of course be needed to eliminate them.

27. Like many others, I am convinced that cessation of nuclear testing would help greatly to put an end to the frenetic arms race and, at a later stage, induce States to reduce their stockpiles.

28. While the co-operation of technically advanced Powers capable of manufacturing nuclear weapons is necessary, the main task devolves on the present nuclear Powers, whose decision to stop all nuclear testing would have a considerable influence on the States in this other category.

29. I now come to the question of the elimination of military bases in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

30. My delegation had an opportunity to state its views on this item when it was included in the Assembly's agenda. Consequently, I shall merely restate its views on military bases. While there are some who believe that military bases help to maintain mistrust and tension among States, the problem should be viewed in its proper context and in the light of its origins. Is it not true that the military bases are a product of the insecurity and uncertainty which prevailed in the international situation? In my view, nothing has occurred to justify a radical change in this particular field. My delegation is convinced that no State in the world would squander its resources on maintaining military installations outside its own territory if all States in fact enjoyed security.

31. In the Memorandum of the USSR Government [*A/7134*], priority is given to the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

32. The USSR has been making proposals for such prohibition, in one form or another, for a number of years. At the time, my delegation in the First Committee supported both by its statement and by its vote the USSR proposal to draft a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. It could not fail to note, however, that there was a school of thought opposed to the proposal. Unfortunately, some of the nuclear Powers favoured the proposal and others opposed it. Consequently, the difficulties remain.

33. My delegation, for its part, believes that this question should not be relegated to the background; the differences of opinion will not vanish of their own accord, but the political and military obstacles are not unsurmountable.

34. The Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States recently held at Geneva and attended by a great many non-nuclear countries and four nuclear Powers has, as we know, adopted a number of recommendations [see A/7277, para. 17] which deserve careful examination by the General Assembly.

35. Once again, the non-nuclear-weapon countries have pointed out that the immediate cessation of the arms race and acceleration of the process of nuclear disarmament and of general and complete disarmament under effective international control are indispensable prerequisites for the preservation of peace and security in the world.

36. They have also once again expressed their conviction that, pending the achievement of general and complete disarmament, agreements must be concluded on collateral measures.

37. In its resolution D, the Conference mentions the agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union last July to enter in the nearest future into bilateral discussions on the limitation of both offensive strategic nuclear weapon delivery systems and systems of defence against ballistic missiles. The Conference also requested the two Governments to begin such discussions shortly.

38. My delegation, while welcoming this development, also appeals to the two Governments to begin the promised negotiations without further delay. That is, beyond question, a lengthy undertaking, but it is important that the Powers concerned should begin work on it at once, so that the hopes aroused throughout the world by the news of their agreement may not be disappointed.

39. These are the few comments my delegation wished to make at the present stage of the Committee's work.

40. Mr. IDZUMBUIR (Congo, Democratic Republic of) (*translated from French*): Mr. Chairman, as my delegation is speaking for the first time in this Committee, it is my pleasant duty to congratulate you and your fellow officers on your unanimous election.

41. I should also like to extend my delegation's compliments to the Under-Secretary of the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs and also the Secretary of the Committee, whose collaboration will certainly be most valuable to you in the conduct of our work.

42. I should like to assure you, following in the footsteps of other delegations, of the entire co-operation of my own delegation, in the hope that we shall all do good work together under the guidance of so talented a diplomat as yourself.

43. The problem of disarmament, whose main aspects I shall deal with, comes before us at a time when international relations are particularly strained. International

co-operation and peaceful coexistence are being disturbed by serious crises in every part of the world.

44. The situation in the Far East is no better, despite the glimmer of hope aroused by the cessation of the bombings in North Viet-Nam; the prospects of peace in the Middle East are far from solid; in Africa, colonization and its aftermath are still a matter of general concern; in Europe, interventionism seems to be replacing peaceful coexistence; while in Latin America what some call foreign subversive elements and others call liberation forces are constantly fomenting trouble in an attempt to overthrow the established Governments by force.

45. It is perfectly natural that such a picture of international relations should make some countries reluctant to disarm. Nevertheless, disarm we must; we must all the more because we see that with the possession of increasingly murderous and sophisticated weapons the will to dominate is growing stronger than the desire to co-operate; we must all the more because the principle of pacific settlement of disputes is being replaced by the practice of the use or threat of force; we must because some of those who resort to force in violation of the Charter are the very States which possess nuclear weapons. That disarm we must, and quickly, too, no longer needs to be demonstrated.

