



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 18TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CARASALAS (Argentina)  
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 TO 57, 133, 136, 138 AND 139 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. PEREZ RIVERO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): The prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests for an indefinite period and in all environments has enjoyed high priority in those forums in which there have been negotiations in the field of disarmament in the last 20 years. The United Nations General Assembly has also adopted numerous resolutions urging the immediate conclusion of a treaty to that end. However, despite the efforts made by many States, it has not yet been possible to realize that goal, which is undoubtedly a measure of the utmost importance if we are to put an end to the nuclear-arms race.

Certain States continue to act in the international arena from positions of strength and are intent on creating further major obstacles to prevent realizing this aspiration of the overwhelming majority of members of the international community, such as, for instance, by the fabrication of verification problems, thus calling into question even the efficiency of the scientific experts working in the field.

Aspects of verification which 10 years ago appeared to be insurmountable today no longer exist. All that is needed to make effective a ban on nuclear-weapon tests is a political decision. The reports drawn up by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events prove that this is true.

In their reports the experts argue irrefutably that verification regarding the nuclear-weapon-test ban can be carried out effectively through the establishment of an international network for the exchange of seismic data wherein the national means of technical verification would play an essential role. All States, without exception, should have access to that data and should take an active part in the verification process.

(Mr. Perez Rivero, Cuba)

That system, in the view of virtually all Member States of the United Nations, would adequately ensure compliance with a treaty on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.

Ten years ago the Secretary-General of this Organization stated:

"I believe that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have been so fully explored that only a political decision is now necessary in order to achieve final agreement ...

"When one takes into account the existing means of verification by seismic and other methods, and the possibilities provided by international procedures of verification such as consultation, inquiry and what has come to be known as 'verification by challenge' or 'inspection by invitation', it is difficult to understand further delay in achieving agreement on an underground test ban." (A/37/27, p. 23)

Today it is not so difficult to understand that delay if we bear in mind that the refusal to put an end to nuclear-weapon tests is not an isolated fact, but on the contrary is in line with the general strategy of imperialism, which seeks to impose itself at all costs while disregarding the opinion of the overwhelming majority of States.

How is it possible to introduce new elements of delay in respect of verification, in order to assume the guise of being interested in negotiating while it is stated unblushingly at the highest levels that, quite simply, there will be no negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests?

According to information provided by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), by the end of 1981 833 nuclear explosions had been carried out. One of the States which today refuses to negotiate the prohibition of such tests heads that list with 390 explosions. That State is to carry out no less than 16 nuclear tests in 1982 and it is reported from other sources that on 23 September last in one single day it set off three explosions, this being the first time in the history of underground nuclear-weapon tests that so many explosions were set off in less than 24 hours.

(Mr. Perez Rivero, Cuba.)

But this is nothing new if we bear in mind that that State was the initiator and impelling force of the arms race, essentially in the nuclear sphere. It was the first to create the atomic bomb and use it; the first to build strategic intercontinental bombers, nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers, multiple independent re-entry vehicles and the neutron bomb.

Moreover the present Administration has doubled the budget for nuclear tests as compared to the budget of the previous Administration, from \$169 million to \$354 million. This shows that there can be no real desire to carry out negotiations to prohibit nuclear-weapon tests, as the facts show.

It may be easy to deceive the majority once, but it is not easy to keep deceiving it for long, and this Committee must bear this reality in mind in order to recommend that the Committee on Disarmament be requested to initiate specific negotiations to ban nuclear-weapon tests. We have had enough of "exchanges" and "considerations"; what we need now are negotiations.

On the other hand, we must bear in mind that to refuse to negotiate and to prevent the holding of negotiations to ban nuclear-weapon tests constitutes a violation of the contractual obligations assumed in more than one disarmament treaty, where it is stated that those negotiations must be promoted.

(Mr. Perez Rivero, Cuba)

Another subject on which we cannot feel too optimistic relates to the prohibition of chemical weapons. Here too there are obvious contradictions. When the Committee on Disarmament began its negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons it did so on the basis of a restricted mandate which actually put a curb on the whole endeavour. Subsequently that mandate was extended, but at the same time certain States took a decision to begin production of binary chemical weapons, thus unduly complicating the whole negotiating process. With the emergence of binary chemical weapons a whole series of chemical agents that had hitherto been used for peaceful purposes were raised to the category of agents of warfare.

Binary systems have introduced new problems concerning the definition of toxicity, and verification in particular, thereby stimulating the chemical-weapon race. Binary weapons, moreover, offer the possibility of being produced by allied countries separately and partially, which complicates the whole verification process, or, at least, could tempt countries to try and prevent verification.

At the present time the decision to produce binary weapons is becoming more dangerous, and a whole factory is being built for the production of binary neurotoxic gas munitions. It will be ready by 1983 and have a monthly production capacity of 20,000 155-millimetre shells. Production is also slated to begin on 500-pound binary VX spray bombs, designed to be dropped from aircraft, and plans are in the works for the manufacture of binary warheads for a whole series of rockets and missiles, including the land-launched cruise missile.

These are matters that should be taken into account when we assess what has been accomplished in this field and what still remains to be done.

The resolution we adopt on the subject should recognize these facts and reiterate the requests made of the Committee on Disarmament to intensify its negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Moreover, we should call upon all States to refrain from carrying out any actions that might create further obstacles in this field.

(Mr. Perez Rivero, Cuba)

The last matter to which I wish to refer in my statement today relates to security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. This is another priority item in the work of the Committee on Disarmament, where the situation is very complex. Let me say, first of all, that the final objective of our work is the adoption of an international, legally-binding instrument that will guarantee the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons. My country, as everyone will recall, has itself suffered the effects of threats and nuclear blackmail; recently we all witnessed similar threats against other non-nuclear-weapon States in the very midst of the tensions of war.

The possible adoption of a Security Council resolution on the guarantees we are demanding would be only provisional in nature and would represent but a step towards the achievement of an international instrument on the subject. Moreover, in order for that resolution to be effective, it should contain identical declarations by all nuclear-weapon States.

Before the holding of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the non-aligned and neutral members of the Committee on Disarmament adopted a document wherein they indicated that the unilateral declarations made on so-called negative guarantees by some of the nuclear-weapon States included unacceptable conditions and exceptions; they involved subjective elements and were based on the policy of nuclear deterrence. In that same document the non-aligned and neutral countries requested all nuclear-weapon States to give proof of good will and to review their policies on the subject.

