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New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 14TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

INAUGURATION OF DISARMAMENT WEEK

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives may recall that the General Assembly at its tenth special session proclaimed the week starting 24 October - the day of the foundation of the United Nations - as a week devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament. Disarmament Week was observed for the first time last year when the First Committee held an inaugural meeting. Following the precedent set last year, we are gathered here to observe Disarmament Week which, by the symbol it represents, has a direct relationship with the very substance of the agenda of this Committee.

At this time, I have the honour to read a message from the President of the General Assembly:

"The establishment of the United Nations was in response to the inevitable necessity to provide for alternatives to confrontations and wars. It was a practical proclamation of the resolute commitment of the States founders of this Organization to the establishment and maintenance of a new world which would be more secure and more harmonious, without dependence on armaments and general military strength. The decision taken by the General Assembly during its tenth special session, to proclaim the week starting 24 October as a week devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament, is therefore significant in that it links the desire of the international community to seek peace with the day of the founding of the United Nations.

(The Chairman)

It also symbolizes the desire of nations to embark on the pursuit of the elimination of instruments of war, which cast a grim shadow on the future prosperity of mankind and indeed threaten its very existence.

"Not only have the stockpiles of armaments and the arms race been a source of tension and insecurity, they have also affected the developmental process of the world. The imbalance between the luxury of exorbitant military expenditure and the necessity for developmental expenditure requires much serious dedication and determination to redress. The poverty and squalor which coexist side by side with such unnecessary spending on armaments represent a serious challenge to the declarations and resolutions of the United Nations which are designed to promote the objective of development and particularly to facilitate the establishment of a New International Economic Order. All citizens of the world must participate in the common endeavour in pursuit of this noble goal, and so as to secure their full and effective participation it is imperative to increase their understanding of the dangers of the arms race and the need for its cessation. In observing Disarmament Week, all nations must resolve to take concrete measures in order to mobilize world public opinion, thereby generating the required international atmosphere conducive to implementing practical steps leading to the cessation of the arms race and working towards general and complete disarmament.

"But while it is of great importance to launch a programme of promoting global awareness, it should be recognized that such endeavours will have a limited effect in so far as the actual cessation of the arms race and disarmament are concerned if nations do not make firm commitments to follow them up with the political will to disarm.

"Further, while it is desirable that all nations initiate and carry out the dissemination of related information through the mechanisms of international and national forums, extensive collaboration and co-operation through exchange programmes between nations may be necessary to help those who lack the expertise and the technical experience. The establishment of the United Nations Fellowship Programme on Disarmament will undoubtedly make an important contribution towards that goal.

(The Chairman)

"In paying tribute to the unique role played by the non-governmental organizations in promoting public awareness of the dangers of the arms race and the necessity of establishing more rational policies responding to the pressing needs of the world, it is hoped that the United Nations Centre for Disarmament will intensify its activities in the presentation of information concerning the armaments race and disarmament. I further hope that the United Nations agencies concerned, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, will embark on a sustained campaign of activities aimed at facilitating research and publications on disarmament within their fields of competence. It is gratifying to note that concrete measures have been and are being taken to link the activities of the non-governmental organizations and those of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament.

"In commemorating this week as a week devoted entirely to fostering the objectives of disarmament, we should seek to promote dialogue and co-operation and be guided by the inherent desire for peace of the citizens of the world. We should work to ensure that the significance of the occasion is not diminished by its being permitted to degenerate into mere annual symbolic gestures. The occasion should, indeed, provide an opportunity to reaffirm our determination to redouble our efforts in promoting the objectives of disarmament and the implementation of the recommendations and decisions taken by the General Assembly during its tenth special session devoted to disarmament."

I now call on the first speaker, who is the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Martenson.

Mr. MARTEINSON (Assistant Secretary-General, Centre for Disarmament): The Secretary-General of the United Nations has asked that the following message be read on the occasion of the observance of United Nations Disarmament Week:

"United Nations Disarmament Week starts appropriately on the day on which we commemorate the founding of our Organization. The observance

(Mr. Martenson, Assistant Secretary-
General, Centre for Disarmament)

of this week is meant to remind ourselves and the world at large that the central aim of the United Nations is the building of a structure of durable peace and that that aim is yet to be fully attained.