46. The second problem before us is what practical approach to take to the different stages of disarmament. In my delegation's view, the most objective approach is to accept the premise that nuclear disarmament is above all the duty of those possessing nuclear weapons. To attempt to elude this principle and its consequences would be to act like the ostrich which buries its head in the sand and thinks thereby to escape pursuit.

47. Until the nuclear Powers engage in a definite and irreversible process of disarmament, the danger persists, even if their number should be reduced to one.

48. For that matter, in 1945, when bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there had been only one nuclear Power in the world. Yet that is the only time in history that the atom bomb spoke. As ill luck would have it, that bomb had been manufactured with uranium which had come from my country.

49. Thus far, the only practical measures adopted by the nuclear Powers in this sphere are: the ban of nuclear testing in the atmosphere; the ban of nuclear testing under water; and the ban on the launching of nuclear devices into outer space. As we take a closer look, however, we shall see that these prohibitions were adopted at a time when the activities banned were no longer necessary for the development of nuclear technology. They were accepted at a time when nuclear devices had been so far perfected that tests in those zones were no longer needed. Underground nuclear testing, on the other hand, is still going on today.

50. That is why my delegation feels that these measures, which, incidentally, do not seem to have seriously affected the nuclear arms race, were not accepted because they constituted a stage of disarmament. Prohibition of all nuclear weapon testing might have been such a stage, but not the mere banning of tests no longer of value for the arms race.

51. We heard it said at the last session that the process of disarmament would begin more readily if the non-nuclear Powers renounced the possession of nuclear weapons, on the understanding that the nuclear Powers would guarantee to protect them against a possible nuclear aggressor.

52. Recent events in Europe have amply demonstrated that the non-nuclear Powers had been right when they had asked the nuclear Powers for more specific protection guarantees than had yet been offered. There is no reason to believe that the reaction would have been any different if in the intervention I have in mind nuclear weapons had been used instead of conventional tanks.

53. The non-nuclear countries have never believed in the effectiveness of the tripartite resolution of the Security Council; nevertheless, most of them, including my own country, signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*] as their contribution to the disarmament effort. But this signature will remain an empty gesture unless the nuclear Powers, for their part, give up power politics, set a good example in respecting the principles of the Charter and discharge in good faith their principal responsibility for the maintenance of peace. It would be a mistake to consider signature of the non-proliferation Treaty as a certificate of good conduct issued to the nuclear Powers; far from it. In my delegation's opinion, such signature was simply a positive response on the part of the non-nuclear Powers to the true wishes of the international community as repeatedly expressed within these walls.

54. My delegation deems the following stages of disarmament to be essential. The first stage should see the total prohibition of nuclear testing. Such tests could first be reduced in frequency and magnitude and then stopped entirely, at the end of a reasonably short period.

55. The second stage should culminate in the cessation of manufacture of nuclear weapons and means of their delivery. Thus, during this stage, manufacture of all such devices must be frozen. Naturally, a time limit would have to be set for the completion of the final phase of this stage, which might be preceded by one or more intermediate phases; for example, there might be a progressive reduction of only certain types of weapons and means of delivery, pending complete cessation of all production.

56. Once the manufacture of nuclear weapons and means of delivery was frozen, the third stage would consist in the gradual reduction of stockpiles until none were left.

57. These, in my delegation's view, are the main stages of disarmament, and more particularly of nuclear disarmament. In proposing these three stages, I am not oblivious of the important fact that some nuclear Powers, for various reasons, are not taking part in such efforts.

58. My delegation believes, however, that the interests of mankind require a concerted effort by the entire international community. The requirements of some of its members can be reconciled in an imaginative and dynamic formula which would save mankind from the nuclear threat and at the same time release enormous resources for the development and well-being of the underprivileged.

59. Another point which my delegation bears in mind is that an appropriate control and checking procedure must be carried out by a competent and accepted organ at each stage.

60. What is essential at present, however, is that the nuclear Powers should first undertake not to use nuclear weapons against countries not having them and subsequently, when all the nuclear Powers are bound by the same commitments, undertake not to use them against any Power.

61. Having stated briefly my delegation's views on the question of nuclear disarmament, I should now like to emphasize several points, the first of which is that our Organization's efforts shall be directed towards conventional disarmament as well.