What happened at the second special session is well known to all: some nuclear-weapon States ratified their policy of nuclear deterrence, and only the Soviet Union introduced the laudable element of renouncing first-use of such weapons, which, apart from making a valuable contribution to security guarantees, introduced one of the few positive elements we witnessed at that second special session.

This matter should also be taken carefully into account by this Committee so that it may recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a resolution that will again request the Committee on Disarmament to undertake specific negotiations on the subject.

(Mr. Perez Rivero, Cuba)

We must bear in mind in that request the renunciation of first-use of nuclear weapons by all nuclear-weapon States since, apart from strengthening guarantees for all, it is a basic measure for preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war, which, it must not be forgotten, is still the absolute priority of the overwhelming majority of United Nations Members.

Mr. VO ANH TUAN (Viet Nam) (interpretation from French): The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam wishes to join the other delegations in extending to Ambassador Gbeho of Ghana its sincere congratulations upon his election to the post of Chairman of the First Committee and to wish him every success in the performance of his duties in guiding the work of this important Committee. Our congratulations go also to the two Vice-Chairmen and to the Rapporteur.

It is with great pleasure that we address our warmest congratulations to Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico on winning the Nobel Peace Prize, a richly-deserved tribute to his outstanding contribution to the cause of peace and disarmament. The Vietnamese delegation wishes, similarly, to congratulate the Swedish delegation on the honour that has been conferred upon it by the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Mrs. Myrdal as well.

The general debate at the present session of the General Assembly, like the debate that took place at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, highlights the growing concern of the international community over the continuing deterioration in international relations, coupled with acceleration of the unbridled arms race, especially in nuclear arms, which increases the danger of a nuclear catastrophe. Accordingly, the prevention of nuclear war has become the top priority of our day, the most pressing and urgent task at the present stage.

Despite the fact that imperialist, colonialist, Zionist and racist forces - sworn enemies of peace - are bent on inflaming tensions and blocking disarmament efforts, the peoples of the whole world, aware of the danger of a nuclear catastrophe hanging over mankind like the Sword of Damocles, have mobilized in anti-nuclear-war movements on an unprecedented scale. Huge gatherings, marches and other demonstrations have taken place this year on all continents: in Japan,

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

where the horrible consequences of the use of atomic bombs against defenceless civilians are still to be seen in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; in Europe, the main theatre of two world wars, where peoples are resolutely opposing the installation of American medium-range missiles and the deployment of neutron bombs and chemical weapons on their territories; and even here in New York, where a million people gathered in Central Park during the second special session devoted to disarmament and demanded the adoption of specific, urgent measures to prevent a nuclear catastrophe.

The Vietnamese people, which has continuously had to live in conditions of war or threat of war for the past 37 years while the peoples of the world were enjoying the longest period of peace of this century, yearns to live in peace. Thus it is that our people is actively and enthusiastically participating in national as well as international peace efforts. Recently, more than 15 million Vietnamese participated in demonstrations, meetings, seminars and the collection of signatures - all in favour of peace and disarmament.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

On 21 September 1982, on the occasion of the successful conclusion of the national campaign for peace and disarmament and in celebration of the International Day of Peace proclaimed by the General Assembly, the Praesidium of the General Committee of the Vietnamese Patriotic Front and the Praesidium of the Vietnamese Committee for Peace made public a joint declaration reflecting the unwavering adherence of the Vietnamese people to the ideal of peace and its firm will to work for the cause of peace and disarmament.

We are bound to observe that the preoccupation of peoples concerning the threat of a nuclear war is unfortunately all too well founded. According to the data available, existing nuclear arsenals are more than sufficient to destroy life on earth several times over. In the meantime the arms race is continuing at an accelerated pace, with the development and manufacture of new and ever more deadly nuclear weapons, such as the neutron weapon, which are opening the way to what could be called a new, and most dangerous, phase in the arms race in weapons of mass destruction.

It is no secret to anyone that the deep-rooted cause of the alarming situation is the pursuit of military supremacy on the part of the most aggressive forces of imperialism. These forces are in the process of elaborating various doctrines and methods for conducting nuclear war, which they describe as either limited or global, a quick strike or a "long" war, and they are deploying strategic offensive forces in the illusory hope of being victorious through being the first to resort to nuclear weapons. At the same time, a psychological climate is being created in which the use of nuclear weapons could become acceptable or admissible: an attempt is being made to accustom people to the idea of the possibility of a nuclear war. In this connection, the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries held at Havana on the eve of the second special session devoted to disarmament emphasized clearly that

"... no doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons can be justified under any circumstances." (A/S-12/AC.1/1, p. 2)

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

The allegations concerning the supposed military superiority of and military threat from the Soviet Union, as well as the mendacious slander concerning the imaginary use of chemical weapons in Kampuchea and Afghanistan, allegations fabricated by the United States to justify that policy of worldwide hegemony, their vast rearmament programme and their obstructive policies in the negotiations on disarmament, cannot stand examination. Undeniable facts demonstrate that since the end of the Second World War the United States has always been the first to develop new weapons and new systems of weapons, thereby provoking a further escalation in the arms race. As for the so-called military superiority of the Soviet Union, the general opinion is that this is a myth. That is the opinion of the thirty-first Pugwash Conference and of the Palme Commission. Experts, and even politicians, in the United States clearly recognize that at present there is an approximate military balance between the two great Powers. What is extremely serious is that the Pentagon has drawn up the so-called "first strategy for a prolonged nuclear war", according to which American armed forces would have to be prepared to strike, not only at the Soviet Union but also at its allies such as Cuba, Viet Nam, and so on. That report is from The New York Times of 30 May 1982. The answer to the question of where the danger of nuclear confrontation is coming from is therefore quite clear.

Since the beginning of the atomic era, the international community has constantly tried to work together to avert the threat of a nuclear war, and has achieved certain concrete results.

Multilateral treaties such as the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 1971 Treaty on the seabed and the 1967 Treaty on outer space were drafted and adopted during periods when the international situation and East-West relations were not ideal, in particular because of the aggressive war of the United States in Viet Nam. That demonstrates that with political will on the part of all concerned, concrete measures for the limitation of the arms race are always possible.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

The bilateral treaties between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic weapons (SALT I and SALT II), on the limitation of nuclear underground tests in 1974, and on nuclear tests for peaceful purposes in 1976 constitute important measures on the path towards the limitation of the strategic arms race and of the qualitative perfecting of nuclear weapons. However, to the present day the majority of these treaties have been shelved by the American side. Such an attitude is certainly to the taste of the devotees of the arms race.