"Durable peace does not mean merely the absence of general war. It means also freedom from the continual and pervasive insecurity which is engendered by an ever-accelerating arms race. When the General Assembly at its tenth special session decided that a week each year should be devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament, it acted in full awareness of the unique threat which is confronting humanity today. The threat is that of self-extinction due to the competitive accumulation of the most destructive weapons ever produced.

"Disarmament reflects the basic urge of peoples throughout the world to ensure the continuation of organized life on our planet and to live a life free of want and fear. That urge has been thwarted not by the legitimate concern of security, whether of a nation or a group of nations, but by the belief that security is best assured through superior military power. In the contemporary age, that belief no longer corresponds to realities. Superior military strength does not necessarily bring greater security. The arms race, whether in the nuclear or in the conventional field, follows its own deadly dynamics.

"The point at which complete deterrence can be claimed to have been gained by one party over another through the acquisition of weaponry never remains stationary. In the process, a steadily increasing proportion of the world's resources is being consumed in the pursuit of an elusive and ever-receding goal. Currently, more than \$1 billion are being spent daily in the ongoing arms race. That figure in itself illustrates the distortion of priorities in a world in which two thirds of the population live in hunger and in poverty. This is the consideration behind the General Assembly's call on all States to abandon once and for all the use of force in international relations and to seek security in disarmament.

(Mr. Martenson, Assistant Secretary-
General, Centre for Disarmament)

"The Final Document of the tenth special session indicated how the process of disarmament could be initiated and systematically maintained. Principles and priorities were agreed upon to provide a realistic and comprehensive framework within which disarmament issues could be dealt with effectively by a revitalized and representative machinery in the deliberating and negotiating process."

(Mr. Martenson, Assistant Secretary -
General, Centre for Disarmament)

"The Disarmament Week then is a time for reflection and stock-taking. The fact must be acknowledged that not enough efforts are being made to achieve real measures of disarmament. To allow the loss of the impetus which was created by the special session last year would cause widespread disappointment.

"As we enter a new decade - the decade of the 1980s - there is a real need to prove that the General Assembly is seriously addressing itself to the most pressing problems on the global agenda.

"To prevent the danger of nuclear war, to halt the arms race, to begin the actual process of disarmament, to arrange the gradual transfer to development of resources now being used for military purposes and thus to help establish a New International Economic Order - these are the goals towards which concrete steps need to be taken if the expectations of the world's peoples are to be fulfilled.

"The implied issues may be complex, but what they together involve is nothing less than the shape and, indeed, the survival of human society on earth".

The CHAIRMAN: Representatives of the regional groups have expressed the wish to address the Committee on this occasion.

I now call on the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I have the honour to speak at this meeting of the First Committee, devoted to the inauguration of Disarmament Week, on behalf of the countries of Eastern Europe. In accordance with the decision taken at the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, devoted to disarmament, this is the second consecutive year in which Disarmament Week is being celebrated, starting on 24 October.

In this connexion the Governments and peoples of the socialist countries again reaffirm their resolve to continue their tireless struggle to

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

strengthen peace, to guarantee security, and to develop and deepen the process of détente in international relations and supplement it with détente in the military sphere.

The principal threat to peace and international security and to the lessening of tensions in the interest of the independence of peoples and their economic and social development is the continuation of the arms race and the increase in its tempo and scale. There can be no stable peace so long as there is in the arsenals of States a massive growth in potential means of destruction which, even today, would be sufficient, if they were used, to threaten the very existence of mankind. That is why the delegations of the socialist States consider that the most important task in international politics in our time is that of ensuring the speediest possible progress in all the negotiations on the cessation of the arms race and on disarmament that are now taking place, and in those that might take place in the future.

The attitude of principle of the delegations of the socialist countries towards the problem of the curbing of the arms race is well known. There is no type of weapon or armament that the socialist countries would not be prepared to limit or to reduce on the basis of strict compliance with the principle that no damage must be done to the security of any country as a result. Whether it be on a European or a world-wide scale, and whether it be applicable to specific regions or to the whole planet, the socialist States are ready to conduct negotiations on all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race.

