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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 6TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOATEN (Ghana)

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of nuclear war (continued)

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ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 127 (continued)

DEEPENING AND CONSOLIDATION OF INTERNATIONAL DETENTE AND PREVENTION OF THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WAR (A/32/242; A/C.1/32/L.1 and L.2)

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives will recall that from the very beginning I said I would appreciate their co-operation in making it possible for us to start a little bit earlier than has been our practice; I suggested that we should be able to start at 10.30 a.m. and 3 p.m. I would again request their co-operation in this regard

Mr. BOYA (Benin) (interpretation from French): Sir, my delegation extends to you its warmest congratulations upon your election to the post of Chairman of the First Committee. Your outstanding qualities as a diplomat well acquainted with international affairs guarantee the success of our work. My delegation's congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee. You may rest assured that you can count on the active and sincere co-operation of the delegation of Benin.

The item at present under discussion, concerning the deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war, is a very important matter indeed. My Government is grateful to the Soviet delegation for introducing this question in order to enable the international community to become even more aware of the importance to it of the sacred concepts of peaceful co-existence and fruitful, beneficial co-operation among all nations, large and small, rich and poor alike.

From the analysis made by my Government, it follows that international détente, if extended geographically and politically to all nations, will constitute a decisive element for peace, security and international co-operation. My Government favours a policy of détente to create or recreate a mutually beneficial climate of confidence. The item introduced by the Soviet Union allows my delegation, for the first time, to see the political implications of true international détente.

(Mr. Boya, Benin)

Present developments in international developments show that it is in the interest of no one to provoke another world war, be it nuclear or conventional. I must add that from our analysis of the international situation we have concluded that if a third world war breaks out it will necessarily be nuclear, which will represent the end of mankind, since no one would be spared.

International détente, if truly pursued with confidence, will make it possible to diminish, if not eliminate, the danger of a third world war. International détente, as pursued, has already yielded some beneficial results, such as the elimination of the cruel manifestations of the cold war, while opening new horizons in the area of co-operation among countries with different socio-political systems. These are realities which we must all acknowledge. But international détente must be deepened and better defined in order to solve the most burning problems of our time: foreign domination, racism, armed aggression and local conflicts which are prompted by reactionary and imperialist forces, unacceptable economic inequalities, and so forth.

The People's Republic of Benin, at the level of relations among independent States, feels that the deepening and consolidation of international détente is a peaceful battle of ideas, peaceful co-existence - in another words, co-existence within the same region or continent, of different politico-socio-economic systems - and the elimination of the imperialist policy of destabilizing progressive régimes, and an end to imperialist mercenary acts of aggression.

At the level of the liberation of peoples of all nations, international détente signifies the peaceful decolonization of the whole of Africa, in other words, the elimination of colonialism and of retrograde minority racist régimes in southern Africa.

At the economic relations level, détente should lead the great Powers to accept the economic equality of States.

The question appearing in agenda item 127, introduced by the Soviet Union, should enable us to carry out a clear and objective examination of the present situation. The Government of Benin will take all the necessary steps to give its active support to all measures that may be adopted by the General Assembly for the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war.

Mr. FLORIN (German Democratic Republic) (interpretation from Russian):

Mr. Chairman, permit me at the beginning of my statement to congratulate you on behalf of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic on your election to preside over this important Committee of the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. I should also like to extend our congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur.

A new initiative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics appears on our agenda: "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war". The issues here are important ones affecting the very fate of this and future generations. On the basis of our policy of peace and mutual understanding founded on principle, the German Democratic Republic welcomes and supports the recent proposals of the USSR with regard to the adoption of an appropriate declaration, as well as a draft resolution.

We value highly this new step taken by the USSR in this sixtieth anniversary year of the Great October Socialist Revolution. It is a reflection of the consistent policy of peace which has always highlighted major questions of development, has established goals and methods, and has promoted - and continues to promote - implementation of the relevant decisions.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

In submitting these documents on the deepening and consolidation of international détente and on the prevention of the danger of nuclear war, the Soviet Union has expressed the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world to live in circumstances of lasting peace and security.

Indeed it is high time for the United Nations to throw all its authority into the work of stimulating the process of détente on a world scale

During the general debate at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly the representatives of a majority of Member States devoted attention to the process of détente, and this is only understandable since in the past few years a number of important bilateral and multilateral agreements have been signed, which have served to promote both the development of normal, peaceful and mutually advantageous inter-State relations on the basis of universally acknowledged norms of international law as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, and the elimination of existing hotbeds of conflict. But we cannot fail to note that the process of détente is still not a stable one. It still has to be extended to all parts of the world, and we find that forces are still at work attempting to turn the peoples and States of the world back to a kind of cold war. As the Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia asked in his statement in the general debate

"is it not high time to exert our utmost efforts so that we can begin to overcome negative tendencies and resistance to the process of relaxation of tensions, as well as to thwart attempts at making use of détente for achieving narrow objectives?" (A/32/PV.14, p. 26).

It would be taking us too far if I were to attempt here to enumerate all the well-known positive results of efforts to achieve international détente and to strengthen universal peace and international security. I should just like to cite the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the cessation of war in the Indo-China peninsula and the understanding on a certain limitation of armaments. As for the factors which have curbed the continuance of détente, these, in our view, include among others the desire to escalate the arms race, intervention in the internal affairs of other States, denial to developing countries of the right

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

of sovereignty over their own natural resources and the provoking of military confrontations among States. The United Nations should focus its efforts on barring the way to the opponents of détente and lending more momentum to the process of détente. In this sense we view the proposals submitted by the Soviet Union as appropriate precisely for providing more momentum to efforts whose purpose is the ensuring of a peaceful future for mankind.

The proposals of the Soviet Union embrace international processes and problems in one complex whole. They reflect the actual development of events and urgent requirements of the time. We have in mind the combining of political and military measures to create a lasting and long-term foundation for détente and the prevention of nuclear war. This is also related to the fact that we have here included all the major fields of international activity in the process of the materialization of détente. Pride of place, of course, goes to the question of disarmament, with regard to which the Soviet proposals contain a number of extremely valuable initiatives. Of equal significance is the need to promote the liberation of all colonially oppressed peoples and the elimination of racist régimes and the remaining vestiges of national oppression.

Genuine détente, without any doubt, involves the final elimination of the old colonial system. The overwhelming majority of Member States of our Organization have repeatedly confirmed that the peoples struggling for their liberation from the colonial yoke have the right to wage their struggle in all appropriate ways in view of the arbitrary rule and oppression practised by the circles which are still dominant. The norms of relations between States should not be translated to the realm of relations between liberation movements and oppressive régimes. The purpose of our efforts to continue and accelerate the process of détente certainly does not lie in recommending that the national liberation movements pursue any kind of peaceful coexistence with the colonialist and racist oppressors. When we talk of the process of détente we have in mind too liberation from colonialism and racism. In our view, it is incumbent upon all Member States of the United Nations to promote that cause equally.