For a long time the complete cessation of nuclear tests has been considered by the international community as a high priority question. It would be a significant contribution to the goal of nuclear disarmament to put an end to the qualitative perfecting of nuclear weapons, the development of new types of such weapons, and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It would also make it possible to allay the grave apprehensions about the harmful consequences of radioactive contamination on the health of present and future generations. Important treaties on the cessation of nuclear weapons have been signed. However, they are only partial treaties and all the nuclear Powers are not parties to them. That is why the majority of States are seeking the complete prohibition of all nuclear tests without exception, as well as the conclusion of the corresponding treaties.

In the tripartite negotiations for the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests that started in 1978, whose encouraging results have been communicated to the Committee on Disarmament in 1980, agreement has almost been reached on the whole of the draft of the future treaties. However, it is to be regretted that these negotiations have been broken off unilaterally by the American side. Recently, the American President announced that the United States would never resume negotiations and would not ratify the treaties of 1974 and 1976 signed with the Soviet Union concerning the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests and underground tests for peaceful purposes. This negative attitude constitutes a violation of the Treaty on non-proliferation of 1963, under which all parties, including the United States, undertook to put an end for all time to nuclear tests. That is further evidence that the United States wishes to have its hands free to continue its nuclear tests in order to develop and manufacture new generations of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan Viet Nam)

The new proposal of the Soviet Union concerning the immediate cessation of nuclear-weapon tests together with basic provisions for a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, can help the international community to emerge from the present impasse. For the purpose of creating favourable conditions at the time of the negotiations on the drafting of such a treaty, all States are invited to refrain from carrying out any experimental explosions of nuclear weapons, whatever they may be, and to institute a moratorium on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

This important initiative, which was based upon experience in this field acquired up to the present and which takes into account the views expressed by several States, could open the way to early agreement on a question of high priority provided that other parties, first and foremost the nuclear Powers, show the necessary political will.

This year the General Assembly has before it another initiative of major importance on the part of the Soviet Union: the placing on the Assembly's agenda of the item, "Intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy." This initiative, which comes after the General Assembly's Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, constitutes a new and effective measure aimed at reducing the nuclear danger. The practical necessity to raise this question is connected with the rapid development of the utilization of nuclear energy for non-military purposes and the serious danger represented by the deliberate destruction of nuclear installations, even with the use of conventional weapons - as was the case with the attack by the Israeli air force in June last upon the nuclear research reactor in Iraq.

According to the calculation of experts, the destruction of nuclear installations could provoke the spread of enormous quantities of radioactive substances, with lethal effects on the population, similar to the effects of a nuclear explosion. Thus the deliberate destruction of nuclear installations used for peaceful purposes would be tantamount to a nuclear attack and should be considered as the gravest crime against humanity. That is why my delegation is of the opinion that the need to ensure the security of the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is closely connected with efforts aimed at preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war. To that end the gradual reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons is a matter of urgency.

The Soviet proposal for a simultaneous freeze by all nuclear-weapon States on the production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, as well as on the production of fissionable materials intended for the manufacture of nuclear weapons, is a first important step in this direction. This idea of a freeze is realistic and feasible because it is based on the balance of strategic weapons existing between the Soviet Union and the United States. It is in keeping with the position of several non-aligned and neutral

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

countries, such as India, Mexico and Sweden, concerning the problems of the limitation, reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons.

The delegation of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam warmly welcomes the proposal of the Soviet Union to place on the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly the two important and urgent questions entitled, "Immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" and "Intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy". We fully support the measures proposed for that purpose by the Soviet Union. These initiatives, coming after the unilateral undertaking, of historic importance, never to be the first to use nuclear weapons and the proposal to sign a world treaty on the non-resort to the use of force in international relations are so many tangible proofs of the good will and determination of the Soviet Union to spare no effort to spare humanity from a nuclear catastrophe. The peoples of the world have the right to expect the other nuclear-weapon States to respond positively to the Soviet initiatives.

The obstructionist attitude of the United States in the Committee on Disarmament, at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean are a challenge flung at the will of the Member States, clearly expressed in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament:

"In the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility."

(General Assembly resolution S-10/2, para. 48)

At present the voice of the peoples of the world has joined with those of the overwhelming majority of delegations in the General Assembly and in this First Committee in asking that efforts be intensified to halt the arms race and prevent mankind from sliding toward the abyss of a nuclear war.

The Vietnamese delegation is ready to make its modest and constructive contribution to this common task. It is ready to support all initiatives towards that goal made by the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries, the neutral countries and other countries.

My delegation reserves the right to speak again on other questions relating to disarmament.

Mr. SRITHIRATH (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): In congratulating Mr. Gbeho most warmly on his election to the chairmanship of this important Committee, my delegation expresses the sincere hope that his personal efforts will make a positive contribution to the success of our work. My delegation was happy to learn that two indefatigable fighters for peace and disarmament, Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden and Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico, had been awarded the highest distinction in the form of the Nobel Peace Prize. That event will not fail to give new impetus to the cause for which we are struggling at present.

This year the climate in international relations is no better than it was in previous years; on the contrary, it is worsening, because it is dominated by the bellicose thirst for conquest and hegemony of certain imperialist circles. Consequent upon that attitude, we note the decision of the Government of the United States to increase its military expenditure and speed up the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction, such as binary and neutron weapons. At the same time the Government of the United States has imposed upon its partners in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization the demand for a substantial increase in their military budgets. Recently, in the course of the conference called the "Old Crows' Meeting", attended by the top brass of the Pentagon, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the so-called non-communist countries, it was said that "tomorrow's war is a daily reality" and that "if the third world war takes place it will be electronic and that will give the United States the best chance of winning it". The President of that conference went on to say:

"If we play the right cards, we can render obsolete a sizeable part of the Soviet arsenal. We must be much more inventive. What matters is to have the capacity to use all the new techniques in weapons." (Agence French Presse, 23 October 1982)

That approach coincides fully with China's thesis that a third world war is inevitable. Given that similarity of views, are we not entitled to worry about the fate of mankind?