The socialist countries have frequently introduced, in the United Nations and elsewhere, carefully calculated and constructed proposals aimed at halting the extremely dangerous stockpiling of the means of destruction and annihilation. Some of these initiatives have already borne fruit in the form of international legal documents and have become an integral part of the development of relations between States. For the realization of other initiatives, further collective efforts are required on the part of all countries genuinely interested in disarmament.

It is no accident that Disarmament Week should begin on United Nations Day. Created, as it was, as a result of the victory over the forces of militarism and aggression, this most universal and authoritative international Organization has

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made a decisive contribution to the narrowing of the material basis for the waging of war with the proclamation of the noble purposes and principles embodied in its Charter. The extensive discussion at the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly of practical ways to bring about the cessation of the arms race and disarmament also was useful and important. Now it is important to take practical steps to put into effect the ideas and recommendations of the Final Document adopted at that special session, and to make even further intensive international efforts aimed at the transition towards genuine disarmament. This objective should be contributed to, in particular, by the discussion now taking place in the First Committee on the various disarmament questions, as well as by the decisions that this Committee will adopt.

In this International Year of the Child, in response to the appeal by the Secretary-General, Disarmament Week will be observed under the slogan "Support for Disarmament - For the Sake of All Children" (A/34/436, para. 33). In the socialist countries children enjoy the most privileged possible position. Their upbringing and concern for their most comprehensive harmonious development have become the foundation of the legal approach to children in our countries. All the peoples of the world are basing their hopes and aspirations on the growing generation. Every clear-thinking person will understand the manifest truth that the accumulation of military arsenals contains within it a horrible threat to the future of mankind. That is why the delegations of the socialist countries appeal to all States and their Governments to embark steadfastly on a course of unswerving adherence to a policy of peace and easing of tensions, to refrain from a policy of hegemonism and from the use or threat of the use of force in international relations, and to move forward resolutely towards progress in the cause of disarmament.

Progress in the elaboration and implementation of measures to put an end to the arms race and of measures of disarmament is possible, but in order for it to become a reality the efforts of all States must be united.

The CHAIRMAN: I call upon the representative of Paraguay, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American States.

Mr. CABELLO SARUBBI (Paraguay) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a great honour for me to address this important Committee on the subject of disarmament on the occasion of the beginning of Disarmament Week. My delegation, whose representative is serving as the current chairman of the Latin American Group, would first like to express its total and warm adherence to any measures that may be or can be adopted to achieve disarmament.

Many words - perhaps too many words - have been spoken in this Assembly in praise of the concept of disarmament. In order not to run the risk of repeating myself, I shall endeavour to be brief and succinct.

The recent decades in mankind's history have purportedly been devoted to mankind's development. The commitment undertaken by the nations here present was to engage in a total struggle towards that end. And this, apparently, has been the major activity of the United Nations over the past twenty years. Now, however, that we are nearing the end of the second Development Decade, we are beginning to realize with increasing clarity that famine and poverty cannot be banished from the earth unless we devote to that struggle the vast sums that mankind - in keeping with its violent past - continues to devote to the senseless and incessant arms race.

In Latin America - and I say this with the pride of a Latin American - serious efforts have been and are being made in the arms struggle. The inter-American system was established in order to devise machinery and institutions capable of guaranteeing some control over armaments, particularly nuclear weapons, through the well-known Treaty of Tlatelolco. Such efforts have been complemented by the creation of additional machinery to ensure the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts.

Both these efforts, the first addressed to the control of armaments and the second to strengthening the machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes, have contributed to the region's growing development and have enabled enormous

(Mr. Cabello Sarubbi, Paraguay)

resources to be allocated to the economic and social progress of man, and not to his extermination.

We are fervent believers that there can be no development without peace, and that there can be no peace without disarmament. We believe that the growing social and economic needs of mankind, which are in some cases of a vital urgency, must take precedence over the selfish hegemonism of certain nations -- and certainly over the satisfaction of seeing one's own ideas prevail by force.

If mankind is not prepared to take the road of tolerance and dialogue and to abandon irrational and arrogant ideologies, it will be extremely difficult to find peace and therewith to divert the great resources being poured into the arms race towards satisfying mankind's most crying needs.

We believe, without false modesty, that our region has chosen the proper road, and that its example should be emulated by all the other regions of the world.

