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Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

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CONCLUSION OF A WORLD TREATY ON THE NON-USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
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DEEPENING AND CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL DÉTENTE AND PREVENTION OF THE
DANGER OF NUCLEAR WAR (A/32/242; A/C.1/32/L.1, L.2)

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): Our Committee is at present discussing items of the utmost importance indeed. These items are intimately interconnected and together deal with the most burning preoccupations of mankind. Can one speak about the strengthening of international security in conditions of the use of force or threat thereof? Is it possible to envisage the strengthening of international security without eliminating the danger of nuclear war? Is not the deepening and consolidation of international détente a factor of paramount importance for the strengthening of international security? The answer to all those questions is obvious.

The real meaning of the discussion now being conducted in this Committee boils down to finding appropriate and effective measures for the preservation of peace and the strengthening of international security in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. This is why we have been systematically reviewing, year after year, the implementation of one of the most important documents in the history of the United Nations, namely, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security.

In our opinion, despite the still existing local tensions and unresolved conflicts, efforts to strengthen international security, to deepen and broaden the process of détente, and to find constructive and peaceful solutions to various difficult international problems have asserted themselves in recent years as the main trends in the development of the international situation. We note it with deep satisfaction since we, like many other countries, believe

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

that the policy of détente and peaceful co-existence of States with different political and social systems is the only rational policy of developing international relations in the world of today.

It is in conformity with this belief that Poland constantly strives to expand equitable and mutually beneficial co-operation with countries of the whole world, and in particular of our European region. Consistent efforts are being made to implement fully the principles and provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. We are developing trade and economic co-operation with almost all countries of the world.

Our ever-expanding fraternal relations with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community of nations constitute the basis for implementing Poland's goals and aspirations. At the same time, we are developing political contacts and broad co-operation with States having different social and political systems. This is evidenced by numerous high-level meetings of Poland's leaders with the leaders of other States, both in Europe and in other continents, which usually end with the signing of many agreements and other important documents. We are constantly endeavouring to broaden co-operation with non-aligned and developing countries.

The active involvement of my country in a mutually beneficial dialogue with many countries of the world is exemplified by the most recent exchange of States visits between the leaders of Poland and those of France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iran, Nigeria and, by the current visit of Mr. Edward Gierek, First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party, to Italy, as well as by the announcement of President Carter's visit to Warsaw at the end of this month.

All this constitutes, in our opinion, an important contribution to the development and consolidation of the infrastructure of détente, which in turn is one of the components of the strengthening of international peace and security. At the same time, we see a need for further intensified efforts in this direction. It is in this spirit that we have lent our full support to the proposal of the Soviet Union to hold three congresses to discuss co-operation in the fields of the protection of the environment, of energy and of transportation in Europe.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

We also believe that the role of the institutions of the United Nations system, and in particular those of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), should be strengthened and their efforts intensified to achieve the full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act.

Linked intimately to the problem of the strengthening of security and consolidation of détente is the question of supplementing it by détente in the military sphere. This is why Poland attaches special importance to the ongoing negotiations in Vienna on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in central Europe. The basic condition for the success of these negotiations is respect for the principle of undiminished security of all States concerned.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

We note with serious concern that, despite all the efforts of Poland and other Socialist States to ensure the progress of these negotiations, they have not as yet brought about visible results. We believe that a speedy conclusion of the Vienna negotiations on the basis of concrete proposals and initiatives put forward by the Socialist States would be of tremendous importance for the strengthening of security not only in Europe but in the rest of the world as well. Of no less importance are, of course, disarmament efforts on a global scale. Poland prides itself on its record of activities in this field, in the Geneva Disarmament Committee as well as in the General Assembly and our First Political Committee. We have always actively supported all constructive disarmament initiatives. We attach great importance to the decision of the General Assembly to convene in 1978 its special session devoted to disarmament. We remain confident that that special session will mark an important and constructive stage in world-wide efforts to curb the arms race and achieve disarmament. As a member of its Preparatory Committee we have done our utmost to bring an effective contribution to its work and we shall spare no efforts to assure a positive outcome of the special session.

Of equal importance are the efforts and the initiatives by other States to broaden détente and strengthen peace and security on all continents. A prominent part in these efforts is played by the non-aligned States. We have welcomed with satisfaction the follow-up of the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-aligned Countries, which represents an important contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security and development of equitable international relations.

Of particular importance among initiatives for the strengthening of international security on a global scale is the Soviet proposal to conclude a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

The observance of the principle of the non-use of force not only is a prerequisite of international peace and security, but also is of paramount importance for the observance of other basic principles of international relations, such as sovereign equality of States, territorial integrity of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and peaceful

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

settlement of disputes. The conclusion of the draft treaty would greatly enhance the effectiveness of these principles. Naturally, as it is well known, the conclusion of the treaty would in no way prejudice the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under colonial domination for their independence and self-determination, nor would it affect the right of States to individual or collective self-defence in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Polish delegation is convinced that the conclusion of the treaty would effectively contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security. Such a treaty would strengthen the principle of the non-use of force as the basic rule of international relations, consolidate the climate of mutual trust and be instrumental in extending détente onto all continents.

Along with actions to prevent an outbreak of new wars it is absolutely necessary to continue determined efforts to eliminate the existing conflicts and hotbeds of tension which, if allowed to continue, would constantly endanger international peace and security. As all of us are aware, a number of such conflicts are still unresolved.