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

To carry out these sinister designs, new doctrines such as "military supremacy", "first strike", "electronic war" and so on were accordingly invented, and this will undoubtedly lead to over-armament. Thus hotbeds of conflict and tension were created in various parts of the world, the consequences of which are extremely serious; in the South Atlantic the most sophisticated weapons were used in a conflict over the colonial acquisition of a territory; in Central America the threats by imperialism to use force against countries seeking a free political, economic and social development are commonplace; in the Middle East, where the doctrine of "strategic co-operation" has been implemented, we have seen the most hideous massacre of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians, and the senseless destruction of the Tamuz nuclear centre, used for peaceful purposes, by imperialist weapons; in South Africa the question of nuclear co-operation for military and expansionist purposes between the racist authorities and the Western countries has endangered peace and security in the region. Similarly, subversion perpetrated by those countries against the socialist and the developing countries, and their incitement to cold war through the progressive elimination of the approximate strategic military balance that exists between the United States and the USSR, between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, with a view to acquiring strategic military supremacy are additional reasons for profound concern by all the peoples of the world in the face of the threat of a nuclear war that could bring about the end of mankind and of civilization.

Thus the United States unilaterally broke off the tripartite negotiations on the question of the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing and withheld ratification of the SALT II Treaty, while intensifying the production, stockpiling and proliferation of weapons, in particular nuclear and binary weapons.

In such circumstances it is not surprising that the second special session on disarmament should have been doomed to failure, because the United States and its Western allies defended only their own interests, to the detriment of the highest priority represented by the survival of mankind.

Before this spectre of nuclear war, each nation, large or small, must fear for its future and the future of generations to come. Its supreme hope is that nuclear weapons will never be used. In recent years the world has been made fully aware of this wish. Hundreds of thousands of people in all corners of

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

the earth have gone into the streets to chant slogans like "stop nuclear war", "peace", "down with neutron bombs" and so on. These actions are neither isolated nor unconsciously spontaneous, but rather are born of a solid conviction and directed by well-organized national and international committees.

My country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which was a victim of the barbarous weapons of American imperialism, including chemical weapons, considers that the most urgent question of our time is the elimination of the nuclear threat. That is why it is actively engaged in preserving the climate of peace in the region, despite continued military threats from the north, and in working tirelessly for general and complete disarmament.

In this connection, my delegation is fully aware that to take the measures needed to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control and to prevent a nuclear holocaust will not be easy and will demand enormous sacrifices from us all.

However, we have not exhausted all our resources or lost hope, because our conviction that we must achieve peace is unshakeable.

In the past decade, a number of resolutions and solemn and pertinent declarations, even though far from perfect or comprehensive, have been drafted and adopted by the overwhelming majority of Member States of our Organization their partial implementation had barely begun when new generations of lethal and inhuman weapons appeared on the scene. That is why my delegation believes that the following steps are imperative. First, the great Powers, particularly the United States of America, must proceed without exception to dismantle all their military bases and facilities abroad and give back the territories they occupy to their respective countries, as well as accepting the concept of making the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace. Secondly, all militarily powerful countries must abide strictly by the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the non-use of force in settling disputes. Thirdly, the Governments of all countries must officially recognize and encourage the mobilization of the masses for the campaign for peace and disarmament. Fourthly, the non-nuclear-weapon States must declare that they will not authorize the deployment of such weapons on their territories.

(Mr. Srithirath, Lao People's  
Democratic Republic)

In the light of the foregoing considerations, my delegation highly appreciates the sincere efforts of the USSR, the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries and other peace-loving countries resolutely directed to halting the arms race and achieving general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

In this context, we find that the proposals of the Soviet Union submitted for consideration by the First Committee entitled "Immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests" and "Intensification of efforts to remove the threat of nuclear war and ensure the safe development of nuclear energy" are realistic, full of good will and worthy of serious consideration.

These wise initiatives of the Soviet Union demonstrate yet again its constructive attitude and its deep attachment to the cause of international peace and security. If all nuclear-weapon States undertook not to make first use of such weapons, as the Soviet Union has done, it goes without saying that nuclear war could be banished.

As the disarmament question is complex and encompasses various fields, my delegation reserves the right to speak later if necessary on specific subjects.

Mr. VITO (Albania) (interpretation from French): I should first of all like to present the congratulations of the delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania to the Chairman on his election to preside over the First Committee.

The debate devoted to disarmament problems is taking place shortly after the second special session, held in June of this year. Many of the delegations that have already spoken have rightly emphasized that it was a total failure and was not even able to produce a formal document. This was neither happenstance nor surprising. For a number of years, at regular and special sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, there has been lengthy debate on disarmament problems, and the concern of the peoples at the continuing intensification of the arms race has been voiced, but in fact no progress has been made in solving those problems. On the contrary, the situation has become more complicated and fraught with dire consequences.

(Mr. Vito, Albania)

In the present debate in our Committee, we are in the process of examining a large number of questions with regard to disarmament problems that have been debated at length at earlier sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. Each of those questions could be dealt with at length, but we feel it would be useless to dwell on each one of them, to delve into the technical aspects of the problems or to talk in terms of numbers. The data submitted by the United Nations and various specialized agencies for this purpose, albeit incomplete, are sufficient to show the colossal sums being devoted to armament, the harmful effects of that expenditure and the many barriers to genuine disarmament. That is why the delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania considers that it is better to concentrate on the main aspect of this problem and to highlight the causes and principal factors that impede the achievement of genuine disarmament. Disarmament problems cannot be viewed or understood in an equitable fashion unless they are examined in close connection with the present international situation. The course of events over the past few years shows that the situation in the world is fairly troubled and serious, fraught with risks and threats. The counterrevolutionary, expansionist and aggressive activity of world imperialism, and in the first instance of the two super-Powers, has been stepped up even further. Although the flames of a new world war have not yet been kindled, dangerous local hotbeds of war can grow into a major conflagration with serious consequences for the peoples. American imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, the other imperialist Powers and reaction, remain the source of all those tense situations and of the further aggravation of world events, the cause of all of the ills of mankind, of quarrels and discords among nations, of diversions and plots against the peoples, of fierce exploitation and of oppression in many countries or the instigators of war. The expansionist and hegemonist designs of the super-Powers affect not only certain particular zones or regions, but the whole of our planet. At present, there is no country or people that is not to some extent in one way or another touched and damaged by that policy or that cannot be the prey of their imperialist designs.

(Mr. Vito, Albania)

The distinctive feature of the policy of the two imperialist super-Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, is their aggressivity, their reliance on armed strength. An obvious expression of that policy is the frenzied acquisition of weapons and their continuous improvement, as well as the intensification of the arms race.