(Mr. Florin, German  
Democratic Republic)

The process of détente also presupposes the all-round development of equal and mutually advantageous economic relations on a just basis, due account being taken of the interests of developing countries. This question has been discussed over and over again in our Organization and has been set down definitively in the decisions of principle taken by the General Assembly. The Soviet document includes recommendations for the overcoming of conflicts and for constructive co-operation in promoting the exercise of human rights. The draft declaration of the Soviet Union proceeds from the premise that it is a necessity to implement the multilateral agreements and treaties which have been concluded and which serve the cause of the strengthening of international security and the development of peaceful relations, and this is indubitably an extremely serious question.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

In recent years a number of treaties and agreements have been concluded and understandings reached which have become possible as a result of the beginning of détente, have laid the foundation for the normalization of relations between States, have led to an easing of tension in whole areas of the world and have given further momentum to the whole process of détente. This development has, with reason, been welcomed in all quarters. However, if those treaties, agreements and understandings are not respected or are even violated then the atmosphere becomes poisoned and new dangerous situations arise.

For example, if we recognize the principle of the sovereign equality of States as laid down in the United Nations Charter this should be reflected in relations among States Members of the United Nations. Furthermore, even in bilateral treaties and agreements if the principle of equality is laid down it is logical to expect that no problem should arise concerning the question of the mutual recognition of citizenship. Therefore the refusal to recognize citizenship is something which we must call an anachronism, to say the least. This kind of anachronism is used to propagate and even to practise the policy of intervention in the internal affairs of other States. This complicates inter-State relations, undermines the foundations of mutual understanding in resolving issues which are of mutual interest and has negative consequences.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the fact that the draft declaration submitted by the Soviet Union calls upon all States to pursue a policy of non-interference in each other's internal affairs and mutual respect for sovereignty and independence. In our view a comprehensive approach to the major issues of the development of the process of détente is also reflected in the fact that the Soviet initiative vigorously supports the extending of the process of détente to all parts of the world and proposes that the General Assembly call solemnly upon all States to continue and intensify their efforts to deepen and consolidate international détente. The process of détente cannot possibly be the business of just a few States even though they may be the most powerful and largest States in the military sense and



(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

therefore bear major and special responsibility. These are questions of international relations in the development of which all States, great and small, regardless of their social system, do and must participate.

The German Democratic Republic is not among the most powerful States in the world - as a matter of fact, it is among the smaller States - but for the sake of peace and security we are determined to do everything in our power in this respect. We realize fully the special features of our situation on the boundaries between States with different social systems.

The Soviet proposals outline far-reaching goals. At the same time they indicate realistic ways and means of attaining those goals. We believe that those proposals are acceptable to all States, for they reflect fundamental international legal obligations as contained in the United Nations Charter and in other bilateral and multilateral instruments. In other words, they reproduce some of the fundamental points in the basic instruments to which Member States of the United Nations, or the overwhelming majority of them at least, have already subscribed. Furthermore they are buttressed by growing recognition of the fact that there is no sensible alternative to détente.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the fact that the Soviet initiative concentrates the attention of the United Nations on the implementation of détente on a world scale. The proposals of the USSR are indeed in keeping with the great responsibility our Organization bears for the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world. The adoption of these proposals will enhance the authority of the United Nations, and the international community will once again be able to see that our Organization is aware of its responsibility. It seems to me that in adopting these proposals our Organization will be encouraging all those people who are concerned for the future of mankind to make further efforts to implement the policy of détente in international relations.

Trust is a very important thing in international relations. Due attention is therefore paid to the question of trust in the Soviet document. Trust of itself will not create a climate of trust and we know this very

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic  
Republic)

well from the period just before the beginning of the Second World War. Trust can be created and developed only in circumstances of stable international relations in accordance with international norms.

Trust and disarmament, of course, are closely interdependent: without trust there can be no disarmament, but without disarmament there can be no trust. In this regard the Soviet proposals are of interest inasmuch as they provide for both a political declaration and a concrete resolution on the prevention of the danger of nuclear war. The prevention of nuclear war is the key issue in international development and here it is important to prevent both the outbreak of situations which contain the seeds of the danger of the launching of nuclear war and the development of new types of nuclear weapons, in order in the final analysis to achieve a general prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the elimination of those weapons.

(Mr. Florin, German Democratic Republic)

We are happy to note that further understandings have already been achieved on the prevention of uncontrolled and accidental use of nuclear weapons. My delegation expresses the hope that at least on this question it will be possible to achieve understanding among all nuclear Powers. The Soviet proposal goes further. It provides for measures such as the cessation of all nuclear-weapon testing; the withdrawal of all vessels carrying nuclear weapons from certain areas of the world's oceans; the creation of nuclear-free zones, the status of which should be respected by the nuclear Powers; the prevention of the further proliferation of nuclear weapons without impeding the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union is designed to stimulate talks on disarmament in various bodies. My delegation believes that the draft resolution is worded most felicitously. It is oriented towards the attainment of far-reaching goals while preserving the necessary flexibility with regard to individual measures. In the view of my delegation it is well-founded to argue that the nuclear Powers bear particular responsibility for détente and the prevention of nuclear war, because it is only by means of their co-operation that, in the final analysis, it will be possible to find a positive solution for all time of the vital problem of mankind. But no less true is another point, which refers to the need for all States to contribute, themselves, positively and independently, to the promotion of international détente.

On behalf of the German Democratic Republic, I wish to state here that our socialist State is ready to do this, and therefore it supports the Soviet proposals which have been submitted.

Mr. LEVENTHOPOULOS (Greece): The Greek delegation views as constructive the initiative of including the new item entitled "Deepening and consolidation of international détente and prevention of the danger of nuclear war" in the agenda of the current thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly.

(Mr. Chrysanthopoulos, Greece)

As my Foreign Minister stated during the general debate, Greece is in favour of the policy of détente. In pursuit of this policy Greece has actively participated in the preparatory meeting in Belgrade of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and we intend to continue this effort in co-operation with the countries signatory to the Helsinki Final Act in order to seek additional measures likely to reinforce security and co-operation in Europe, and trusting that the positive development of détente in Europe will have a favourable influence on co-operation and peace in the Mediterranean as well as in other regions in the world.