Lastly, and in accordance with all I have just said, I believe that I am properly interpreting the feelings of all Latin Americans when I say that we support the convening of a World Disarmament Conference that will be totally devoted to action, and not only to mere words. All mankind is tired of so much violence and death, and it is now time for us faithfully to translate that feeling into action.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Canada, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States. /

Mr. BARTON (Canada). This is the second time that we in this Committee have inaugurated the week of 24 October as Disarmament Week. Speaking on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States, I am confident that members of

(Mr. Barton, Canada)

this group are also marking this day and week by special statements or ceremonies in their own countries. The members of the Group of Western European and other States have special reason to want to abolish war and to strengthen the conditions of peace, including the reduction and ultimate elimination of weapons of mass destruction. We have known too much war in our not-so-recent past. We are determined not to allow the horrors of war, including now the inconceivable effects of the use of nuclear weapons, to devastate once again the lives of our peoples.

It is often remarked that disarmament is a goal, and not a policy. Even as a goal, we do not really know what it means. What we do know is that modern weapons represent a threat to the security of all nations, and that balanced and gradual measures of arms control and disarmament would help to reduce this threat, as well as release significant resources for more productive purposes. Such measures are too few. However, the fact that negotiations are continuing on various aspects of nuclear weapons, on chemical weapons and on limiting forces and arms in Europe is significant. Moreover, it is a positive sign that the General Assembly remains seized of the many proposals and the initiatives introduced at its special session in 1978. These will bear fruit if we give to them the serious attention and commitment that they deserve.

Today is also United Nations Day. The United Nations has come to assume a more important role in disarmament affairs, both as a deliberative forum and as a centre for research and education in disarmament. The group I represent believes that public discussion and debate on these subjects is vital if there is to be understanding of the issues underlying national and international security. We speak at the United Nations as representatives of Governments. The work of the Secretary General and his staff is done on behalf of all of us, as well as to further the principles and objectives of the Charter, and I take pleasure on this particular Day in paying a tribute to him and his associates, particularly at the Centre for Disarmament, for their invaluable assistance and support.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Ireland, who will speak on behalf of the Nine Members of the European Community.

Mr. FULLOY (Ireland): We have rightly set aside time in the deliberations of this Committee to allow delegations an opportunity to share their reflections on the commencement of this week dedicated to the objective of disarmament and the ways and means whereby this objective can most effectively be advanced. My delegation would wish to avail itself of this occasion to speak on our theme on behalf of the Nine States members of the European Community. The course of our debate in the weeks ahead will of course allow for adequate detailed elaboration of our positions on other items before us.

The Nine welcomed the decision of the first United Nations special session on disarmament to establish a week dedicated to disarmament, because it offered a timely opportunity for focusing international attention on the problems of disarmament and the compelling need for progress towards their solution. It was, of course, with deliberate purpose that the date of 24 October was selected to initiate an annual Disarmament Week, since that date also commemorates the foundation of the United Nations system. Thus the occasion helps us to emphasize the contribution which the United Nations has made in the past to the promotion of measures of arms control and disarmament and the central role which it will continue to play in the furtherance of such efforts. The occasion also helps us to situate the question of disarmament within the global context of the goals and priorities which have been set for this Organization and its over-all effort to encourage the peaceful resolution of conflict and tension, promote justice and come to grips with the problems of our ever-growing interdependence.

For the Nine States progress towards disarmament and arms control has a special urgency and a clear significance within this larger framework. For, if it is true that conflict and tension within the international system have complicated our efforts at disarmament, it is equally true that real progress in disarmament can improve the climate of international relations and encourage other endeavours of co-operation at the international and regional levels. And, furthermore, progress in reducing tensions, in making détente a more viable and universal process, can provide a stimulus towards measures of disarmament. We are all aware of the dangers inherent in the arms race and the threat which the present high levels of armaments could pose. The arms race

(Mr. Mulloy, Ireland)

can be halted only if progress is made on concrete effective measures of disarmament and arms control. Moreover, resources which are released as arm races in disarmament is made could be used for furthering necessary economic and social programmes and in facilitating the social and economic progress of the developing countries.

The essential purpose of the week is, of course, to enhance the awareness of public opinion concerning the question of disarmament so that there can be a constructive and balanced debate of all aspects of the problem. Governments can in turn benefit from the useful contribution which informed public opinion can make to their consideration of the issues which arise both in a national and in an international context. More than a few of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly had their origins in the workshops or symposia organized by non-governmental bodies which have provided a forum for specialists, both private and governmental, to exchange and enrich their viewpoints.