The leader of the Albanian people, Comrade Enver Hoxha, stated:

"At one time it was possible to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which ensured the United States and the Soviet Union the monopoly over such weapons, and even to conclude the SALT agreements, which set up the balance between the two super-Powers with regard to such weapons. Now, the two parties are caught up in a frenzy of armament that has blinded them and caused them to abandon all logic. The megalomania and arrogance of the super-Powers, which imagine that they can lay down the law for the entire world, are mitigated by their mutual fear and their terror of revolution."

The United States, through the ever-increasing growth and scope of its military potential, is trying to intimidate and terrify the peoples and to attack them, directly or indirectly.

The same activity and increased aggressiveness can also be seen in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. What at present characterizes Soviet policy is the over-all militarization of the country's life and the direct use of armed force against various other countries.

The fierce rivalry for hegemony between the two super-Powers is daily taking on greater proportions, spreading to every continent and sea and ocean and even into outer space. In those circumstances, not only can there be no question of achieving any early concrete results in the field of disarmament, but, on the contrary, it is clear that the arsenals of all types of weapons - conventional, chemical, bacteriological and even nuclear - are constantly being increased. The concerns and efforts of the super-Powers are not concentrated on the goal of limiting weapons, but on increasing their range and their destructive force.

(Mr. Vito, Albania)

Together with the uninterrupted improvement of weapons, sales of armaments are now reaching enormous proportions. It should be emphasized that one of the purposes for inciting armed conflicts among various countries and creating areas of tension is the increase in the arms trade, which has become a vast business. Many countries are now engaged in this trafficking in death. The expenditures for the purchase of weaponry that the great Powers are imposing in various ways on the economically under-developed countries represent a heavy burden that impedes progress in those countries and the solution of the serious economic problems they are confronting.

The peoples of the world are greatly concerned by this tense situation created by the aggressive and warlike activity of the imperialist super-Powers and the other reactionary forces. They are aware of the consequences of this adventurist course and demand that those who are trying to push the world towards war be restrained and that ways and means should be found at all costs to rid the world of the heavy burden and anxiety that has overtaken it, in order not to advance towards an inevitable catastrophe. An open expression of the peoples' rebellion and of their concern is the powerful demonstrations and protests of the working masses in many countries of the world against the military bases and nuclear weaponry of the super-Powers. It is for that reason that the super-Powers, by pursuing their acquisition of arms and preparations for war, are at the same time engaging in both deceit and demagogy. They are attempting to create the impression that Soviet-American negotiations and so-called peace initiatives are the key to general and complete disarmament. However, facts prove the contrary. All the mutual agreements, treaties, arrangements and compromises between the United States, the Soviet Union and the other imperialist Powers are designed to serve their own selfish aims and interests. As such, they can never contribute to bringing about disarmament and can certainly in no way serve the strengthening of international peace and security. The signatures that have thus far been affixed to worthless treaties have not prevented the super-Powers from continuing their nuclear-weapon tests or from preparing new programmes for the production of all kinds of weapons.

(Mr. Vito, Albania)

This can be seen not only in their already bulging arsenals, but in the scale of their efforts towards increased integration within their aggressive military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, in order to reactivate former broken-down blocs and create new military alliances.

Imperialist and revisionist demagogy with regard to disarmament, détente, the balance of forces and the "interdependent world" is designed to conceal the true goals of imperialist policy and to make the super-Powers' diktat the law of international life. The proposals and promises made here by representatives of the super-Powers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and to freeze their arsenals and reduce them are purely and simply mystification and demagogy.

The delegation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania wishes to repeat its opinion that genuine disarmament cannot be achieved by the outdated proposals and empty promises served up and advocated from time to time by the super-Powers here in the United Nations and outside this Organization.

That is why a large number of representatives of countries that aspire to genuine disarmament have quite rightly highlighted the fact that sterile debates are not enough and that genuine disarmament cannot be achieved by increasing the number of resolutions. The interests of the peoples demand that disarmament questions be couched in a totally different way from that favoured by imperialism and social-imperialism and that there be determined opposition to the arms race and the illusions according to which disarmament can be achieved given the will and under the aegis of those possessing the largest arsenals of weapons.

In the prevailing international conditions, it is absolutely necessary that the peoples redouble their vigilance with regard to the aggressive policy of the super-Powers and to their preparations for war. In order to progress towards the solution of disarmament problems it is essential that, first of all, concrete measures be taken to eradicate the aggressive blocs of imperialism and social-imperialism, to dismantle their military bases, to ensure the withdrawal of foreign troops from the countries in which they are stationed and to expel the naval forces of the two imperialist super-Powers from the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and other seas.

The People's Socialist Republic of Albania considers that disarmament, peace and genuine international security can be realized only when the peoples adopt effective measures to stay the hand of the aggressor.

Mr. MBAI (Kenya): I wish to associate my delegation with the previous speakers in extending to Ambassador Gbeho our warmest and sincerest congratulations on his election as Chairman of the First Committee. His election is a great tribute to our sister African country Ghana, with which Kenya shares warm brotherly relations, friendship and co-operation.

I also extend my delegation's congratulations to the other officers of the Committee and wish them success in the discharge of their enormous responsibilities. I need hardly add that I assure them the full co-operation of the delegation of Kenya.

At the same time, I wish to take this opportunity warmly to congratulate Ambassador Garcia Robles and Mrs. Alva Myrdal for the great honour bestowed upon them by the Nobel Peace Committee.

It is hardly three months since the second special session devoted to disarmament was convened. We regret that the outcome of that special session was not encouraging. Most regrettably, the second special session on disarmament failed to agree on the comprehensive programme for disarmament and to identify the root cause of the lack of progress towards disarmament negotiations. We deplore the failure to review the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament and its implementation programme, especially the Programme of Action on multilateral disarmament measures and machinery. However, we cannot underrate the importance of the series of proposals that were submitted during the second special session on disarmament. Of singular importance was the reaffirmation by consensus of the Final Document of the first special session as the guiding gospel in disarmament negotiations.

Further, we note with appreciation the support given to expanding the fellowships programme and activation of the World Disarmament Campaign.

The deterioration in the international climate and the intensification of production of new generations of strategic theatre and tactical weaponry, to replace earlier generations of weaponry, is of great concern to us. Given a situation in which everyone is striving to acquire "king atom" for military purposes, no progress can be made in disarmament negotiations unless national priorities are changed and geared towards higher achievements in the

(Mr. Mbai, Kenya)

utilization of the atom for peaceful purposes. We therefore call upon all States, particularly those with large nuclear arsenals, to intensify effective bilateral and multilateral negotiations on specific agreements for arms control and reduction, both nuclear and conventional.