The Middle East crisis is among the most dangerous of them, making the need for a comprehensive and lasting solution very urgent indeed.

Another still unresolved and important problem is the final elimination of the remnants of colonialism. We have always supported the struggle of peoples still under colonial and foreign domination as well as the struggle against racism and apartheid.

The question of Cyprus also needs implementation of the successive resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly which call for the respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the non-aligned Republic of Cyprus as well as for non-interference in its domestic affairs and withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from its territory.

We are deeply convinced that the deepening of détente and its extension to new regions and spheres of activity has become a necessity for all States, irrespective of their political and social systems, size and level of development. We have said in the past that in our opinion there was no sensible

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

alternative to détente. This opinion is now shared by the overwhelming majority of countries. Recently we have noted with interest the communiqué on the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Nordic States held in Helsinki on 1 and 2 September of this year, in which it is said that "there is no realistic alternative to the policy of détente".

However, while the process of détente is progressing it is by no means automatic. Still more efforts are needed to strengthen it and make it irreversible. We consider the Soviet initiative on the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war to be among the most important of such efforts. The head of my delegation has spoken at length on this issue during our discussion in this Committee on 17 October of this year. We have exposed in detail reasons for our unequivocal support for the Soviet proposal. This is, in our opinion, an important step on the road marked by such important documents as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. We believe it to be a logical comprehensive extension of these documents and it contains a very accurate and precise catalogue of activities and measures which the international community should undertake lest the process of détente loses momentum. We believe that the adoption of the declaration on the deepening of détente would contribute effectively to the strengthening of international peace and security, enhance efforts of international community for disarmament, consolidate the climate of mutual trust and assist in further development of equitable and mutually beneficial co-operation among all States.

In concluding, I should like to reiterate once again my country's deep commitment to the noble cause of maintaining international peace and security.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

We believe that it is not sufficient merely passively to maintain international peace and security, it has to be constantly strengthened by active contribution by all countries and ultimately made lasting. We all have to work hard together to achieve this goal, and my delegation believes that the best place to carry out this common project for the benefit of mankind is precisely our Organization, in accordance with Article 1 of its Charter.

Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran): The item proposed by the Soviet Union entitled "Deepening and consolidation of détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war" is an important one which deserves careful consideration. The Soviet initiative is in our view a potentially constructive step towards enhancing understanding and co-operation among States. Any proposal aimed at promoting peaceful and amicable relations among nations has always been welcomed by my Government.

It is true that as Members of the United Nations we are under an obligation to live together in peace. It is, however, equally true that an analysis of the development of international relations since the establishment of the United Nations shows that only during the past several years has there been a welcome move away from what was called the "cold war" towards co-operation among States with differing political and social systems.

This development, which is usually called "détente", has also at times been referred to as "relaxation of tension" or "improvement of the international climate". What this process really means is a tacit agreement to resolve differences of views and disputes by peaceful means rather than by force or the threat of force. In essence, it is a return to normal relations among States in their dealings with one another. It is supposed to institute a new era of negotiation and co-operation.

The process of détente is multifaceted and interdisciplinary. The various aspects of this process being interconnected, achievement in one aspect should lead to progress in others. Thus, the improvement in the international political climate has resulted in expanded economic, cultural, scientific and technical co-operation among States which has led to an increase in the volume of trade. These have, in turn, contributed to the solution of certain political problems such as the reduction of the threat of nuclear war. In short, the development of détente has resulted in many fields in the substitution of co-operation for confrontation. Détente in the present stage should therefore be regarded as a way station from the state of the "cold war" that existed in the past, to the state of harmonious relations among nations which is being sought for the future.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

The item under discussion therefore corresponds in general terms with the policy of my Government. But the field covered by the Soviet proposal is indeed extremely broad and the subject quite complex. The question, in our view, has therefore to be broached thoroughly, so that all the various aspects of the problem may be examined and that the results of our efforts may be commensurate with the importance and significance of the subject.

The development of equitable, mutually beneficial economic relations among nations is an integral part of the process of détente. The advancement of the cause of détente - which is of great importance for the strengthening of world peace - will at the same time create the necessary political foundation for normalization of the world economic situation. Progress in the task of restructuring the international economic order will in turn contribute to the cause of the advancement of détente. The improvement of political and economic relations will result in the building up of the feeling of friendship and confidence among all people.

The world has increasingly come to realize that in the nuclear age there is no reasonable alternative to détente. Thus the question now is whether the world will follow the course of renunciation of force and détente, or whether it will plunge even more deeply into the arms race with dire consequences for the future of humanity.

While the success of the policy of détente during the past several years is the result of efforts by many States and struggles by numerous individuals around the world, it is at the same time obvious that we are still at the beginning of the process of restructuring international relations or returning to the normal state of relations among nations. What is more, many complex problems remain to be solved before this process can assume global dimensions and become irreversible.

In other words, while welcoming détente in the relations of the super-Powers, my delegation believes that détente should cover much more than the state of relations between the two super-Powers. The super-Powers, by virtue of their enormous military and economic power, have, no doubt, the major responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

In other words, the state of relations between the super-Powers has a special significance for the rest of the world. It is, however, equally important that relations among other countries should be improved regardless of super-Power relations, especially since détente comprises only one among many dimensions of the super-Powers' foreign relations. Hence détente should be extended to all parts of the world for the benefit of all nations. If extended to all regions of the world, détente will constitute a decisive element for peace, security and international co-operation. For détente to be extended to all parts of the world and to all spheres of international life, new initiatives and strenuous efforts are called for.