The new item under discussion therefore corresponds in general terms with the policy of my Government. However, the subjects covered by the draft declaration and draft resolution submitted to our Committee are indeed broad and complex. It now falls upon us to discuss them fully, in depth and width, in good faith and with open minds, so that the final text might cover, as much as possible, the entire spectrum of this colossal problem before us, which the world expectantly challenges us to solve.

My country is a non-nuclear State and intends to remain so. Though we consider the discussion of nuclear disarmament useful, indeed indispensable, we see the problem of disarmament as a whole, including both nuclear and conventional fields. Only thus may we reach a satisfactory text encompassing in a comprehensive way the aim of achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament for the sake of the present and future generations of mankind. Only thus could we speak of real progress.

It is an elementary prerequisite that all non-nuclear countries be given effective guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as of all other weapons of massive destruction, against our people, who do not have nor wish to have effective means of retaliation. We thus see the matter in a composite way.

We submit that the draft resolution before us should include the prevention of the danger of conventional war and that it should be placed clearly within the context of the Charter.

(Mr. Chrysanthopoulos, Greece)

Lastly, my delegation submits that steps should be taken to establish that the decisions of the Security Council and the resolutions of the General Assembly are respected and implemented by all.

Only by effectively prohibiting war, whether nuclear or conventional, together with the respect and application of the decisions of the Security Council and the resolutions of the General Assembly can real peace through justice be established in international relations.

We must also not lose from sight, in dealing with the present item, the general goals that we have set ourselves in the special session of the General Assembly next year devoted to disarmament.

My delegation will gladly participate in the debate on this item at a later stage. Its vote will depend of course on the final text that emerges from the discussion in our Committee.

Mr. YANKOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all most cordially to congratulate you, as an eminent representative of friendly Ghana, and also the other officers of the Committee, the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Imre Hollai of Hungary and Ambassador Ilkka Pastinen of Finland, as well as the Rapporteur, Mr. Correa of Mexico. I wish you success in your highly responsible mission and I pledge my delegation's full co-operation with you.

For a number of years, the agenda of the General Assembly has featured important and topical items related to measures, prerequisites and initiatives aimed at strengthening international security. It is worth while noting that this year's general debate devoted considerable attention to this issue. There were a great number of Foreign Ministers and Heads of State who found this item to be at the core of present-day international relations. We should also emphasize the fact that the First Committee has commenced its work by discussing a question of exclusive significance which touches on the very foundations of present-day international relations. There is no doubt that consideration of the question of the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of a nuclear war (item 127 of the agenda) which was introduced on the initiative of the Soviet Union, and the adoption of relevant documents in this regard, will have a positive impact on the situation in the world today. It will also help to enhance further the role of the United Nations in the strengthening of international peace and security.

It is well known that this role has increased to a considerable degree in recent years. The credit for this should be given to the adoption by the United Nations of such important instruments as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security and the Declaration on the Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and a number of others which had a positive impact on the improvement of the international climate and provided a sizeable impetus to the development of the process of the reconstruction of international relations on just and democratic grounds.

That is why we hold the view that the adoption by the United Nations of the draft resolution and declaration on this crucial issue constitutes an important task for the United Nations. We would recall that in 1960 when resolution 1514 (XV) was submitted there were voices of doubt as to whether this was within the purview of the United Nations and whether a declaration of that kind would bring us closer to the attainment of the aims of the United Nations. There have been some other instances when similar problems were discussed and

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

again doubts were raised. But what about the Mission of the United Nations? The United Nations is supposed to operate through political actions, through recommendations and resolutions, in furthering the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter.

The present stage of political détente in the world has come about as a result of many factors, such as bilateral and multilateral initiatives advanced by quite a number of States and political organizations. Though they often take opposing stands, nevertheless it is noteworthy that with respect to the urgent need of international détente they arrive at a common ground. In our view, a leading role in the promotion of this process has been played by the Soviet Union. The new Soviet proposal now under consideration is a logical sequence of the consistent struggle of the Soviet State, since its inception 20 years ago, to deepen and materialize détente and to establish in international relations Lenin's principles of peaceful coexistence among States with different social systems.

Although détente has received considerable development and continues to be the most important trend in international relations, the achievements so far cannot cloud the fact that this process has not yet been strengthened enough, that it is liable to waver and come to a standstill. The danger of a return to the period of the cold war cannot be entirely excluded. Post-war history teaches us that it is very easy to cut down the saplings of détente and to aggravate the political climate, while it is extremely difficult to overcome the inertia of the cold war and to ensure a steady advancement of the relaxation of international tensions. For détente is not an immobile phenomenon, something that can be permanently taken for granted but a dynamic process, with its ups and downs, which is to bring mankind to a period of lasting peace and guaranteed security.

It is the prime duty of the United Nations to take an active part in the strengthening of international détente as a basic prerequisite for the settlement of all major international problems. Just like a good builder who, before erecting the building itself, consolidates its foundations, so the United Nations ought to make its contribution to the strengthening of the foundations of the new structure of international relations. This commitment

of the world Organization stems from the basic provisions of its Charter which define the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security in the world. It also stems from article 27 of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, in which the General Assembly:

"Emphasizes the need for the United Nations to exert continuous efforts for the strengthening of international peace and security ..."

(General Assembly resolution 2734 (XXV))

It is generally recognized that the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe provided a powerful impetus to détente. The People's Republic of Bulgaria, being an active participant at the Conference, is doing all within its power for the implementation of the Final Act. We believe that the meeting which is now being held in Belgrade will be another step in this direction. Yet no matter how important the Final Act may be, it must be admitted that it concerns above all those States which have signed it and that basically it is concentrated on the European continent. In this world of interrelationships, in this world where peace is indivisible, however, it is impossible for separate oases of détente to exist for long when tensions reign in other parts of the world. It is therefore necessary for the impact of détente to assume global dimensions and to become universal. This can and must be done with the active co-operation of the United Nations and of all Member States. For détente is not a formula whereby one can define relations between the strongest States in terms of military and political potential, or between members of military and political blocs. Détente is a vital necessity for all States, big and small, from east and west, developed and developing, without distinction as to their soci-political systems. The need to spread détente to other regions of the world has been repeatedly emphasized in various organs of the United Nations, as well as in other forums such as regional meetings, the conference of the non-aligned movement held last year in Colombo and other international governmental and non-governmental gatherings.



(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

It would therefore, in our view, be very strange if at this stage the United Nations were to remain outside this process and be unable to lend its contribution to its promotion. For this reason we consider the current discussion as a natural continuation of the efforts of the world Organization in this field.

There are other reasons that require prompt and effective measures in this respect.