The current international concern expressed about the nuclear arms race and imminent self-destruction would be incomplete if the dangers of both extended horizontal and vertical proliferation were not given sufficient attention. Kenya believes that there is no substitute for negotiation on arms limitation and disarmament. Such negotiations must provide for verifiable agreements. It is clear to us all that verification cannot be underestimated; it is a prerequisite for any anticipated success in the disarmament negotiations. Kenya supports the development of international verification procedures in order to enhance confidence that the parties involved are complying with the agreed terms. We regard verification as the most important test of seriousness to contribute to a climate of confidence.

The call to have the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace was explicitly articulated by Kenya's Foreign Minister, Mr. Robert Ouko, as follows:

"... the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace is not a political slogan; rather, it is imperative for our own security in our attempts to safeguard our territorial integrity." (A/37/PV.20, p. 107)

In that connection, Kenya fully supports the call for an international conference to review and consider all the aspects of this problem. We believe that, granted a more stable political climate and a greater harmonization of views on the issues involved, such a conference would eventually offer the best method of achieving the objective of the establishment of such a zone of peace.

I turn now to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It is a welcome gesture that more than two thirds of the Member States have so far acceded to the NPT, which over a period has made a substantial contribution to international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Kenya

(Mr. Mbai, Kenya)

views the NPT as the springboard of the international non-proliferation régime. Taken together with the wide-ranging safeguards administered by the International Atomic Energy Agency, it promises a guarantee of the peaceful intent of nuclear activities which is essential for the establishment of a climate of confidence. However, Kenya is concerned that many States not parties to the NPT and not bound by the safeguards agreements are developing and constructing a nuclear explosive capability.

At the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, this Committee saw the urgency for action to complete a comprehensive test-ban treaty on which the participating nuclear-weapon States were urged to conclude their negotiations. Kenya is deeply disappointed at the slow progress. We cannot but appeal for the earliest resumption of the trilateral negotiations.

Another area of the highest concern to Kenya and most of the developing countries is the close triangular relationship between disarmament and socio-economic development. Conservative statistics have been published on this, including the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/36/356, which present some considerable shocking data on the enormous resources consumed by the world-wide armaments build-up. My delegation appreciates the efforts being made at last, particularly by the United Nations, to establish a link between disarmament and development; however, by and large, most of those attempts have remained in the realm of concepts.

A relationship between the arms race taking place predominantly in developed world and poverty - the dominant pattern in the developing nations - is yet to be perceived, not to mention established.

My delegation understands the constraints on the overview which is meant to underscore the immense obstacles to evolving a consensus view of the issues involved in disarmament and development. However, the growing concern about the future availability of the vital non-renewable sources of energy and other raw materials should strengthen the plea and commitment for reducing consumption of such materials in the avoidable field of the arms race.

(Mr. Mbai, Kenya)

Finally, let me close my statement by quoting the following from the sentiments expressed by Thomas Hobbes:

"The controlling factor in human life is that 'inner force' which compels man to seek his own self-interest; especially to avoid injury..."

The chief object of man's desire is self-preservation, and what man wants to avoid is the loss of life. Man wants to be sure of his life and possessions.

Mr. MARINESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): A few days ago we put forward the views of the Romanian delegation on all the disarmament questions, emphasizing on that occasion that we give pride of place to the cessation of the arms race and to disarmament and, first and foremost, to nuclear disarmament, in the context of efforts made by the international community to improve the present political climate and consolidate world peace and security.

I should today like to dwell further on a subject that is of continued concern to the Romanian Government, as reflected in the proposals submitted by it on the subject to the General Assembly, including the special session this year. I am referring to the question of the freezing and reduction of military expenditures. Consideration of this question at the current session benefits, too, from the Secretary-General's report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures, a document rich in ideas which eloquently reveals the profoundly harmful effects of the continued accumulation of weapons and of the squandering of material and human resources it entails for the economic and social life of States. The ideas and conclusions contained in the report - which, incidentally, is the first to be prepared within the framework of the United Nations since the second special session - are amply confirmed by the profound concern expressed by States throughout the general debate at the staggering increase in military expenditures accompanied by the aggravation of the economic crisis. We shall revert to this important document in a separate statement. However, we could not fail to underline on this occasion certain conclusions in the report which, in our view, are especially revealing in relation to the subject we are touching upon today.

During the last four years, it is said in the report, military spending has risen faster than in the preceding four years. This alarming process of acceleration of the arms race and expenditures has taken place in an international political climate of exceptional gravity, in conditions where the hotbeds of crisis have been exacerbated by growing tensions among the leading countries involved in the arms race. Never in the past have so many resources been squandered for purposes of destruction and annihilation. The world has never shown so much resourcefulness in developing, deploying and accumulating new weapons and weapon-systems of ever greater destructive power, the production of which causes military expenditures to soar.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

This is all the more tragic since never before has mankind been confronted by needs so great and so pressing to ensure its economic and social development and to solve the serious problems confronting the international community and, above all, to the developing countries by the economic, energy and financial crises, by the deepening of the gap between the rich and the poor countries, and by the phenomenon of underdevelopment in its many aspects. Never in the past has economic development been so closely connected with the achievement of true progress in the field of disarmament.

The mindboggling amount of the resources swallowed each year by the arms race acquires its full significance not only by reason of the fact that military expenditures have reached the figure of \$600 billion. The unbearable burden they represent emerges in all its true light if we take into account the increasing share they represent as compared to the negligible resources devoted to the solution of the fundamental problems of mankind, such as energy, food, health or the protection of the environment.

Even deeper concern is aroused by the projection into the future of the continued spiralling of military expenditures. If we examine the curve followed by military expenditures, in particular during the last four years, and the foreseeable trends for such expenditures in the future, we see that by the year 2000 another \$15,000 billion will be spent on armaments and a further 8 million men will swell the ranks of military forces and the trade in weapons will reach the figure of about \$100 billion a year. The destructive power of weapons will be twice as great as at present. But, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General, the dynamics of the arms race is not limited to the total volume of military expenditures or to the growing list of participating countries.

The forces that guide it, the interests it serves and its varied forms of expression have transformed the arms race into a political phenomenon which affects global options in the economic and social fields. That conclusion arises not only in the case of the developing countries, for its implications are increasingly felt in the highly industrialized countries themselves. The continued increase in military expenditures and of military rivalry and competition that it stimulates have stifling effects on the economic life of

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

those countries and represent an ever more redoubtable barrier to the recovery and improvement of the economic situation. The excessive rate of growth of military expenditures maintains and increases budgetary deficits, represents a heavy burden on the balance of payments, reduces the resources destined for productive investments, aggravates inflation and unemployment and dramatically affects social assistance programmes - in a word, the conditions of life of the population.