The most appropriate forum to advance new initiatives and provide détente with fresh impetus is, no doubt, the United Nations. But in this connexion my delegation would like to stress the particular responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States - especially the two major nuclear-weapon States - to spare mankind the prospect of a nuclear confrontation. The effects of a nuclear war will not be confined by State boundaries. Therefore, in sparing mankind the prospect of a nuclear holocaust, every nation, great or small, developed or developing, capitalist or socialist, has a stake.

Very little has been done to remove the threat of nuclear war. Consequently, it is important to concentrate all our efforts in the direction of eliminating the nuclear threat. The responsibility for the prevention of nuclear war rests mainly with the two major nuclear-weapon States. We therefore urge them to lead the way in this crucial and pressing matter.

(Mr. Foveyda, Iran)

We hope, therefore, that the discussion of this item, in which a link has been established between the consolidation of détente on the one hand and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war on the other, will stimulate efforts by all States on disarmament matters, especially nuclear disarmament, in various bodies.

Such discussions should not, however, distract our attention from the real problem, namely the problem of general and complete disarmament.

The key issue in this item is undoubtedly the problem of arresting the arms race and disarmament. The problem of halting the arms race will be helped at least to some extent by the convening of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and subsequently by the convening of a world disarmament conference.

The questions of the deepening and consolidation of détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war require that all of us make sincere and sustained efforts not only to implement all the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, but also to undertake new initiatives to prevent, or lessen the risks of, a catastrophic nuclear confrontation.

We believe, therefore, that the Soviet proposal should receive careful consideration with a view to ensuring that it reflects the views and concerns of all States. We believe further that the limits of détente in its present stage should not discourage us from pursuing this transformation of international relations on which we have embarked. We should be determined to surmount the inevitable disillusionments and frustrations that lie ahead by remembering the obvious fact that the world will be far more secure if we learn to coexist and to co-operate.

Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Mr. Chairman, I should like to take this the first opportunity I have had to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee on your appointment.

In my statement in this Committee last year under the item entitled "Strengthening of international security" I attempted to point out how actual performance since the day when the Declaration was solemnly adopted on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations had failed

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

miserably to come up to the high expectations to which that Declaration had given rise. Despite all attempts to gloss over the performance - or, more precisely, the lack of performance - by those countries whose positive contribution is necessary if the objective is to be achieved, we can only conclude that concrete results are the exact opposite of the stated objective. I do not have time to substantiate this assertion by statistical evidence, nor would I feel justified in taking up the valuable time of this Committee by trying to prove this self-evident fact. I am certain, however, that it would not be incorrect to conclude from a brief review of the past decade or so that the only "strengthening" of international security that has been achieved lies mostly in the increase in the level and quality of opposing armaments, the increase of expenditure on those weapons systems, the increase in the rate of obsolescence of those systems, the increase in the sales to third parties, and so on. Security certainly has not been strengthened; at best it has remained a delicate and periodically unstable balance.

If any proof were needed it could undoubtedly be gleaned from The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, in his Foreword to which the Secretary-General says:

"Nuclear weapons capable of destroying the world many times over continue to be stockpiled, and their performance is constantly being refined. There is continuous accumulation of conventional weapons of ever-increasing sophistication. Under these circumstances, the maintenance of international peace and security, even the very survival of mankind, is in jeopardy." (The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook, vol. 1:1976, p.iii)

Or perhaps we could glance at today's newspaper, which indicates that new strategic postures raise the threshold for human error in launching a nuclear counterattack.

This state of affairs may or may not have been necessary in the past; I should not like to pass judgement on that. Most certainly, however, it would be tragic in more ways than one to see this unsatisfactory method projected indefinitely into the future. Surely the time is now long overdue when we should strive resolutely to bring about positive change.

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

My delegation does not see that positive change as likely to be brought about by theoretical dissertation on the value of détente or by attempts to put forward suggestions which are manifestly of one-sided benefit and consequently foredoomed to failure. Is not the frustrating experience of the disarmament debate of the entire post-war period sufficient to show us the futility of such an approach? Are we not yet prepared to admit that security in the future does not necessarily or permanently depend on the mere continuance of the processes that have at best only succeeded in maintaining an unstable balance in the past?

Certainly to my delegation it seems that there should be no more hesitation on the need for a more rational line of action. Let us lose no more time in defining and redefining principles, which at times only results in undermining the values of the very principle we are trying to strengthen. As I said last year:

"We do not lack norms of international relations; what seems to be lacking is the will to apply them in all cases ... It is essential for us now to determine future priorities. One priority is to concentrate more effort on concrete measures and, temporarily at least, to postpone further concentration on the elaboration of theory. A second priority is to determine areas of co-operation where concerted political action is likely to produce effective results. A third priority is to set up appropriate machinery to give effect to decisions, as otherwise the best blue-prints for action will remain dead letters."

