



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. Roche (Canada)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 51 to 69, 139, 141 and 145 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Mr. HOULLEZ (Belgium) (interpretation from French): The Belgian delegation is particularly gratified to see the representative of Canada, a country that has been very active in the disarmament sphere, presiding over the work of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly.

Greece, as Chairman of the European Community, has already stated the views of the Twelve on a number of issues pertaining to limitation of armaments and disarmament. While fully endorsing the ideas that have been placed on record, I should like to elaborate on some aspects of Belgium's position.

It is encouraging to note that the positive developments in East-West relations continue to have a stimulating effect in numerous spheres, including the limitation of armaments and disarmament. Since the last session, contacts between the super-Powers have further intensified and have helped further increase the common ground they share. This approach based on dialogue and co-operation opens up new prospects.

We must be careful to seize every opportunity that comes our way in order to develop a global and common approach conducive to trust and transparency in all spheres, including military expenditures and budgets. This approach must be based on compliance with agreements already entered into.

Belgium would like to see the Twelve take part as such in this fundamental process of the improvement of East-West relations.

The Soviet Union and the United States have already embarked upon a programme of very ambitious dimensions. These two countries are working on new ideas to carry it out in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Henceforth verification is accepted as an integral part of the process, just like the principle of

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

asymmetrical reductions. The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, the INF Treaty, which has been acknowledged to be an important historic step, demonstrates this point. Who could have imagined just a few years ago that the presence of teams of inspectors of the two countries not only on their respective territories but also on the territories of third countries, including Belgium, was to become a routine matter and that their missions would be conducted in an excellent spirit of co-operation?

Belgium ardently hopes that this first nuclear disarmament agreement will soon be followed up by another, leading to a significant reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals. The advanced state of those negotiations entitles us to hope that those countries will succeed in overcoming the last technical hurdles so that their efforts will be crowned with success.

Referring still to nuclear disarmament, the question of nuclear testing also seems to have been enlivened by the dynamism of the new approach taken by the United States and the Soviet Union. Here again, the spirit of openness and co-operation is clearly evident. The progress made on experimental verification will lead the way to the ratification of the two bilateral treaties on the limitation of nuclear testing. These negotiations are also beneficial for the non-nuclear countries. We hope that at the Conference on Disarmament this prospect will induce the participants to take into account the Czech proposal on the mandate of a special committee to deal with the question of the cessation of testing.

Although Belgium continues to view the total, definitive and verifiable cessation of testing as the ultimate objective, we none the less note that the approach we have always advocated, that is, a gradual evolution linked to a parallel improvement of verification systems, is leading to concrete and encouraging results.

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

The recent initiative taken by certain countries proposing that the 1963 Moscow partial nuclear test ban Treaty be amended to convert it into a Treaty encompassing all nuclear testing is doubtless motivated by the same concerns. None the less we fear there are too many political and legal obstacles for it to be successful. The question of the cessation of nuclear testing cannot be isolated from negotiations in other disarmament spheres.

Another concrete result of the new spirit manifest in relations between the super-Powers in disarmament is the setting up of two nuclear risk-reduction centres, which has made a start on meeting a major concern.

In order to complete these remarks on nuclear questions, my delegation wishes to draw the Committee's attention to the need, when dealing with the various facets of this problem, to take account of the increasing proximity of the Fourth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, scheduled for 1990. Belgium hopes that the Treaty, which is as valid today as it ever was, will emerge from that exercise strengthened by new ratifications.

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

With regard to outer space, we are pleased to note the efforts being made to achieve an agreement preserving the authority of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, while at the same time guaranteeing security. Let us encourage the United States and the Soviet Union in their quest for common ground in these complex negotiations. The Conference on Disarmament could make its contribution by taking due account of these circumstances in its consideration of the matter and by avoiding initiatives that might impede the bilateral negotiations.

Here again the trust that is indispensable to any agreement will depend on the exchange of information, on transparency and on adequate verification measures, which will have to be adapted to the complexity of the problem. It is clear also that major reductions of strategic nuclear weapons will greatly facilitate the quest for a solution in this matter.