International détente as an objective possibility has existed throughout the entire post-war period. Its realization has been thwarted, however, because of subjective considerations and the actions of certain circles that would tip the balance in favour of choosing the path to the "cold war" and everything connected with it, such as the arms race and the division of the world into opposing military and political blocs. The opponents of détente have not laid down their weapons even today. We cannot disregard the fact that these circles are again stirring into activity, particularly now when the question concerns the consolidation of the results achieved, when the positive trend is to be made irreversible. Of course these circles do not draw their strength from wide public support but from an enormous financial and military establishment and a wide network of political ties and influence upon the mass media.

If détente is judged by its roots and consequences, it surpasses the framework of inter-State relations affecting only a limited number of countries. We cannot share the view expressed by some previous speakers that détente, in their opinion, means a dialogue among a few. Détente must be viewed within a wider social and historical context as a factor that has a global impact upon all the major problems of the present-day world and affects all countries in the world. In actual fact, there is not a single important item on the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly that is not in one way or another directly dependent on or influenced by the status of détente. On the other hand, many of those problems directly influence the international climate. That is why détente must be considered not as an abstract concept but in close relationship with fundamental international problems. Détente needs to be extended both horizontally in its geographical dimensions and vertically, that is, in various spheres of international relations.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

Questions were raised during the debate as to why well-known principles of the Charter and other United Nations instruments needed to be reiterated again; to whom the new documents are to be addressed and why this item is being put forward for consideration now. Is it too early or too late? In other words, what are the grounds that justify consideration of this item, and why must a document in the form of a United Nations declaration be adopted at this stage?

We do not intend to go into detail in trying to answer these questions. However, we feel obliged to express our views on these points.

I should like to dwell here on a question of a preliminary nature that seems to occupy the attention of many delegations. This is about the kind of action that the United Nations is supposed to take on this issue. As is known, the Soviet Union proposes that the General Assembly should, as a first step, adopt a declaration on deepening and consolidating international détente. The Bulgarian delegation considers that this is a timely proposal and fully supports it. Why do we think so?

First of all, the question under consideration is not a routine one of a peripheral nature. As I said earlier, it concerns the very foundations of international relations. In considering similar questions in the past, the General Assembly preferred to resort to declarations, the moral, political and binding force of which as a code of conduct was most explicit. The United Nations is, by its very nature and competence, supposed to act through such instruments.

Secondly, the present moment when this question is being discussed is a crucial one in a sense, and it is incumbent upon the United Nations to assert, pertinently and most resolutely, its support of the cause of détente.

Thirdly, the adoption of a declaration will stress the consistent nature of United Nations actions in the discussion of basic problems related to international peace and security and the interrelationship that exists between the current discussion and other United Nations documents that have been considered as important contributions by this Organization towards the maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of co-operation among nations.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

Fourthly, a declaration would provide better opportunities for a future study and elaboration of the basic aspects and requirements of international détente as a policy that is not a short-term one but as a policy that has universal and long-standing significance and underlies international development as a whole. Such a declaration will not only promote the compliance by States with existing bilateral and multilateral treaties on international security and co-operation, but could contribute to and serve as a basis for future international political agreements in this field, as has been the case with other similar United Nations declarations. In our opinion, the draft declaration represents a real programme of action that is to be taken by the world Organization. We are convinced that the General Assembly must adopt a declaration on this question and a related resolution on one of its most important aspects, namely, the prevention of the danger of nuclear war.

The draft declaration rightly emphasizes the urgent need to take decisive action on one of the most significant and long-standing problems at present, namely, the curbing of the arms race. It is the arms race that is the most difficult hurdle on the path to the strengthening of mutual trust, and there is no more urgent task now than that of putting an end to the stockpiling of armaments. It is common knowledge that the arms race is a material preparation for war and conceals immense danger to the lives of people and the future of mankind. In addition to this danger, which has been repeatedly brought to the fore, I should like to stress that the arms race has a tremendous negative impact on the entire system of international relations. It breeds and spreads daily, and even hourly, an atmosphere of distrust and suspicion among States, and diverts attention and efforts from peaceful co-operation.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

There is only one way out of the present situation. As pointed out in the well-founded report of the Secretary-General dealing with economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security:

"Effective security cannot be achieved today by further armaments. The world has long since reached the point where security can only be sought in disarmament and in the expansion of international co-operation among all countries in all fields, the establishment, on the basis of mutual benefit, of ties which will permit the elimination of present sources of tension and conflicts and the suppression of the relevance of force in international relations." (A/32/88, p. 6, para. 2)

The alarming fact is that military expenditures on a global scale are skyrocketing. In 1974 some placed these expenditures at around \$200 million; then, in the following years, as the report of the Secretary-General shows, it reached about \$350 billion. (op. cit., p. 9, para. 14) These expenditures are a heavy burden on the shoulders of the working people throughout the world.

Once again I would like to affirm here the position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria with respect to the need to take prompt measures for disarmament. Just a few days ago, speaking before the sixty-fourth Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held in Sofia, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council, Todor Zhivkov, said:

"Political détente should not only be strengthened and developed but it should also be supplemented by a détente in the military field as soon as possible. It is high time that practical steps were taken, first, to end the testing of nuclear weapons; secondly, to observe the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; thirdly, to prohibit of chemical weapons and new kinds of weapons of mass destruction; fourthly, to curtail military budgets; and, fifthly, to reduce armaments and armed forces in Central Europe. The world must set out boldly along the road to general and complete disarmament under strict international control."

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

The most important aspect of the struggle to deepen international détente is undoubtedly that of preventing a world thermo-nuclear war. It is not accidental that these two questions are interrelated under the current item. My delegation found it somewhat strange to hear in this room a reference to the priority given to the problem of preventing world thermo-nuclear war, for it is common knowledge, and I need not emphasize it, that it is indeed thermo-nuclear war that, by its destructive dimensions, its economic burden and its political implications, is of primary importance for the international community. This does not mean that conventional wars are condoned. This does not mean in any way that conventional armaments should not be limited. This does not mean in any way the establishment of a kind of contradiction among the different measures in the field of disarmament.

In his statement, the representative of the Soviet Union emphasized the need to take urgent measures in this field. I should like to point out a very important aspect of the Soviet draft resolution. It constitutes a comprehensive approach, that is to say, the commitment of all nuclear and non-nuclear-States, big and small, to the specific requirements towards them ensuing from the general will to avert a nuclear war. Of course, the nuclear Powers and the permanent members of the Security Council have special responsibilities in this regard. Although many of the provisions in the draft resolution are in fact well-known principles, which have been elaborated in a number of other documents, their reiteration here and now is required because of the need in the present international situation to give a new impetus to the common endeavour which is formulated in preambular paragraph 3 of the draft resolution: "... to take all possible measures to ensure that the danger of an outbreak of nuclear war is diminished and eventually removed. ..."