The nine were especially appreciative of the degree to which so many groups and organizations followed with interest the preparatory and deliberative stages of the first special session on disarmament. The dedication and imagination with which they approached the range of problems which all States Members of the United Nations confronted at that session was a helpful stimulus to our efforts. The publications which they issue continue to provide wider knowledge of the tasks we all face and of the continuing need that we now give effect to the undertakings contained in the Final Document of the special session. During the present week the many activities organized at the initiative of private groups and organizations within the States Members of the European Community testify to the seriousness and importance with which the question of disarmament is regarded by public opinion within our nine States. We wish these activities and similar activities in other States every success.

It is of course the overriding responsibility of Governments to engage in and contribute to efforts to halt the arms race and provide a political climate within which the urgent negotiation of arms control and disarmament measures can be facilitated. The nine, at the regional and global levels, have engaged in activities to that end. In this connexion they sought individually and collectively to play an active role in the deliberations of the special session

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on disarmament and contribute towards its success. By establishing for the first time an international consensus within a single text on principles and a programme in the field of disarmament and on necessary institutional machinery, the Final Document points the way to practical progress on immediate issues in the period ahead. Within the competent bodies the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Committee on Disarmament - the effort has begun to give effect to that consensus.

The Nine participated actively at the first substantive meeting of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, during which consensus was reached on elements for a comprehensive programme on disarmament. A number of the Nine are also actively engaged in the work of the Committee on Disarmament, where negotiations are under way on a range of issues identified in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament, such as a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons tests and the prohibition of chemical and radiological weapons. The Nine States members of the European Community will continue to work for the successful utilization of the deliberative and negotiating machinery in which they are engaged so that concrete steps are taken to halt the arms race, strengthen security and lay a firmer basis for a more stable peace.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Ambassador Yango of the Philippines, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States. |

Mr. YANGO (Philippines): It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Asian Group.

Today we begin Disarmament Week for the year 1979, the second of the weeks of its kind which we inaugurated in 1978 in pursuance of the decision of the General Assembly adopted at its tenth special session, devoted to disarmament. That decision proclaimed the week starting 24 October - the day of the foundation of the United Nations - as one devoted to fostering the objectives of disarmament.

The motivation behind the observance of Disarmament Week is to stimulate and mobilize world public opinion towards the achievement of a primordial goal

(Mr. Yango, Philippines)

of the United Nations, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In my view, this proclamation of the General Assembly was one of the most significant and far-reaching decisions taken at the tenth special session, devoted to disarmament.

It has only been in the recent past that we have come to the realization that popular and world-wide support of the goals and objectives of disarmament is necessary and indispensable. We must all concede that world public opinion could and should be an influential factor in the ongoing negotiations on the various issues of disarmament, so that we may expeditiously attain the supreme goal of general and complete disarmament. It is not only Governments which should be aware of the issues relating to disarmament but also - and more importantly - peoples ruled by those Governments who should be informed, enlightened and educated on this most vital problem.

Only a handful of the States Members of the United Nations could observe, in one way or another, Disarmament Week in 1978, but I expect that many more will be able to participate in this observance in 1979 and that a much greater number still will do so in succeeding years.

Pursuant to resolution 33/71 D, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1978, the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a model programme which might assist States in working out and planning their own local programmes for Disarmament Week. We now have the report of the Secretary-General (A/34/436), to which is annexed a document entitled "Elements of a model programme for Disarmament Week". A reading of this document will show that it could indeed be extremely useful in helping Governments in mapping out their own activities in observance of Disarmament Week. And it is for this reason that I have made the statement that many more Member States will observe Disarmament Week in 1979 than in 1978, and that even more will do so in the coming years.

(Mr. Yango, Philippines)

The main recommendation made by the Secretary-General to foster information relating to disarmament is the use of such mass media of communication as newspapers, publications, magazines and books as well as radio and television. Beyond that are such activities as symposia, seminars, conferences and meetings. The use of all these means of communication would not only impart information to, enlighten and educate the masses but also encourage them to participate and to contribute their opinions. What is really envisaged is a national programme of activities on Disarmament Week which would highlight a different aspect of disarmament each year, such as, for instance, nuclear disarmament, disarmament in conventional weapons, disarmament and development, or disarmament and international security.