(A/C.1/31/PV.54, pp. 4-5)

We have seen the validity of this approach confirmed in practice in the region in which my country is situated, and I will only use this area as one example. There are other areas which could also serve as an illustration, but each one of us naturally understands his own region best. We know that despite the high-sounding declarations of intent contained in the Mediterranean chapter of the Helsinki Final Act, which was supposed to set the seal of permanent co-operation and improved security in our region, no visible progress can be recorded in the Mediterranean, least of all in security.

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

The strategic importance of the area continues to attract the rivalry and intrigue of the major Powers. Local conflicts continue to be polarized on East-West lines. The fragile sea joining three continents, a crossroads of world trade, an area rich in history and resources, remains an arena where the super-Powers deploy the biggest array of deadly armaments, casting a menacing shadow over the prospects of world peace.

Not only is the situation dangerously explosive, but it is also highly illogical, for it flatly contradicts the commitments assumed by all the participants in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, including of course the two major Powers, and goes against the spirit of détente, of which so much is said in theory but so little is applied in practice. It is obvious that, in the calculation of national defence requirements, vague commitments to peace and co-operation cannot be expected to receive much consideration unless they are accompanied by a positive movement visibly at work to produce tangible results by widening the sectors of co-operation and building on the latent and overriding aspirations of all countries for peaceful social and economic progress.

The need for improvement is obvious. Yet, equally obviously, the situation remains uneasy, with tension and confrontation unrelieved and, hence, the prospects for increased co-operation stifled. The inertia of the status quo prevails. We are convinced that we cannot expect positive change unless the countries of a particular region themselves take the initiative and act in concert to identify sectors of mutually beneficial co-operation which, as they accumulate, will gradually overcome the division of the past. We have found ample evidence in the Mediterranean region to indicate that the scope for co-operation is unlimited in a genuine partnership of equals between the developed countries of Europe and the developing countries of the southern Mediterranean.

Judging by recent statements made by leaders of major countries, the prospects for changes in policy appear good. For instance, President Carter of the United States said on 27 July, in reviewing the past:

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

"For decades our foreign policy has centred on antagonism between the two coalitions, one headed by the United States and the other by the Soviet Union. Our national security was defined almost exclusively in terms of military competition."

On another occasion, on 22 May, he has said:

"We fought fire with fire, never thinking that fire is better fought with water. This approach failed..."

If the policies of the past have failed, then surely it is high time for new alternatives to be explored in the future; and those alternatives should not consist merely of declarations of intent, but instead should provide practical means for translating into reality our oft-repeated intentions. It is necessary to devise means which are manifestly fair, which will promote stability, which will seek no unilateral advantage, and which will build on the momentum of progress. It seems to me that that is the paramount challenge of our times; failure to respond or delay in responding can have negative effects.

We are all involved in the search for a solution, some of course having a much heavier responsibility and corresponding contribution to make; but all have a role to play, and none more so than those whose disinterested approach seeks only genuine progress towards peaceful co-operation. The nations of the world must adopt new perspectives as they encounter new problems - the policies of the past, as a start, have to be discarded.

It is claimed that détente is gaining acceptance as an irreversible process. No one, no nation, can presume to take that for granted. Certainly, if détente is to have any real meaning, if it is to deepen and develop, then the policy of automatic and perpetual military confrontation has to be discarded and the manifold ways in which the process of détente can be given tangible expression have to be applied in practice.

We have had an authoritative attempt at defining détente by General Secretary Brezhnev in a speech in Tula last January. He said:

"Détente means, first of all, the overcoming of the cold war and transition to normal, stable relations among States; détente means willingness to resolve differences and disputes not by force, not by threats or sabre-rattling, but by peaceful means, at the conference table. Détente means a certain trust and ability to take into consideration each other's legitimate interests."

More recently, in his address to the General Assembly, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union said:

"The experience of recent years has shown that when States are inspired by peaceful strivings, in actual deeds and not just in words, they do find a common language in settling on actions that lead to a stronger peace. Moreover, not only do they find it, they also work quite successfully - jointly or along parallel courses - to attain this goal." (A/32/PV.8, p. 38-40)

Malta is naturally motivated by the essential requirements of our own region, but we were encouraged by such statements from the leaders of the two super-Powers and by others which, in the interest of time, I shall not quote. For this reason, the Maltese delegation is actively participating in the current first Review Conference to assess the achievements on security and co-operation in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Since the Review Conference is meeting to take stock of the existing situation and to adopt remedial measures, several proposals have been put before it, many of the most far-reaching coming from the neutral and non-aligned countries participating in that Conference. The Maltese delegation has also submitted one on the question of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean.

The Maltese working paper points out that the experience of the last two years has proved that the absence of progress cannot but be ascribed to the lack of specific machinery designed to implement the provisions of the declarations subscribed to and the commitments assumed. It appears to the Maltese delegation that the establishment of such a forum is a fundamental first step, a prerequisite, for the concertation of the required efforts.

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

We envisage the machinery as a Committee charged with planning and encouraging the realization of all the objectives set out in the declaration on the Mediterranean. The Committee would be invited to co-ordinate the implementation of the security, political and economic objectives. It would be responsible for the elaboration, with the participation of all States directly interested, of an agreed and co-ordinated plan, bringing together all these different aspects, and constantly monitoring execution. The Committee would naturally include all the Mediterranean States to bring about the required dialogue and concertation of ideas. Several of the objectives, particularly the reduction of armed forces, can best be realized with the full co-operation of the super-Powers, since progress would be more rapidly forthcoming if they were assured that their interest in stability is not overlooked. It should be stressed, however, that when the objectives of Mediterranean unity are achieved, it would no longer be necessary for non-Mediterranean forces to remain in the Mediterranean.