(A/C.1/32/L.2)

The fundamental aspect of the Soviet draft resolution, together with the draft declaration, is the creation of a code of conduct for all States for the consolidation of détente in the struggle to avert a nuclear war. That is why the People's Republic of Bulgaria fully supports the two Soviet documents.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

An encouraging step in this direction, and one which we welcome, is the expressed readiness of the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom to accept a moratorium on underground nuclear-weapons tests. We hope that the other nuclear Powers will also join in this move. We hope that they will also adhere to the treaties on the prohibition of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and underwater, on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and on the prohibition of the emplacement of these weapons in outer space and on the ocean floor. This will be real steps on the road to the prevention of a nuclear war.

A serious threat to world peace arises from the military hotbeds and conflicts which continue to smoulder and flare now and then in various parts of the world. That is why the appeal in the draft declaration is both appropriate and timely, as it is addressed to all States "To facilitate the speedy peaceful settlement of conflict situations and to prevent the recurrence of situations of this kind. ..." (A/C.1/32/L.1, p. 1)

Very often these are called "local" or "limited" crisis or conflict situations. But this term is rather conditional in our interrelated world. Every crisis situation is fraught with the danger of being inflated into a major clash and even a global conflict where means of mass destruction could be used. Events in the Middle East, Cyprus and Africa confirm this conclusion.

What is characteristic of the hotbeds of tension and conflict is that the greater part of them result from attempts by colonial and imperialist circles first, to stifle by force the legitimate aspirations of the peoples to be liberated from colonial dependence; secondly, to raise a barrier in the struggle of people for democracy and social progress; and, thirdly, to fan the conflicts that are the vestiges of imperialist domination and colonialism.

The only way to stamp out the hotbeds of tensions and conflicts and to strengthen international peace and security is to eliminate the very sources which cause such conflicts. This philosophy underlies the United Nations resolutions on the elimination of colonialist and racist régimes in southern Africa and on the peaceful settlement of the conflicts in the Middle East and Cyprus. We fully share this philosophy and we shall continue to support all measures aimed at the implementation of these resolutions.

In the case of the struggle against colonialism, international détente may increase the opportunities for bringing the process of decolonization to a final end. Détente also creates better conditions for other nations to assist this legitimate struggle with all the necessary means so that it can end in success.

The principle of the non-use of force or the threat of the use of force is of particular importance for the promotion of détente, and the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force will greatly further the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

The efforts to deepen détente are also related to those of restructuring international economic relations on a democratic basis and eliminating discrimination, diktat and inequality in establishing a new international economic order.

In conditions of détente the struggle for the reconstruction of international economic relations will acquire new opportunities and dimensions; it will lead to the release of greater means for development, for it is well known that the arms race has a devastating effect on the economy of all States and in particular the developing countries.

International practice in recent years provides convincing evidence that even the most complicated problems can be resolved through a businesslike co-operation among States. There are a number of objective factors which can furnish favourable conditions for the promotion of international co-operation and thus create a climate propitious for the consolidation of détente.

Mankind is facing problems of such a magnitude that they require a global approach and closer co-ordination of national efforts. I have in mind economic progress and development, the rational utilization of natural resources and energy, the protection of the environment and the struggle against disease. The advancement of the technological revolution will further present new challenges which will require concerted action.

Furthermore, in an atmosphere of détente, more favourable conditions will be established for the promotion of cultural exchange, mutual understanding and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

(Mr. Yankov, Bulgaria)

The success of every international measure comes only when the entire diversity of interests of different States or groups of States yield to the common understanding and responsibility for the fate of man. That is what we need now.

Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria): You being an old friend, Mr. Chairman, I do not have to congratulate you in the same terms as previous speakers so as not to sound banal to you. But I am glad that the principal representative of Ghana is directing the affairs of this Committee. We both know the historic ties between our two countries. You and I have worked together almost continuously in Ghana, elsewhere and in the United Nations during the last 20 years in our respective foreign services.

The subject that we are discussing here is of profound significance to us in Nigeria and, I believe, to the rest of the world. We congratulate the Soviet Government for once again playing its part in promoting détente and for its attempts to effect and give momentum to the spirit and actions prescribed by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

If my country puts a lot of emphasis on redeployment of resources away from the arms race and towards economic development, it is because we believe that the only meaningful policy for a developing country is one that would improve the basic well-being of its citizens. If we ask for the deepening and strengthening of détente, it is because we believe that economic development would be easier to achieve in the world under conditions of co-operation than those of confrontation.

We recall that last year the world Powers came forward on the initiative of the Soviet Union with a draft convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques. To many of us it was blood-curdling to conceive that anyone would consider such methods of warfare at all. It will be recalled that that convention had the limited objective of limiting such war techniques in terms of their widespread, long-lasting or severe effects. We thought such types of warfare should be instantly banned. However, we gave our support to that convention in the



(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

context of détente and in the spirit that for confidence-building any step forward, however limited, that brought together the super-Powers was in the right direction towards the final objective. We thank the Soviet Union for that initiative last year.

Détente did not commence with the Helsinki accord. Helsinki was, however, the first major attempt by European Powers to elaborate and define the principles that should guide relations towards achieving that objective.

We all recall however that after the Second World War accelerated development of arsenals became the vogue. There was the resultant polarization which led to the beaming and targeting of the instruments of war of one group against the other, based essentially on ideological and super-Power rivalry. That period of confrontation led to a second phase when countries like mine, based on the philosophy of non-alignment and in order to bring about détente between the so-called East and West, became a third force to mediate or take the heat off the contest between East and West.

The non-aligned movement has consistently worked towards reducing tension in the world at large, and we are encouraged by the growing co-operation since Helsinki among States in the so-called East and West. We must also work primarily towards the removal of the distrust and fears particularly among the super-Powers, for those are the root causes of the insecurity which engenders the inability to achieve genuine disarmament or move forward at least in decelerating the arms race. It is our hope that this interaction - in contacts, technological exchanges and economic pursuits in the social and all other fields - and ipso facto towards greater interdependence are the surest way to remove conflict. Such developments that will lead to a safer world in which to live will, I hope, increase and release resources for the building of a better world for mankind.

Those who belong to military pacts only frustrate this trend towards détente. They do not create security for themselves but insecurity for humanity, for the world is endangered by its polarization into military camps. That is why Nigeria is non-aligned, and that is why most third-world countries are non-aligned in the interest of world peace and security, and in fact constitute a third force in the pursuit of international détente.