62. Whereas there is reason to hope that the prospect of a global atomic war acts as a restraint on those who might be tempted to use nuclear weapons, conventional war, on the other hand, does not yet arouse the same horror in the leaders of developed societies. More bombs have been dropped on Viet-Nam than during the entire course of the Second World War. Highly sophisticated conventional weapons are being tested on various battlefields or made ready for such testing; and those who use them feel that they have a clear conscience before the world because they believe that the use of such weapons serves a purely defensive purpose against an outside threat. Of course, the outside threat can and does exist; but in their acts of violence States are also motivated by the desire to dominate and, unfortunately, on occasion the outside threat is but a thin excuse used to conceal a desire for power.

63. Another factor I should like to emphasize in this connexion is the relation between the outside threat and the threat from within—the two phenomena a State must face.

64. The power of the weapons used for internal protection is proportionate to that of the weapons which individual members of society are able to use to threaten law and order. A society in which increasingly murderous weapons are freely and easily obtained will need more and deadlier weapons for its own protection. But in the eyes of other States, particularly where friction exists, such an accumulation of weapons may in itself present an outside threat to their security.

65. We shall therefore ask that those conventional weapons which are obviously designed for offensive warfare should be frozen and gradually eliminated, and that Governments should proceed to disarm their citizens in order to reduce to the minimum their own need for weapons to maintain internal security.

66. Lastly, in order to prevent weapons meant for internal security purposes from being used to threaten other States, a study should be made with a view to determining those essentially defensive weapons that States could retain to ensure their security from outside threats pending the establishment of an effective system of collective and universal security.

67. My delegation would like this security of States to be discussed when the Committee examines item 29 of its agenda, the elimination of foreign military bases. While this item is unquestionably of interest to my delegation, it can only regret that the Committee's examination should be confined solely to the threat to peace constituted by the military bases of Africa, Asia and Latin America, when the foreign military bases in Europe are obviously the ones most likely to plunge the world into a bloodbath. I therefore believe that it would be in the Committee's interest not to confine itself to examining the question of foreign bases in selected continents.

68. Lastly, the question should be examined taking due account of the sovereign right of States to conclude security agreements.

69. Since the behaviour of certain Powers and, regrettably, some of the great Powers threatens the security of small States, as Europe learned not long ago, small States unfortunately have little choice but to conclude a military alliance with a great Power to safeguard their security.

70. That does not mean that such agreements should relate to military means out of all proportion to the extent and scope of the threat; a balance and a sense of measure are needed.

71. Lastly, the military bases in colonial territories are perhaps the least excusable. Their presence is often used to stifle the free expression of their fondest wishes by the colonized peoples. The international community should be aware of this fact, and should invite the administering Powers to refrain from installing such bases and see to it that those already installed do not hinder the application of the principle of self-determination to the colonial peoples.

72. In conclusion, it is clear from the debates on disarmament, both in this Committee and in other international bodies, that if the effort to achieve disarmament is to take a sound and irreversible course, the essential prerequisite is a return to the whole-hearted respect for the principle of refraining from the use or threat of force in settling international disputes.

73. We must therefore address ourselves to resolving by peaceful means the international disputes which becloud the present international atmosphere. This is a task incumbent upon every one of us, a task so vital for mankind that nothing must deter us from pursuing it. My delegation, for its part, is ready to make its modest contribution to it.

74. The CHAIRMAN (*translated from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his congratulations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee and the other officers.

75. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Although the past year has been characterized as a year of achievement in the field of disarmament, my delegation cannot repress a feeling of disappointment.

76. The successful conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear-Weapons does little to console us since it guards against a less than imminent potential

danger while not dealing directly with the main problem facing the world today: that of securing a halt in the nuclear arms race followed by a reduction in the nuclear arsenals of nuclear-weapon States.

77. The race not only continues unabated, but certain new dimensions are also being introduced, for instance, the concept of "unacceptable damage", which, though not precisely defined, is usually considered in terms of scores of millions of people. It would by inference appear that the annihilation of a few million people such as the entire population of many small non-nuclear-weapon States would fall into the opposite category of acceptable damage.

78. Furthermore, although the Treaty has been signed by over 80 States, and ratified by a few, including one nuclear-weapon State—to whom we extend our congratulations—it is far from certain whether the Treaty itself will be viable. Ultimate viability of the Treaty is linked in our view to a threefold series of actions which can be taken only by nuclear-weapon States.