My Government put this proposal forward at the Belgrade meeting in good faith, in the interests of the region, as a collective effort towards regional progress, and it serves as a test for the credibility of stated intentions. For our own part, to the fullest extent of our own possibilities, we have made a far-reaching, practical contribution to the promotion of peace in the area. We have firmly adopted a policy of neutrality based on the principles of non-alignment. The military bases in Malta will be fully dismantled by March 1979. Malta will no longer serve the military requirements of foreign Powers but, on the contrary, will devote itself exclusively to the promotion of peace and unity in our region. This new policy constitutes a radical break with the past, and a giant step in the right direction - a practical contribution to the lessening of tension in the region. We believe that it is only through confidence building measures of this magnitude and scope that, through their cumulative effect, can a better environment be created to pave the way for the consolidation of peaceful co-operation throughout the world. We have done what we can on our own at home; we have proposed corresponding measures in our region. As a further token of our dedication to the quest for peace, and faithful to our

(Mr. Gauci, Malta)

non-aligned policy, we have also offered to provide the necessary facilities to accommodate the Committee and its secretariat in Malta. It is our firm determination to turn the Mediterranean into a lake of peace, with the help of our friends on the shores of this ancient and historic sea.

Those countries, as well as their political and youth organizations, are keen to develop a spirit of Mediterranean unity. It is a democratic process at work which deserves encouragement from all quarters, since it falls in line with present requirements and future perspectives. The countries of the Mediterranean are interdependent, and so are the problems of the region. The security problems of Europe cannot be divorced from those of the Mediterranean, and the reverse also applies. A common effort to solve our own problems is therefore called for. The Committee proposed by Malta, served by an efficient secretariat, provides the means whereby intentions can be brought to realization; otherwise no real progress can be achieved beyond the periodic repetition of noble intentions. The Maltese people and Government are only satisfied with deeds, not words, and we will naturally expect the support of countries committed to a genuine search for peace and progress. We can think of no better cause to advance, nor devise a more realistic, efficient and democratic way of seeking to secure our common objectives.

Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary): In my statement today I wish to deal with two questions, namely, items 37 and 127 concerning respectively the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations, and the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war.

It follows from the peace-loving policy of the Hungarian People's Republic that we have always given the closest possible attention to, and have done our best to help to achieve success in, any questions that are linked with the cause of peace and are likely to enhance it. In our judgement, the Soviet initiative serves to promote the atmosphere of trust among States and to strengthen international peace and security.

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

As regards the question of the non-use of force, I have already explained the position of my delegation in this same Committee last year. Since then the Hungarian People's Republic, in common with a number of other States, has stated its relevant position, communicated in an official Government reply contained in document A/32/108.

May I now, without going into detail, make some remarks in connexion with this problem.

First, the principle of the non-use of force, also contained in the Charter of the United Nations, has been reaffirmed and further developed by several international instruments. Nevertheless, its inclusion in a treaty is not only not out of place but, on the contrary, is even necessary. The arguments advanced last year by some countries, to the effect that the draft treaty does nothing but reiterate the obligations under the Charter while failing to increase them, disregard the 31 years of United Nations practice, under Article 15 of the Charter, regarding the progressive development and codification of international law. The principles embodied in the Charter have served as a basis for the conclusion of numerous international treaties and agreements in several fields, such as disarmament, human rights and in particular the maintenance of international peace and security. The General Assembly resolutions and the international treaties relating to certain provisions of the Charter have not vitiated the legal force of the Charter at all but, on the contrary, have played an outstanding role - political, legal and moral alike - in increasing the effectiveness of the provisions of the Charter and in translating them into reality, and have on the whole served to enhance the role of the United Nations.

Secondly, the affirmation of this principle in a treaty is also necessary because, although it is laid down in the Charter and we have all undertaken to observe it, its implementation in international life is still a long way from being the consistent practice of States. Unfortunately, examples of force being used even today would fill a long list and this in itself makes the formulation of additional guarantees necessary.

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

Thirdly, such a treaty would be of great political and moral significance for all States, and in particular for smaller countries. Its acceptance and accession to it by all States would greatly contribute to curbing the arms race and adopting effective disarmament measures.

For all these legal and political considerations, we firmly believe in the need to start, without any further delay, elaboration of such a treaty, for which an appropriate basis is provided by the draft submitted by the Soviet Union a year ago. Accordingly, my delegation is in support of any initiative likely to lead to the practical elaboration of such a treaty.

As has also been shown by the general debate in the plenary Assembly this year, the great majority of States are of the opinion that, in contrast to earlier years, favourable changes have been taking place in the present-day international situation and that international relations are being increasingly determined by the process of détente and of equal and mutually advantageous co-operation among States.

Dealing with the international situation and the status of détente, the Foreign Minister of the Hungarian People's Republic stated in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly that:

"The prevalence of détente has done much to expand co-operation among countries with different social systems, to bring the process of decolonization into its final phase, to consign to oblivion dictatorial régimes that were once believed to be perpetual, and to help certain acute hotbeds of crisis reach settlement. The climate of détente helps make progress also in the difficult issues of disarmament and other questions." (A/32/PV.24, p. 16)

Even this brief reference makes it clear that détente is the concern not of a relatively small group of States, but of all countries, of all States Members of our Organization.