(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

The policy of détente cannot be allowed to mark time. It needs to be extended and reflected in all spheres of international relations. It must also be extended to all regions of the world. It should be developed so that its relevance is recognized by both big and small nations. In essence, it is necessary for all nations to recognize the need to follow policies of peaceful co-existence and co-operation in the conduct of their international relations. My delegation feels that the big Powers can contribute immensely towards such a development. The smaller nations, as it were, often derive their international behaviour from the attitude of the big Powers. We have always lamented big-Power politics of creating areas of influence in such regions as Africa. We think that the deepening of détente would help solve the numerous problems we now have in Africa and other regions of the world, and in particular the abandonment of the approach to some African problems in the context of super-Power rivalry, and at the expense of peace, freedom and human dignity in the African continent.

Thus it is important that the United Nations lend the process of détente its prestige. To us in the developing countries, the United Nations is our appellate court of last resort. The United Nations should not therefore feel unconcerned but should give direction to the desire to strengthen détente.

There have been questions as to what the term "international détente" means. Many times people define the term differently. This difference in definition could give rise to misunderstandings regarding the nature and content of the process of détente. There is therefore need to have a generally acceptable definition. There is no better forum to adopt such a definition than the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation therefore believes that the draft declaration on the deepening and consolidation of détente issued by the Soviet delegation could be used as a basic working paper to come up with an acceptable definition of the words "international détente".

Every year the General Assembly discusses an item entitled "General and Complete Disarmament". To many people this has become an exercise in futility. It has been rendered futile because, despite discussions here, the arms race has

(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

continued to escalate. In order to achieve success in the field of disarmament, a climate of peace must be created. Measures could then be taken in the disarmament field, starting with nuclear weapons.

In his address to the General Assembly on 13 October 1977, my Head of State said on this point, inter alia:

"The reasons for our anxiety ... derive, of course, from the recognition that if the unbridled race in the production of weapons of mass destruction and mutual annihilation between the super-Powers were to continue at the present pace, we should be faced with the near certainty of a third world war, with all the attendant tragedy and human sufferings that would imply. In such an eventuality of a nuclear holocaust, there would probably be no victors, and the human race as a whole would be the loser, since the generalized destruction that would result would obviously recognize no political barriers. We hope, therefore, that the gravity of the threat posed to world peace and security is equally well recognized by the super-Powers and that the time will soon come when the valuable resources at present devoted to such a dangerous pursuit will be more fruitfully deployed for the greatest good of the greatest section of mankind." (A/32/PV.32, pp. 52 and 53-55)

He went on further to say:

"In this regard I am encouraged by the growing détente among the super-Powers. Such co-operation in technological, economic and other fields is the surest way to develop mutual confidence through interdependence, to lead to less tension and to encourage disarmament". (ibid., pp. 53-55)

To conclude, détente should be seen in its broadest context, and not in the narrower relations of super-Powers. Détente should embrace all countries, and this implies action not only to prevent war - nuclear as well as conventional - but also action to build peace throughout the world. Thus we shall intensify world understanding, facilitate negotiations on disarmament and, ipso facto, promote measures against economic backwardness and bridge economic gaps which aggravate relations.

(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

Détente should embrace the liberation of peoples and countries from imperialism, foreign and racist domination and racist oppression, especially the type in southern Africa, and the acquisition of territory by war, together with the expansionist policies of Israel in the Middle East. Détente should embrace a policy that will restore dignity and a homeland to those deprived of their rights in Palestine.

The deepening and strengthening of international détente should therefore be a major contribution to international peace and security, if taken in its broad perspective.

My delegation thanks the Soviet Union once more for its initiative. Détente has tended to have the connotation of a bilateral affair and one remote to many of us from the third world. We are happy that it may now assume the multilateral treatment which it deserves. For the millions starving while billions of dollars are spent on arms, détente will now have some meaning.

Mr. ALARCON (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I should like to express to you the satisfaction of my delegation at seeing you presiding over this important Committee of the General Assembly. In the time that it has been my privilege to know you, I have learned to appreciate your professional and personal qualities, which convince me that under your guidance the First Committee will fruitfully fulfil its duties. May we also extend our congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of the Committee.

The First Committee has begun its work this year with the consideration of a highly important item. No one can question the fact that the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war are urgent problems of overriding interest to all peoples. We must therefore voice our gratitude and appreciation to the Government of the Soviet Union for taking the very timely initiative of requesting the inclusion of the item in this year's agenda.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

The statements made by Foreign Minister Gromyko in the general debate and by Ambassador Troyanovsky yesterday have, moreover, helped to put the question in its proper perspective, while doing so convincingly and eliciting further expressions of gratitude. But, in fact, there are even more profound reasons for which the people and Government of the Soviet Union deserve the gratitude of all peace-loving peoples in the world. If today it is possible to lessen the danger of world war, if we can hope for a peaceful future for all, and if it is possible to stay the hand of the aggressor and to contain the war-like tendency of imperialism, this is due, first and foremost, to the existence of a powerful Socialist State which for six decades has waged a just, unrelenting and consistent struggle for international peace and coexistence.

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

Détente is above all the fruit of the persevering efforts made by the Soviet Government ever since in the first days of glorious October it proclaimed, with Lenin's decree on peace, its will to inaugurate for all peoples a new era in which international relations would be based on equality and co-operation.

Progress in the field of the process of détente, demonstrated in particular by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the signing of the Final Act in Helsinki, has opened encouraging prospects whose scope could be beneficial to the whole of mankind. Détente is acquiring an increasingly influential value in international relations. It creates new possibilities for co-operation between States with different social and economic systems, diminishes the danger of military confrontation and promotes a more favourable climate for the settlement of existing conflicts; but we must not disregard the fact that this is a recent phenomenon and that powerful interests conspire against strengthening it. It is for this reason that it is necessary to adopt measures which will deepen the process of détente and imbue it with a universal, irreversible character. Within that context it is especially important to extend political détente to the military field through the conclusion of agreements which will put an end to the arms race and lead rapidly towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The Soviet delegation has expressed once again its readiness to take important steps to that end. It is now for the Government of the United States and the other nuclear Powers to show their capacity to co-operate.

With regard to general and complete disarmament, I should like to repeat the view of my Government that it should be carried out in conditions that guarantee the security of all States and that it should include the dismantling of all the military bases established by the imperialists in various parts of the world. The adoption of urgent decisions to reduce military arsenals and to promote disarmament is a key element for the strengthening of international détente, since it is the large monopolies connected with the military industry that are the major enemies of peace, and that, seeking gains from war, encourage conflicts. It is for this reason that it

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

is alarming to see how in the present conditions of détente the United States is increasing its military budget to unprecedented limits. The development of the neutron bomb, furthermore, gives reason for growing concern and is condemned throughout the world.