79. In the first place, as the Secretary-General has emphasized in part II of the Introduction to his annual report for 1967/68, "the Treaty is not an end in itself but a step towards disarmament".⁴ Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and abatement of the nuclear arms race are intimately interconnected. We are glad to note that according to the message from the President of the United States to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament of 16 July 1968:

"Agreement has been reached between the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States to enter in the nearest future into bilateral discussions on the limitation and the reduction of both offensive strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems and systems of defence against ballistic missiles".⁵

We trust that these conversations will take place at the earliest opportunity and, in the words of operative paragraph 4 of resolution 2373 (XXII), will result in "effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date", especially now that the over-kill capacity on both sides has reached a stage which defies accurate assessment. Unless, and until, significant measures to this effect are negotiated between the nuclear-weapon States, there can be little surprise if some civilian nuclear Powers appear somewhat reluctant to ratify the non-proliferation Treaty. Since the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament itself has not established any priorities we would not presume to suggest which measure should be adopted first. A wide variety of useful proposals have already been made, among which, we believe, the suggestions contained in resolution C adopted by the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States [*see A/7277 and Corr. 1, para. 17 (III)*] deserve special consideration.

80. In the second place, non-nuclear-weapon States adhering to the non-proliferation Treaty must be assured that article IV of the Treaty will be effectively implemented and we hope that the nuclear-weapon States will

⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-third Session, Supplement No. 1A*, para. 17.

⁵ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/231, annex 1, sect. 4.

soon announce a comprehensive programme to further the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in all countries signatories to the Treaty. We fully support the resolutions of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States on these lines and we look forward to the early establishment, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of a special nuclear fund financed mainly by the nuclear-weapon States.

81. Finally, the question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States adhering to the Treaty must be examined further. While Security Council resolution 255 (1968), which purports to provide these assurances, may have political significance and importance, there is little doubt that it cannot adequately satisfy the legitimate desire for greater security on the part of States that have renounced nuclear weapons since not only are the assurances provided vague, but they cover only the remote contingency of "aggression with nuclear weapons or the threat of such aggression". This assurance is too narrow, since the nuclear-weapon States are also the major conventional military Powers and do not need to have explicit recourse to nuclear threats, which are in any case implied as long as nuclear weapons are retained, to impose their will upon a non-nuclear-weapon State.

82. Nor is the desire for greater security satisfied by references to the United Nations Charter as providing a legal framework which protects the interests of all Member States in this field when we all know that the basic provisions of the Charter continue to be violated with impunity. Indeed, two months after the adoption of resolution 2373 (XXII), commending the non-proliferation Treaty, the principles on which it was based were flagrantly violated.

83. I need hardly recall that that resolution, adopted in June this year, contains the following paragraph:

"Affirming that in the interest of international peace and security both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States carry the responsibility of acting in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations that the sovereign equality of all States shall be respected, that the threat or use of force in international relations shall be refrained from and that international disputes shall be settled by peaceful means". [See General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII), sixth preambular paragraph.]

In August, only two months later, the armed forces of four of the States that had promoted the objectives and voted in favour of resolution 2373 (XXII) shocked the world by marching across the frontiers of a neighbouring peaceful State.

84. Actions are far more persuasive than words, however eloquent, and it is to be feared that, in a situation where the rule of law cannot be enforced, States with adequate financial and technological capabilities may eventually be tempted to develop nuclear weapons not because they do not recognize that proliferation of nuclear weapons adds to global insecurity, but to deter, or at least to have the means of exacting a heavy price for unprovoked acts of international banditry directed against them, even if this should mean obliteration.

85. International security is based on trust, and this in turn results from confidence that all States, big and small, but particularly the big Powers, will subordinate their interests to the rule of law. We consequently associate ourselves with the appeal contained in the declaration of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States [*see A/7277 and Corr. 1, para. 17 (V)*] to the effect that all countries of the world should observe the United Nations Charter and the generally accepted norms of international law governing relations among States.

86. We sincerely hope that the day will come when such an appeal will be observed; tragically, however, the day still seems far distant.

87. In these circumstances it is only natural that non-nuclear-weapon States should seek—indeed it is their duty to seek—far more binding and comprehensive assurances against unprovoked aggression than those contained in Security Council resolution 255 (1968). We also understand the reluctance of the three nuclear-weapon States to provide such assurances on a global basis. The question is, admittedly, highly complex: yet it must be solved in a way that is satisfactory to non-nuclear Powers if the viability of the non-proliferation Treaty is to be assured.

88. While all countries live in a state of global insecurity, the degree of insecurity and the type of danger to the integrity of non-nuclear-weapon States vary in different regions of the world. Each region has its own particular problems, and countries in each region require assurances tailored to the nature of the problems which they must face. We would consequently favour a General Assembly invitation to all non-nuclear-weapon States to meet informally on a regional basis to examine regional security problems and to discuss specific security assurances, meeting regional needs, that could most appropriately be requested of the nuclear-weapon States. The conclusions of the various regional meetings could be studied at a future conference of non-nuclear-weapon States that could be held in three or five years' time.