There is no doubt that in recent years the cause of détente has advanced first and foremost in Europe, culminating in the signing of the Final Act by the

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

35 States that participated in the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. In order, however, to make détente stable and irreversible, it is necessary, on the one hand, to extend it beyond the political sphere to the military field - and in this respect a great deal must still be accomplished by the signatory States - and, on the other hand, to do everything possible to ensure that the achievements in co-operation and the spirit of joint efforts for continued progress spread to other continents as well.

Efforts to enhance the cause of détente are all the more necessary, since the results of this process are accompanied by increased activity on the part of its opponents. These include circles that have vested financial interests in the production and sale of a growing arsenal of weapons. Also opposed to détente are some politicians who think they can still act upon outdated tenets, failing to respect the principle of the non-use of force in international relations. The opponents of détente are not confined to one or two continents.

All this dictates the logical need, on the one hand, to be resolute in taking the field against the opponents of détente and repelling their attempts while, on the other hand, to act on a global and universal scale, as do the adversaries.

This is why we regarded and still regard as being particularly topical the Soviet initiative on the basis of which the General Assembly has included the item "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war" in its agenda as an urgent and important question. Today the greatest challenge is undoubtedly the prevention of the danger of a war, particularly of a nuclear war, threatening the very survival of mankind as a whole. Proceeding from this understanding, we welcome the initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at preventing a nuclear war.

The extension of détente provides a real possibility of preventing the danger of war. It is therefore a common task of us all to advance the cause of détente not only in bilateral relations but here in the United Nations as well. In our view, the Soviet draft declaration meets the aforementioned need.

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

The draft declaration is fully in keeping with the obligations defined in the Charter and with the principles set forth, inter alia, in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The provisions of the draft declaration are entirely suitable for promoting not only the cause of peace but also inter-State relations based on equality, understanding, friendship and mutual trust among peoples. Thus what is involved is more than the unstable peace of the cold-war years. Now the world finds itself in a qualitatively new and more favourable situation, but we cannot rest content with what has been achieved so far.

Even though we have succeeded in concluding agreements in the field of disarmament, there still are enormous military allocations diverting resources from the urgent peaceful needs we all feel, and the possibility of war - even nuclear war - cannot be excluded.

Even though high-sounding and lofty principles have been adopted to guide relations among States, they are not always observed everywhere. Even though there is a great improvement in the general climate of international relations, renewed attempts have been, are being, and will be made to poison the prevailing atmosphere.

There is a great deal countries can do, and indeed are doing, to overcome these problems and to advance the cause of détente through the channel of bilateral relations. Following the signature of the Final Act of Helsinki, the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic made concrete proposals in writing to 17 participating countries to review jointly the tasks ensuing from the Final Act and the possibilities of common action. High-level visits on our part also serve to promote the cause of détente.

It seems important, however, that the efforts made in bilateral relations be complemented by channelling into action the possibilities offered by international organizations, principally the United Nations.

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

This is an added reason why the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic endorses the Soviet initiative, one of great timeliness, for it involves the United Nations in the struggle for the furtherance of détente.

This is a logical concern of the United Nations, which bears primary responsibility in safeguarding international peace and security, and is also an indication that what is involved here is not merely an "East-West" or big-Power issue, but a common concern of us all.

Common espousal by the General Assembly of the cause of détente would serve the double purpose of giving fresh impetus to the process of détente and dealing a serious blow to its opponents.

In view of the foregoing, my delegation is fully in support of adopting, unanimously if possible, a declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): The Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, which was adopted almost unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in 1970, is a document the importance of which cannot be over-emphasized. By elaborating the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, it brings into sharp focus the conditions that are most essential for the attainment of world peace and security for which we all are striving. My delegation has always given full support to the Declaration and is firmly committed to its implementation.

The Declaration, as well as the subsequent resolutions to date on this subject, reflect the numerous problems confronting the world today and the urgent measures required to solve them if mankind is to hope for a better future. It is imperative that an atmosphere of trust and confidence be firmly implanted and nurtured on a global scale in order to provide the necessary impetus to attain our avowed goal of durable world peace and security, for it is only within such a framework that tensions can be eliminated, much needed disarmament measures be developed and a just and equitable international economic order be established - measures that my delegation feels are vital for the strengthening of international security.

It is generally recognized that the international climate has changed for the better in recent years as a result of the relaxation of tensions. We welcomed the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation, held at Helsinki, as a positive contribution to an atmosphere of co-operation. However, we have continually urged that the process of détente must not be limited to certain areas or regions but should be extended to all parts of the world. Such an extension would, we feel, lead to the diffusion of areas of tension in the world today.

My delegation has always viewed the situation in the Middle East with deep concern. By his courageous visit to Israel, President Sadat of Egypt has creditably demonstrated his serious desire for peace in the region. Events are moving fast, and we sincerely hope that the final outcome will be the establishment of a durable peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and taking into consideration the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. We appeal for the early convening of the Middle East peace conference and hope for its complete success.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

Meanwhile, the Cyprus crisis is continuing to cause a tense situation in the Mediterranean. While urging the two communities in Cyprus to continue their negotiations, my delegation reiterates its view that the solution of the problem must be based on respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment of Cyprus.