In order to consolidate détente it is necessary to extend it to all regions of the world. The complete elimination of colonialism and racism and the cessation of aggressive practices and the policies of force and domination exercised by imperialism in several regions are essential factors for the establishment of true international co-operation. The main hotbeds of tension that still exist today are on the agenda of the General Assembly, and it would be possible to make progress towards their effective solution if there were the necessary political willingness to accede to the legitimate interests of those peoples and to comply with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

In the Middle East the quest for a just and durable peace demands the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories and the full recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to constitute a State in its homeland. In any negotiation on this question, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, must be included on a footing of equality

Cyprus continues to be a source of tension but, above all, represents a serious challenge to the authority and prestige of our Organization. We must act in order to achieve the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from that island, while ensuring strict respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-alignment of Cyprus.

In western and southern Africa, the existence of the racist régimes of Pretoria and Salisbury and the unlawful occupation of Namibia are factors which endanger peace and threaten the security of all African States. The imperialist Governments have traditionally supported the minority racist régimes and today are still manoeuvring to gain time for Vorster and Smith and to undermine the oppressed peoples in that region while preventing the achievement of their emancipation. Thus they have embarked on a course

(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

which is a threat to international détente and is doomed to failure. If there is a true desire to put an end to racist tyranny in southern Africa and to find a just solution for the problems affecting that part of the world, there is no course but that of imposing total isolation of the Pretoria and Salisbury régimes, while giving broad effective support to the national liberation movements in those Territories.

The elimination of colonialism and foreign oppression all over the world, the renunciation of the policy of force and the recognition of the inalienable right of all peoples to decide their own future and to endow themselves with the social system best suited to them and to have the free use of their wealth and resources are sine qua non conditions for the building of a new system of international relations based on peace and co-operation. The essential pillar of such a system should be the radical transformation of the structure of the international economy, with the elimination of subordination and dependency, coupled with the putting of an end to exploitation by imperialist monopolies and contributing to the accelerated development of under-developed countries.



(Mr. Alarcon, Cuba)

It is the obvious duty of the United Nations to deepen and consolidate international détente and to prevent the danger of nuclear war. The draft declaration and draft resolution proposed by the Soviet Union, if adopted, would represent important contributions to the fulfilment of that duty. That is why they have the support of my delegation. We urge the members of the Committee to give them their enthusiastic support.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The delegation of the Republic of Iraq welcomes the initiative of the Soviet Union leading to the inclusion of this item in the agenda of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. This new initiative represents a step forward and forms part of the actions undertaken in recent years to bring the General Assembly and this Committee back to the ideals and principles of the United Nations Charter and to emphasize those principles, respect for which is an obligation deriving from the need for sound international relations.

We therefore believe that consideration of the deepening and consolidation of international détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war provides an opportunity for us to explain the position of the Government of Iraq on certain questions connected with the very substance of this matter. At this preliminary stage of the consideration of item 127 of the agenda we shall confine ourselves to making some general comments, without however going into detail concerning the draft declaration on the deepening and consolidation of international détente or the draft resolution on the prevention of the danger of nuclear war, both of which have been submitted by the Soviet Union. At a subsequent stage in our discussions we shall speak in detail on these matters in accordance with the decision taken by this Committee on its work programme for this session.

First, the principles relating to the deepening of détente and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war are among the very foundations of the policy of non-alignment which Iraq considers to be the corner-stone of its foreign policy. Some of my colleagues, representatives of non-aligned countries, have mentioned

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

this point and referred to the Declarations of the Bandung Conference and the fifth Summit Meeting of non-aligned countries held in Colombo in August last year. For our part, we shall mention only the resolutions of the first Conference held in Belgrade in 1961, when the danger of confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies was the first question to be studied by the participants in that Conference. The Belgrade Declaration laid stress on the need to adopt practical measures to put an end to confrontation and bring about détente. Further, that Declaration stated that the policy of blocs constituted a genuine danger to world peace and the future of international relations.

The Belgrade Conference also called for urgent measures to be adopted in the field of disarmament and stated that non-aligned countries should participate in all discussions relating to disarmament.

Secondly, the other non-aligned Conferences have reaffirmed those ideas so that there can remain no doubt about the paramount role played by the non-aligned movement in changing the structure of international relations and in the creation of a new political and economic order governing those relations based upon interdependence, respect for the rights of all countries and renunciation of the policy of domination and hegemony.

I would add that any attempt to use the policy of détente as a pretext for consolidating the existing situation, to impede the progress of the liberation movements and to prevent peoples from exercising their right to self-determination and sovereignty over their natural resources should be resisted firmly. Along with other non-aligned countries we insist that international détente should be genuine and general and not come about at the expense of small countries. Nor should it be based on dividing up zones of influence or maintaining the interests of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism and racist minority régimes in southern Africa and occupied Palestine.

Thirdly, as we see it, détente should mean that countries which dominate the world economy and world trade must be prepared to give a favourable response to requests from developing countries which desire the

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

establishment of a new world economic order based upon recognition of their legitimate economic rights and mutual interest in international relations. The fact that the industrialized countries are not in any hurry to satisfy these aspirations is one of the major sources of tension in international relations and a fundamental obstacle to the creation of the new international community to which we aspire.

Fourthly, as we know, certain Western circles, particularly in the United States, are ceaselessly striving to use the policy of détente with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries to exert pressure against them so that immigration to Israel and occupied Palestine can be accelerated. They use to this end all the media of information and policy that they have at their disposal. We condemn these attempts and we insist that concerted efforts be made to put an end to them. The Foreign Minister of Iraq spoke of the danger posed by this immigration when he mentioned the problem of Palestine in the general debate in the plenary Assembly a few days ago.

Fifthly, with regard to the prevention of the danger of war, and nuclear war in particular, the Republic of Iraq reaffirms its unwavering position with regard to the need to turn away from the present phase, in which negotiations are based on the limitation of the arms race and putting an end to the stock-piling of nuclear arms in view of the dangers it poses, towards the taking of practical and effective measures to reduce nuclear armament and bring about full and complete disarmament.

We therefore want measures taken to reach an agreement on the total prohibition of nuclear tests. We reaffirm that it is necessary to strengthen special arrangements to prevent the expansion of nuclear arms in the world and the implementation of treaties concluded to this end, and, similarly, with regard to the application of United Nations resolutions, to create denuclearized zones in the Middle East.

We state that it is necessary for the developing countries to benefit from nuclear technology for economic purposes.

Sixthly, and finally, the delegation of the Republic of Iraq would like to stress the role of the United Nations in bringing about the objectives inherent in the Soviet initiative. We believe that the weakening of the role of this Organization and the failure to respect the principles of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations are the fundamental reasons for the tension which exists and for the maintenance of the danger of war in Arab countries, particularly in southern Africa.