Anyone who wishes to face reality will see that the present course of military expenditures offers very sombre prospects for mankind.

Far from inducing a sense of resignation, this grave phenomenon merely emphasizes the high priority and urgency of all measures aimed at halting the arms race, the freezing and reduction of military budgets. This is an imperative task which calls for immediate and sustained action, regardless of the difficulties to be overcome.

It is in this spirit that, like other States, Romania has consistently spoken out in favour of the reduction of military expenditures, either in percentages or in absolute figures. We wish to recall also on this occasion the proposal of Romania concerning the freezing of military budgets at the 1982 level and their reduction by 10 to 15 per cent by 1985, the resources thus saved being used to support the social and economic development of all countries, and in particular the developing countries.

As is well known, disarmament cannot be the work of a single country and less still of the small or medium-sized countries, the developing countries. The solution of disarmament problems, including the freezing and reduction of military budgets, calls for the political will of States, first and foremost of the nuclear Powers, of the most strongly armed countries, which should sit at the negotiating table and assume specific obligations by virtue of negotiated agreements applied in good faith. It is our firm conviction, moreover, that all States, large or small, important or less important from the military point of view, can and should make a contribution to the process that is called upon to promote the expression of that political will. As we pointed out in our previous statement, it is essential to bring a constructive approach to our work, to start not from the criticism or rejection of proposals by the other side, but rather from a desire to identify and develop common elements and possible guidelines enabling us to reconcile positions and to identify acceptable formulas with a view to achieving concrete agreements.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

In the light of those considerations my delegation considers that practical action aimed in support of efforts to reduce military expenditures should take three principal directions. First of all, we have in mind specific confidence-building measures capable of creating the conditions required to begin the negotiation of agreements on the freezing and reduction military budgets. All States, and above all, the most powerfully armed, could make a really valuable contribution if they showed moderation in their military expenditures and refrained from any measures likely to jeopardize the central purpose of future negotiations. One cannot over-emphasize the salutary effects that such moderation would have in the broader sphere of improving the international political climate, as a tangible proof of States' desire to begin negotiations on the cessation of the arms race and disarmament.

That is what the General Assembly had constantly in mind when in three consensus resolutions it appealed to all States, in particular to the most powerfully armed, to show moderation in their military expenditures pending the conclusion of agreements on the reduction of such expenditures, and to reallocate the funds thus saved to economic and social development, especially in the developing countries.

In view of the great political significance of that appeal, particularly in the present circumstances, we feel it would be appropriate to ask the General Assembly to repeat it, this time in more resolute terms. We believe that the good effects of such an appeal would be increased if the General Assembly were given a report at its thirty-eighth session on what action States have taken to moderate their military expenditures.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

Secondly, we have in mind the action already taken by the United Nations Disarmament Commission to define and elaborate on principles that should govern the actions of States in the freezing and reducing of military budgets. In this connection I wish to recall that at its last two sessions, the Commission began considering those principles, acting on a joint proposal by Romania and Sweden. In the opinion of the Romanian delegation, those principles would help to set up the general political framework for efforts to reach agreements on the freezing and reduction of military budgets and for an expression of the political will without which in this field as in all other disarmament areas, it is hardly possible to move on to specific negotiations.

We consider it all the more necessary to take this course, since in the consideration of the problem of reducing military budgets there are still conflicting approaches that are blocking any progress towards the attainment of that end. We believe that the elaboration of such principles will help to overcome those differences about how the question should be tackled, and to create the conviction that the reduction of arms expenditures would not be to anyone's disadvantage, but, rather, would be in the vital interests of all States and of peace, security and the development of all peoples.

Since the final aim of States in this field is the negotiation of agreements on the freezing and reduction of military expenditures under appropriate international control, the principles should clearly reflect the overridingly important concept that such agreements should in no way affect the right of States to equal security, or the balance of forces at the regional or international level. In the last analysis, the freezing and reduction of military budgets is one of the principal means of achieving a stable and sound balance of forces, which should be effected at ever lower levels of military expenditures and thus of armed forces and armaments.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

In our view, the principles to be adopted should also reflect the need for the most powerfully armed States to be the first to limit and reduce their military budgets. The influence of those States, in terms of world military expenditures and the policies they follow in that field, determines the pace of development of those expenditures at the international level. It is clear that the adoption by those countries of measures to freeze and reduce military budgets would be of the highest importance in halting the arms race and building confidence among all States.

In the view of my delegation, it would be especially important for the above-mentioned principles to reaffirm the link that should exist between the reduction of military budgets and the efforts undertaken at the national and international levels in favour of development, as well as the concept that the resources thus released should be used to support the economic and social advancement of the developing countries. We have always stressed the value of unilateral measures to freeze or reduce military budgets.

In this connection I wish to recall that for several years running now Romania has been unilaterally reducing its military expenditures, while devoting the funds thus released to the implementation of economic and social development programmes.

Like all disarmament agreements, those relating to the freezing and reduction of military budgets should provide for a verification system designed to ensure rigorous respect for the obligations undertaken. Hence we believe that one of the principles that should govern the activities of States in the field of the reduction of military budgets should be the existence of a guarantee that those agreements will be verified through adequate measures. The provisions of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, which provide that verification measures should be satisfactory to all parties concerned, should also apply to agreements on the reduction of military expenditures.

Obviously, those aspects relating to verification and to comparability should be an integral part of the conventions to be negotiated, and consequently cannot constitute prior conditions. The content of an international agreement and the methods for verification of its implementation constitute a whole which must be the subject of negotiations carried out in good faith and with the desire to achieve real measures for the reduction of military expenditures.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

The importance we attach to these principles impels us to request that the 1983 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission intensify its efforts to draft and complete those principles so that they can be adopted as soon as possible. We are convinced that the inclusion of those principles in a declaration by the General Assembly would be of special importance and significance because they would in fact represent a political commitment on the part of all States to promote the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

Lastly, the third course that our efforts should follow is the continuation of a thorough consideration of all technical aspects of the freezing and reduction of military budgets, including those relating to verification and comparability. We supported the work of the group of experts who prepared the machinery for publication of data concerning military expenditures of States and who considered the problems of their comparability. We appreciate that the United Nations efforts in this area are useful to the extent that they can provide solutions to certain technical aspects involved in the overall negotiations on the freezing and reduction of military budgets - and provided, of course, that they are clearly designed to attain that end.