89. In the meantime, we can only expect the nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their respect for international law by specifically endorsing all the principles contained in resolution A adopted by the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States [*ibid.*, para. 17 (I)].

90. This brings me to consideration of the machinery which the General Assembly has established to deal with negotiations in the field of disarmament. I was impressed in this connexion by the pertinent observations of the representative of Iran at our 1613th meeting. We recognize that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has in the course of years enjoyed the confidence of the two super-Powers, that it has done useful work in examining a series of proposals directed mainly at halting and reversing the nuclear arms race, and that it has provided a suitable forum for the discussion and adoption of a limited number of collateral measures. But it must also be admitted that in the seven years since its establishment, the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament does not appear to have made significant progress in carrying out the purpose for which it was instituted and which is defined in General Assembly

resolution 1722 (XVI), section II, operative paragraph 2, as follows:

“*Recommends* that the Committee, as a matter of the utmost urgency, should undertake negotiations with a view to reaching, on the basis of a joint statement of agreed principles and taking into account, *inter alia*, paragraph 8 of those principles, agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control”.

91. This purpose, which was considered of the utmost urgency in 1961, appears to have been forgotten by the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and I, for one, have not been able to find any mention of the “Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations” in recent reports of that body. If these principles are obsolete, if the implementation of paragraph 8 of the principles, specifically mentioned in resolution 1722 (XVI), is no longer intended and is not even discussed, it may be advisable for the General Assembly to review the terms of reference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament at an early date.

92. In this connexion the occasion could also be taken to review some of the working methods adopted by the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament—for instance, the reasons why not only the public, but even representatives of States not members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, are excluded from meetings—and perhaps also the composition of that body since, as the representative of Iran observed, changes have taken place in power relations in many parts of the world since 1961.

93. The statement of agreed principles for disarmament negotiations lays considerable stress on the importance of “confidence-building”, or collateral measures aimed at lessening international tensions, consolidating confidence among States and paving the way for general and complete disarmament.

94. In our view, one such measure could well be the provision of impartial publicity to the trade in arms, since the world is faced not only with an arms race between the nuclear Powers, but also by arms races between several non-nuclear Powers. These arms races may become extremely dangerous since they may increasingly involve the major Powers and lead to undesired direct confrontations.

95. We expressed our views in this connexion at the 1392nd meeting of this Committee three years ago, and it is for the reasons we gave then that we have co-sponsored the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.446. A few days ago we listened with respect, indeed, if I may say so, with sympathy, to the comments on this subject made by the representative of Saudi Arabia [1617th meeting], supplemented yesterday by the representative of India [1624th meeting]. We understand these fears, even if we do not fully share them. We too are a small country, we too are situated in proximity of a region which lately has not been notable for its tranquillity.

96. We recognize the complexity of the subject of the transfer of arms between the States. It is not a matter for simplistic solutions, nor does the draft resolution contained

in document A/C.1/L.446 propose any. All that this draft resolution proposes is to request the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on: (a) undertaking an obligation to register imports and exports of conventional arms, and (b) authorizing the Secretary-General to publish at regular intervals information on the transfer of arms. No General Assembly expression of opinion on the substance of the question is involved at the present time; all that is sought by the sponsors of the draft resolution is to obtain an expression of the views of Member States on this question in order to consider the substance of the question next year in the light of the views expressed.

97. I repeat, we understand the fears expressed by the representatives of India and Saudi Arabia, possibly of others. We recognize the complexity of the question. We have no intention of seeking hasty decisions; we only seek to open the door to a sober, factual consideration of a delicate and important subject in which we have the same vital interests to protect as have so many others here. The objective is extremely modest. We believe it may also be useful as a first step, and we trust it will be acceptable to all.

98. Mr. MICHELET (France) (*translated from French*): A little over a month ago, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs defined before the General Assembly [1683rd plenary meeting] the four fundamental objectives which our Governments should seek to achieve. Disarmament was one of them. That in itself shows how great an importance my Government attaches to this undertaking, and the interest with which we are following the present debate.

99. By its very nature, this aim imposes certain duties on us, the first of them being to ascertain the facts of the case clearly and exactly, instead of being satisfied with elusive or illusory partial approaches.