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

Among the new foundations of the new international order, which we look forward to and for which we are striving, is the strengthening of the United Nations so that it can have the opportunity to play its role fully and to see that its resolutions are complied with and that the fundamental principles to which we are all committed by our signing of the Charter are complied with.

Mr. ARNELLO (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me first of all, Sir, to express the satisfaction of my delegation at your election as Chairman of this Committee and to congratulate you and the other officers of the Committee.

The fact that the item under discussion may be the object of comments on other occasions makes it unnecessary at this time to take too much of the time of the representatives, and therefore in a very few minutes we shall refer to some interesting aspects brought forward in the discussion of yesterday and this morning.

The item proposed by the Soviet Union has two different aspects: the deepening and consolidation of international détente on the one hand, and the prevention of the danger of nuclear war on the other. It seems to me at first glance that it is difficult to reconcile the idea of discussing these two questions jointly. It would appear to be rather unpleasant to feel the presence of the danger of nuclear war unless détente is somehow connected with it. In other words, to link up détente necessarily with the prevention of nuclear war might appear, to say the least, to be restrictive or something that in some way conditions peace.

Chile is a peaceful country and its love of peace, as can be seen throughout its history and as reiterated in its adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter, has made it possible for my country to live in peace for many years and to hope to do so for many years to come. It does have some remarks to make in respect of détente, but none the less it supports it.

(Mr. Arnello, Chile)

My Foreign Minister, in his statement before the plenary General Assembly, said that the Chilean Government supports détente because it is:

"... a means of lessening international tension and because, to the extent that it is applied in good faith, it dispels the threat of world conflict."

He added:

"Nevertheless, we feel that for the process of détente to be valid, it should be extended to all nations. Only then will its ultimate aim, the maintenance of peace, become real and effective, responding to the moral desire of mankind." (A/32/PV.21, pp. 41 and 42)

In order to analyse détente we have to acknowledge some of the political facts that condition it. Yesterday, we listened with very special attention to the assertions made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and India, for instance, which we fully and sincerely share. The ideas they put forward were expressed with such clarity and eloquence that it is hardly necessary for us to repeat them. But, apart from this, in respect of the political aspects of détente we must recognize at least two things. Détente is a policy between the super-Powers, a policy of super-Power blocs. It was born of a need to create a policy to replace the one that existed during the so-called cold war period, the cold war which, through the so-called deterrent means, sought to prevent war by deterring the enemy.

But the cold war has consequences which we are all more than acquainted with and which for many, in particular for primary-commodity-producing countries, represented enormous prejudice in those cases where the materials they produced were strategic.

(Mr. Arnello, Chile)

Obviously, détente seeks to prevent the danger of war; obviously, it seeks to replace the cold war policy by promoting trust and confidence between the super-Powers, among blocs of nations, while progressively and increasingly promoting normal relations. But as we understand it, it involves a thesis of balance, the idea of neutralizing with one's own forces the forces of the adversary. In other words, in this sense we understand that détente is not the synonym of peace, nor is it the only means, the only policy conducive to peace.

The countries of the third world have not asked for a policy of détente in order to live in peace and to maintain international relations of peace with other nations. I repeat, we support the spirit underlying détente which should be truly applied in all the policies of the super-Powers vis-à-vis other States, that is to say, not only between those countries themselves but in their relations with all countries in the world. In our view, this implies a number of things. It makes it essential, first of all, to spell out the content of this concept of détente. This is no easy task.

The word "détente", to begin with, and the translation of that word is inappropriate; many of the translations are even contradictory. In Spanish, the translation of "détente", the word "disensión" in Spanish, means precisely the opposite of what we are trying to say. In my language the meaning of the word "détente" is not the relaxation of tension, which we assume "détente" means, but rather to carry that tension to the extreme - in other words, the opposite.

In English - perhaps not by chance, because English is such a precise language - there is no accurate one-word translation and we have to find a whole sentence to express what we mean. Even the French word itself is imbued with that meaning of balance, of armed equilibrium since, as representatives know, it means a trigger, an instrument which prevents a shot from going off but which none the less can fire the shot as well.

If we consider the concept underlying the word, we find that that too is imprecise, that parties to détente interpret it as meaning a number of things. If we look, for instance, at the definition given by the

(Mr. Arnello, Chile)

Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union in his statement, and if we look at what is said, for instance, in the Helsinki Final Act, we see undeniable differences in emphasis between one and the other. If we attempt to spell it out, on the other hand, through the specific application of détente in the world over the years that that policy has been in force, we do not find it very useful either, because it has only been applied in part. That application has been questionable, I would even say at times unjust, and there have even been moments when it has seemed like a mockery. In the years of détente we have seen undue interference in the internal and external affairs of other States; we have even witnessed support or subversion in other States, and even armed support of confrontations in some parts of the world, to say nothing of the ideological warfare that still continues. In other words, its application does not make it possible to spell out the actual content of this concept either.

We feel that these imprecisions, these difficulties, because of the inappropriateness of the concept or the word, call for a prior effort before we can use it in instruments which, one way or another, mean that they grant this the nature of a substantive principle of international law, or some substantive law of an international juridical order.

We believe that at this time it is important, as was stated by one representative yesterday, to revert to the principles of the Charter, duly to assess and consider them, to study items such as the one before us in the context of what we find in the United Nations Charter and its principles, while analysing policies in their due world context. We must therefore carefully study the views of the third world countries whose representatives have spoken here and which show how, once again, it is necessary to determine behaviour and policies in keeping with the required respect for United Nations principles, the rights of men and nations and the most open good faith in international relations in our quest for peace and respect for human beings.



The CHAIRMAN: Ambassador Amerasinghe of Sri Lanka wishes to speak to make a correction.

Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): I have asked to be allowed to speak on a point of personal explanation, and I am grateful for the indulgence shown me. I think it is important that I should make this explanation because, if I did not do so, there might be many Members who would take offence at what is reported in the verbatim record of my statement of yesterday.

On page 17 of the English version of the provisional verbatim record (A/C.1/32/PV.5) I am reported to have stated - and I am quoting from the first paragraph - that on another occasion I had described one of the causes of war as "the stupidity of nations".

I did not say "stupidity". I used the word "cupidity". I have to make this explanation now lest unnecessary offence be caused to my colleagues here. People might argue that there is not much difference between stupidity and cupidity, but I would never accuse others of an affliction from which I may suffer.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that the Secretariat has taken note of the remarks of the representative of Sri Lanka, and that the correction will be made accordingly.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.