Although the programme of activities of each year may carry a different theme, it should always be geared to fostering and promoting the objectives of disarmament. I am most hopeful that the time will come when all States Members of the United Nations will have their own programmes in observance of Disarmament Week, thus resulting in the total mobilization of world public opinion.

The report of the Secretary-General is not an end in itself; it is merely the beginning. Governments will continue to look to the United Nations for guidance and assistance in keeping alive the yearly observance of Disarmament Week. The Centre for Disarmament will be kept busy producing and disseminating materials, whether printed, taped or recorded, for the use of Governments at their request.

I also foresee bigger and better programmes for Disarmament Week in the future through interaction not only between national Governments and the United Nations but also among governmental and non-governmental institutions, educational organizations and research institutes. We should be deeply grateful for the decision taken by the General Assembly and for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Centre for Disarmament in implementing that decision. They have all contributed to an auspicious ground-breaking for a programme in the observance of Disarmament Week in the future.

The CHAIRMAN: I call upon the representative of Lesotho, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. THAIJAE (Lesotho): I have the pleasure of addressing this meeting and of participating, as Chairman of the Group of African States at the United Nations during the month of October, in the inauguration of Disarmament Week.

The horrendous potential for destruction inherent in the armaments race has been the subject of discussion in many different forums, and I shall not devote any time to the analysis of what the military arsenals of States Members of the United Nations represent in terms of international security and of their contribution to the economic and social deprivation of millions. The inauguration of Disarmament Week represents a beacon of hope for the millions of unarmed peoples of Africa, on whose behalf I speak, and also for the rest of the peoples of the world, who share with us a yearning for an assured peace of mind and a security from bodily harm and destruction that may result from war.

We can only express the hope that Disarmament Week will provide us with an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the spirit of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament and also to renew our efforts in the direction of achieving complete and total disarmament. It is obvious that we cannot hope to realize in only one week much that we have failed to achieve in so many years, but a renewal of our commitment to the ideals of peace and harmonious relations among nations of the world, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, is necessary if progress, however sluggish, is to be made in the search for a disarmed world that would be free from the threat of a nuclear holocaust.

The people of Africa share the concern of the rest of the peoples of the world at the ever-increasing arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons of the States Members of the United Nations. The prospect of a future nuclear catastrophe is as alarming as the frequency of limited

(Mr. Thamae, Lesotho)

and localized skirmishes, which occur now and then in different parts of the world. The diversion of meagre resources by developing countries to the importation of arms for purposes of self-defence must be seriously examined, as such a policy finds its roots in the obvious threat posed by the huge arsenals stockpiled by the developed countries and the ease with which those countries have resorted or threatened to resort to the use of force against developing countries.

We are therefore of the opinion that the occasion of the inauguration of Disarmament Week will not become an annual ritual with no purpose and no end result. It should be used for purposes of strengthening international détente and mobilizing international public opinion to support the principles of disarmament. It is true that disarmament can only take place in an international political climate which makes it possible. That is why we consider the resolution of political disputes and tensions to be an essential ingredient of disarmament. We cannot over-emphasize the benefits of a world free from disputes, without necessarily being utopian, especially with regard to the amount of financial aid and human resources that would be released for human economic and social uplift.

I shall not conclude without giving a fair acknowledgement of some encouraging steps made in the direction of disarmament. The SALT II treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics constitutes a milestone in the direction of complete nuclear disarmament. We must express the hope that negotiations on SALT III will start very soon and that these negotiations will be broad enough to include all the members of the two major military alliances.

We are not disheartened by the lack of progress in the disarmament negotiations that were held in Geneva last summer, as we can see that this lack of progress is only an indication of the complexity of the problem of disarmament. Should it be clear beyond any doubt that the lack of

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political will on the part of some Members of our Organization is about to render the search for disarmament fruitless, the countries of Africa will not hesitate to warn the international community of the dangers inherent in such a development. As has been said before, there is no single human endeavour which matches the arms race in wastefulness and lack of imagination.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to advise the Committee that on the occasion of Disarmament Week we have received messages from the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and from the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The texts of those messages are being distributed.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.