In southern Africa, the continuation of the white minority régime in Rhodesia and the apartheid régime in South Africa continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Although the Salisbury régime very recently seems to have accepted the basic principle of one-man, one-vote, we agree with the view expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General in this respect that it is essential that the process leading to that objective include all political parties and liberation forces in order to ensure an effective cease-fire and a durable settlement. Nepal has always supported the cause of the liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia and the elimination of the abhorrent policy of apartheid. My delegation welcomes the recent mandatory arms embargo adopted by the Security Council against South Africa, which was long overdue.

The political declaration of the Colombo Non-aligned Summit has rightly emphasized that a relaxation of international tensions cannot be secured through a balance of power, spheres of influence, rivalry between power blocs, military alliances and the arms race. The fact that we have not been able to make any significant headway in the field of disarmament has been one of the most frustrating problems of our times. Progress has indeed been slow. We welcome the recent statements by the Presidents of the United States of America and of the Soviet Union regarding the proposed reduction in their nuclear weapons as steps in the right direction.

As a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Nepal views with growing concern the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. The arms race, both nuclear and conventional, continues unabated at an alarming pace, which is a grave threat to international security. While millions die of poverty, hunger and disease, both the qualitative and quantitative escalation of the arms race have syphoned off technical and financial resources to the serious detriment of development needs. My delegation reiterates its firm

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

conviction that universal peace and security can be assured only by general and complete disarmament under effective international control. We look forward to the special session on disarmament with the hope that the session will make a meaningful break-through in disarmament negotiations and thereby enhance the prospect of general and complete disarmament.

One of the most significant factors for the promotion of international peace and security is undoubtedly the establishment of a new international economic order, which has become a substantive issue of utmost importance. It is indeed a sad commentary that the decisions and commitments of the sixth and seventh special sessions have not produced results. Furthermore, both the International Development Strategy and the Paris Conference on International Economic-Co-operation have not led to the results expected.

For the least developed among the developing countries, a category to which 29 countries, including Nepal, belong, the increasing economic disparity between the rich and the poor assumes an importance of the highest magnitude. Apart from the existence of a yawning gap between the developed and the developing countries, the gap between the least developed and other developing countries is widening further. In 1976 the annual average per capita income of the least developed countries amounted to \$136, growing by only \$2 in the period 1970-1976, while the corresponding per capita income for all developing countries amounted to \$472, having grown by \$70 in the same period.

The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) pointed out recently that the least-developed countries had achieved an annual growth rate in real per capita product of only 0.4 per cent in the period 1970-1976 compared with 2.8 per cent for developing countries during the same period. Eleven of these countries recorded actual declines in per capita growth. Under these circumstances the problem of the least-developed justifies the need for a special measure.

The international community must not only fully realize the necessity of closing the ever-widening gap between the developed and developing countries but it must also fully recognize and actively seek ways and means to reverse the deteriorating position of the least developed countries. As long as millions of people continue to be subjected to deprivation and are not provided with basic human needs, any effort towards the strengthening of international security would be meaningless.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

This august body of the United Nations provides the forum for almost all the nations of the world to participate actively through discussions in an effort to iron out their differences and find common approaches in solving problems of great magnitude. Numerous resolutions are passed each year but few are effectively implemented. Some countries have total disregard for these resolutions and continue to defy them. Because of this, the efficacy of the United Nations has at times been called into question. But it must not be forgotten that the United Nations has played an important role in warding off conflicts that might have led to major conflagrations. That on occasions it has not been able to do so has been, to a large extent, due to the interests of the big Powers. The Security Council, having the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, must bear the onus of implementing its decisions. Only then can the United Nations fulfil the goal of maintaining international peace and security.

It must always be kept in mind that the main basis of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security is, in fact, the Charter of the United Nations, which lays down the principle of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes, and refraining from the threat or use of force. The purposes and principles of the Charter must be fulfilled in good faith, as is expressly pointed out in Article 2, if we are sincere in our belief in the need to strengthen international peace and security.

Nepal has always upheld these principles, which are fully reflected in its policy towards other States. We are fully committed to the strengthening of the role of the United Nations and are convinced that all nations, big and small, should contribute towards this end. The peace-keeping operations of the United Nations play an important part in the strengthening of international security and therefore should be given full support. Although a small land-locked country with limited resources, Nepal is ready to share the burden of responsibility as has been demonstrated by its participation in the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East.

Nepal's steadfast adherence to a policy of non-alignment and peaceful coexistence stems from our conviction that it brightens the prospect of peace.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

As his Majesty King Birendra has stated:

"A passion for peace and peaceful coexistence will remain an abstraction unless we crystalize the idea by actual bridges of understanding, where possible through mutual exchanges in the cultural, intellectual and economic spheres. I believe this will help not only the poorer countries but also the richer ones. In the world today, while each country is free and independent, no country can afford the luxury of living in its own castle of peace and plenty. We need bridges. My plea, therefore, is for more bridges, bridges that will link countries and continents, of minds, hearts and spirit so that our universe becomes a universe of peace."