100. This is a widespread concern, to judge by some of the speeches heard in the course of this debate. My delegation would say in this connexion that the purpose which inspired the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States seems not far removed from its own thoughts on the matter. Regardless of our opinion of some of the resolutions adopted at Geneva, we should like to say that we followed the work of the Conference with great interest and that we have carefully taken note of the concerns which were expressed by non-nuclear-weapon States and which bring out faithfully enough what is inadequate, not to say deceptive, in the disarmament efforts as currently pursued.

101. Disarmament, of course, means more than avoiding the spread of nuclear weapons. That is no doubt a worthwhile objective, and the French Government has always held that the nuclear States should in no way, directly or indirectly, encourage a spread of nuclear weapons which would be contrary to the interests of the world as a whole. As it has said, France will behave in this sphere exactly like those States which decide to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. If it neither condemns nor approves the conclusion of the Treaty and if it refrains from signing it, its main reason is to emphasize the fact, mentioned by many speakers here, that to make it impossible for States which do not now have

them to acquire weapons of mass destruction does not constitute a real act of disarmament.

102. Secondly, and quite obviously, disarmament does not mean the taking of partial measures whose only effect would be to confirm the nuclear monopoly of a few States and to make world security dependent on a delicate balance that may be impaired at any moment.

103. Thirdly, disarmament does not mean the mere limitation of further armament increases by means of agreements concluded between already too heavily armed Powers. Such agreements would, of course, be a political gesture which would encourage relaxation of tension, and, like many other countries, France would welcome anything that would lessen world tensions; but such an initiative, which to begin with would be purely bilateral, could hardly at this stage be regarded as true disarmament.

104. The real problem, as all our discussions show, is to meet security needs and, above all, to offer the safeguards against nuclear weapons which all mankind is clamouring for.

105. On this point, my Government—which advocates strict application of the Charter in this matter—said long ago that there can be no safeguard against nuclear weapons without nuclear disarmament.

106. We defined a number of years ago the conditions which, in our view, would result in true disarmament assuring general security. The French authorities stated over eight years ago that disarmament should first apply to the existing nuclear stockpiles. We said at that time that the necessary restraints should first be applied to the means of delivery of nuclear warheads and that they should culminate in the prohibition of manufacture and the destruction of stockpiles of such weapons. We also said that in order to be successful, negotiations must first be held between the Powers which possess nuclear weapons and which are therefore able to make the necessary commitments with regard to each other.

107. This brief reminder of the fundamental principles and the doctrine steadily adhered to by the French Government should make it clear to everyone that France finds of great interest the passage in the USSR Memorandum of July 1968 [A/7134] suggesting that all the nuclear Powers should hold negotiations to find the best means of ensuring the elimination of nuclear weapons, including study of the problem of vehicles of delivery.

108. My Government wishes to reaffirm that it is ready to take part in any effort to give practical effect to these suggestions, it naturally being understood that negotiations cannot be successful unless all those who engage in them are prepared to accept strict control over the implementation of the decisions reached.

109. The same imperative need for close and effective control applies to the large-scale conventional disarmament which should accompany nuclear disarmament lest a new imbalance of forces should result. Clearly, the prohibition and control measures should cover biological and chemical weapons. My delegation may have additional comments to make on this and a few other points. I merely wished to give a broad outline of what would constitute a true policy of disarmament.

110. My delegation's statement would, however, be incomplete if it failed to stress one consideration of great importance. As it recalled on 12 June 1968 in the General Assembly [1672nd plenary meeting], the achievement of disarmament requires that the nuclear Powers agree and work together, which presupposes both a desire for disarmament on their part and a profound change in their relations. Surely everyone will agree that, today more than ever, this last condition—the establishment of a thorough and lasting *détente*—is an absolute imperative.

111. The CHAIRMAN (*translated from Spanish*): I would like to make a brief statement on the progress of our work.

112. We have twenty-nine speakers on the list for the debate on the various disarmament items. Beginning with Monday next, 2 December, we have approximately thirteen working days before the date on which, in principle, this Committee is scheduled to conclude its work, in accordance with the time-table fixed for the General Assembly session. In view of this, and of the fact that thus far none of the items allocated to this Committee has been disposed of completely—although a number of them have been well studied—the Committee might set itself the task, if it deems appropriate, of concluding the debate on the various items referring to general and complete disarmament by 4 December at the latest. In other words, we would hear the remaining twenty-nine speakers on 2, 3 and 4 December and conclude the disarmament items towards the end of the week.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.