At present those efforts relate primarily to a study of problems concerning verification and control. At a later stage it may be necessary for the same technical expertise to be directed towards other, equally important aspects such as those relating to the use of the funds that have become available as a result of military budget reduction measures for the benefit of the economic and social development of the developing countries in particular. The study on the relationship between disarmament and development, as well as the Secretary-General's report on the economic and social consequences of the arms race and military expenditures, draws attention to the complex problems of reconversion, and we believe that this aspect calls for a more detailed study.

(Mr. Marinescu, Romania)

While we are in favour of the continuation of the careful study of the technical aspects, we believe that the latter cannot be regarded as being exclusive or in any event a prerequisite for any practical action in this field. We wish to emphasize that the Romanian delegation is in favour of a constructive and flexible approach which would make it possible to identify the elements likely to bring about a rapprochement in the views of all States in the field of the reduction of military budgets.

Any action taken by the United Nations in the context of the Disarmament Commission and other bodies created by the General Assembly should be complementary and harmonized in a common effort with the final objective of the conclusion of international agreements on the reduction of military expenditures. Those are the views my delegation wishes to put forward on the question of the reduction in military budgets.

In conclusion, may I express the hope that a sense of the responsibility incumbent upon us and the obligations of the international community will prevail over the differences of opinion that exist in this field. Beginning with that premise, we envisage the possibility of undertaking consultations with the object of achieving a draft resolution that will command wide acceptance, will keep the door open and facilitate the action of States in favour of the limitation and reduction of military budgets.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt): It was my intention today to address the different items inscribed on the agenda of the First Committee. However, I choose not to do so at this stage. Instead, I shall make the following statement.

We are all aware of the deteriorating international situation and its adverse effects on the international drive in the field of disarmament. In the last few months we have witnessed serious developments in that field. The failure of the second special session on disarmament and its impact on disarmament efforts, activities and machinery, the growing tension between the two super-Powers and its serious implications are merely significant manifestations. What is most serious and alarming is the escalation in the arms race, accentuated by revealed intentions to pursue the massive build-up of armaments. This escalation has indeed reached a stage that could render our work here pointless. The attitudes of the two super-Powers so far have been of no help in creating the atmosphere conducive to ensuring and enhancing international peace and security and meeting the objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The General Assembly, which has proclaimed disarmament to be one of its major objectives, cannot afford to be indifferent to such dangerous developments. The primary role of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, that of maintaining international peace and security, makes it essential, especially at this stage, for the General Assembly, on the initiative of the First Committee, to take the necessary action to ensure that collective efforts are deployed to face the threat of the escalation of the arms race.

At this juncture, we deem it appropriate that the General Assembly express its grave and profound concern over the escalating pace of the arms race between the two super-Powers, which runs contrary to the principles and objectives of the United Nations. The collective responsibility of Member States should be emphasized, as provided for in the Charter. The two super-Powers which possess the largest nuclear arsenals have a special responsibility in this regard. The main objective is to check and reverse the arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race, in the framework of general and complete disarmament. We believe that the First Committee has a leading role in this regard. In fact we should like to emphasize that role and promote it.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

We have previously called for a certain degree of rationalization of the work of the Committee, as well as the whole spectrum of United Nations disarmament activities, be they negotiating, deliberative, research or administrative. Assuming that leading role, we believe that the First Committee should take appropriate action along the following lines: first, the expression of grave concern over the escalation in the arms race, both in its qualitative and quantitative aspects; secondly, a reiteration of the central role and the primary responsibility of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament; thirdly, the affirmation of the special responsibility of the two super-Powers to act in good faith and not to hamper the collective drive towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control; fourthly, the confirmation of the priorities agreed upon in the field of disarmament, and as illustrated in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament; fifthly, the affirmation of the objective of undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces. In short, we firmly believe that the General Assembly should act promptly in the face of the serious events that could lead to an uncontrolled deterioration in the work towards achieving disarmament and consequently in international peace and security.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I am sure that the suggestions made by the representative of Egypt will be examined in the proper way in the First Committee.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of their right of reply. On many occasions the words of the decision adopted by the General Assembly (34/401) have been read out in this connection so I shall refrain from reading that provision, with which all representatives are acquainted.

Mr. BARTHELEMY (United States of America): Ambassador Lodge replied in full yesterday to the baseless allegations concerning the United States made by the representative of the Soviet Union. Today we have been subjected to the same shop-worn rhetoric from the representative of Cuba, Viet Nam and Laos. We will not impose on the Committee's patience by again taking up the many misstatements which characterized those statements. All three representatives ignored the clear evidence of the massive and unprovoked Soviet military build-up over recent years, reinforced only two days ago by Chairman Brezhnev. Instead, they rehearsed a miscellany of published figures and viewpoints drawn from the free press of the United States.

We did not expect before they spoke that they would diverge in any respect from well-known Soviet positions, and they did not surprise us. In the 264 votes during the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly when the Soviet Union was present and voted, Cuba cast its vote with Moscow 90.9 per cent of the time; Viet Nam voted with the Soviet Union in 97.5 per cent of the votes; and support for Moscow from Laos was 98 per cent. So much for the independence of thought and national positions of countries such as these.

Such States, by propagating year after year charges which they know to be false and misleading, undermine the very fabric of this Committee.

Mr. NUNEZ MOSQUERA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): There is an old saying, "If the cap fits, wear it". In the statement by the representative of Cuba today, the United States was not mentioned by name, but facts are facts. The statement just made by the representative of the United States shows yet again that we are accustomed not only to hearing senators and film actors speaking for the United States but also to falsehoods, blackmail and pressure.

To my delegation, it is an honour that the representative of the United States should have mentioned Cuba among the group of countries to which he referred. It would have been shameful if he had placed us next to Israel, South Africa or the United States itself.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The Committee has now concluded the part of the general debate on disarmament questions included in our agenda.

Members of the Committee now have the opportunity to make comments, if they so wish, on the Medium-Term Plan of the United Nations (A/37/6).

The two parts of the document with which this Committee is concerned - the Introduction and chapter I, which relates to activities on political and Security Council affairs - are now before the Committee. Has any delegation any comment to make?

Am I to understand that this document, which is only tentative like any other plan which is not for immediate application, calls for no comment, objection or observation by any delegation in this Committee?

I understand that to be the case, and the Chairman of the Committee will convey that view to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.