For my delegation feels that in the final analysis it is only through deepening the ties of human communication, through exchanges in various fields, that an international climate of trust and confidence can materialize - a factor which is a prerequisite for the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. MELESCANU (Romania) (interpretation from French): In its statement today my delegation would like to make some comments on the question of concluding a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

The initiative of the Soviet Union in including in the agenda of the General Assembly the item on the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force was supported by Romania on the basis of our position of principle, pursuant to which, in an era of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the non-use of force is of the greatest possible concern to the whole of mankind. Indeed, the history of mankind, and of Europe in particular, shows that the only way of protecting the peoples of the world from war is to banish for ever the use of force and the threat of the use of force from international relations.

Even as far back as 1970, in his speech to the twenty-fifth anniversary session of the General Assembly, the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Nicolae Ceausescu, stressed that:

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

"A central objective in international affairs of our time is that of putting an early end to wars and armed conflicts which are at present going on and which pose a serious danger to the peace of mankind as a whole, of halting all acts of aggression and interference in the internal affairs of other States, and ensuring complete observance of the right of peoples to self-determination. ...

"It is in that spirit that all States are called upon to undertake the solemn obligation of refraining from any threat or use of force in the settlement of disputes and to work towards the settlement of their conflicts exclusively by political means, in a peaceful way, through negotiations." (A/PV.1872, paras. 94 and 95)

Romania has acted consistently to make the non-use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes, accompanied by effective measures in the political and military realms, obligatory norms in international relations, a true basis for international peace and security.

Thus, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, Romania officially proposed the inclusion in the agenda of the Conference an item entitled "Building of European security and non-use of force or the threat of the use of force in relations among European States". At the same time our country stressed the need to prohibit explicitly all flagrant acts of intervention entailing the use of armed force, the organization or encouragement of irregular forces or armed gangs, including mercenaries and, to this end, it submitted within the framework of the negotiations at that Conference, a working document on measures to make the non-use of force effective.

Since our experience has shown us that we cannot talk of genuine security in our continent and internationally as long as in Europe and the world at large the arms race continues unhindered - and primarily the nuclear arms race - Romania expressed its support for the adoption of complete and general disarmament measures, primarily nuclear disarmament measures, with a view to making effective the principle of the non-use of force. Among the many proposals put forward by our country, we should like to refer to the document

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

entitled "The position of Romania on the problems of disarmament, and particularly nuclear disarmament and the establishment of lasting world peace", circulated at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly in document A/C.1/1066 of 30 October 1975.

In current international circumstances, the adoption under international law of a commitment by States to renounce the use of force and the threat of the use of force would be an event of particular importance for the process of building genuine security for all nations, whatever their size, their level of development, their geographical location or their economic and social system. It would also be a contribution to the establishment of a new international order. Consequently, Romania firmly supports the idea of producing, as soon as possible and with the participation of all States, a single coherent and universally valid document, which would stipulate the obligations of States not to have recourse to force or the threat of the use of force in their relations with each other, in any circumstances or on any pretext.

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

In view of the important responsibilities of the United Nations in bringing about democratic co-operation among all States in order to ensure international peace and security, and since it provides the most appropriate organizational framework for the examination of problems with the effective participation of all States, Romania considers that the United Nations is the forum within which this international treaty should be worked out.

In the view of Romania, the world treaty on the non-use of force or the threat of the use of force should be very broad in content in order to cover the prohibition of the use of both armed force and other forms of use of force, the exertion of pressure in international relations - economic and political pressure and military pressures and constraints - the prohibition of war propaganda, and the obligation to settle international disputes and problems by peaceful means. Since over the last 30 years international life has seen some very important developments, the treaty advocated should include new elements which have been achieved within the United Nations and at the Conference on European Security and Co-operation with regard to the detailed definition of the obligation of States not to use force or threaten to use it.

Particular stress should also be laid on the territorial elements of the non-use of force or the threat of use of force, such as the prohibition of the occupation of territory, invasion, attack, bombardment, acts directed against the unity and territorial integrity of a State, or any use of armed forces on the part of one State against the territory of another State.

Romania considers that this treaty which we advocate should explicitly stipulate the obligation of nuclear-weapon States not to use such weapons or to threaten to use them against non-nuclear weapon States, and also the commitment on the part of all nuclear weapon States not to be the first to use such weapons against each other.

The treaty should also explicitly provide for the right of all States to legitimate self-defence against armed attack, and also the right of peoples to struggle, and to struggle with arms, to free themselves from colonial domination.

(Mr. Melescanu, Romania)

To make effective the fundamental obligations which States will be assuming under this treaty, this instrument should stipulate the obligation of all States to adopt effective disarmament measures, to reduce the danger of confrontation between them, because of the close links between the principle of the non-use of force and the threat of the use of force and the bringing about of general and complete disarmament, primarily nuclear disarmament.

It is the deepest conviction of my delegation that the process of producing the world treaty on the non-use of force or the threat of use of force will provide an opportunity for the development of this principle in the light of the progressive development of international law, the current requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security and the current situation in relations among States.

In concluding these preliminary remarks, I should like to assure the Committee that Romania is determined to do its best to contribute to the preparation and negotiation of a treaty on the non-use of force and the threat of the use of force, a treaty which we hope will see the beginning of a new era in international life from which the policy of force and diktat will be banished for ever, in keeping with the requirements for the establishment of a new world order.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.