Belgium wishes also to refer to a recent development that has given rise to grave concern - that is, the proliferation of missiles intended for military purposes. This phenomenon could well aggravate the military destabilization in many parts of the world where the presence of those weapons, capable of all kinds of uses, could give renewed impetus to the arms race. Heightened international co-operation needs to be organized in order to halt that trend.

Members of the Committee are well aware of my country's interest in regional disarmament. For world peace can result only from an atmosphere of trust and balance in the various parts of the world. Any local conflict is fraught with the danger of degenerating into a widespread conflagration. That concern is shown by the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 42/39 E. What I have said explains the importance my country attaches to conventional disarmament in Europe, where we seek stability and security guaranteed by significant reductions of forces, in order to achieve real balance.

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

We hope that it will still be possible to start the new negotiations on conventional weapons this year and that they will lead promptly to the elimination of the principal asymmetries, whose existence is now acknowledged by all. The main emphasis will be placed on the chief categories of offensive forces capable of launching sudden or surprise attacks.

With reference again to the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), it is important to note that the implementation of the confidence-building measures drawn up at the Stockholm Conference two years ago is proceeding to the unanimous satisfaction of the parties concerned. This experience fully demonstrates the value of such measures in a situation as complex as that prevailing in Europe, where forces quite out of proportion to defence needs are concentrated.

We are aware that the efforts being made in Europe cannot be adduced as examples for other regions of the world, although disarmament can do a great deal everywhere to help bring about a climate of peace and stability. In many regions there is an urgent and mounting need for solutions in the sphere of conventional disarmament, but those solutions must be adapted to the circumstances, conditions and problems peculiar to those regions. Efforts to that end can be noted in a number of parts of the world, and we must encourage and sustain them. The fact that several pockets of regional tension are now being eliminated should help create conditions conducive to conventional disarmament efforts.

It is interesting to see that the awareness of the role and scope of conventional disarmament is constantly increasing. The trend towards trivializing conventional weapons by stressing the nuclear aspects of armament excessively or exclusively, can be dangerous and can distort the problem as a whole.

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

We can thus stress with satisfaction the growing interest in the problem of international weapons transfers and the role that the United Nations could possibly play in this field. Belgium is prepared to seek, with others, any acceptable solution to this problem, whose importance is often glossed over.

There are many hopeful signs concerning chemical disarmament, because of the constant progress achieved in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Unfortunately, they have been tempered by the repeated violations of the Geneva Protocol during the conflict between Iraq and Iran - violations that were confirmed by the missions of inquiry dispatched by the Secretary-General.

I think that we are all aware of the risks inherent in any violation of an international agreement, in the impression that could spread of the tacit condoning of infractions. That risk is of all the more concern because it affects an important principle of the international regulation of armaments, a principle that has stood the test of time.

We are nevertheless encouraged by the unequivocal condemnation and criticism of these violations. We welcome the idea of convening an ad hoc international conference on respect for the Geneva Protocol. That would enable the international community to understand the exact risks inherent in the state of affairs created by the violations, to restate its political determination to maintain the status of opprobrious weapon which the Geneva Protocol ascribed to chemical weapons, and to respect that legal instrument. On the other hand, this political determination will be expressed in a more radical and effective manner through the conclusion of a treaty for the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

Seen in that light, this international conference would meet Belgium's serious concerns, as expressed during this session of the General Assembly by Mr. Leo Tindemans, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Belgium is thus able to support this draft. We hope that the international community as a whole will be

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

able to react positively to it. This is a cause which concerns the future of all of us. It is in no one's interest to go back to the chemical wars of which some countries, including my own, have had such horrible experience, particularly when we know that technological progress could make such wars even more fearful, if that is possible, than they were in the past. The danger is there. It must be averted, first of all by a demonstration of the unanimous determination to respect the principle of the prohibition of the use of such weapons.

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

With regard to the current negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament, several developments this year enable us to view the future with confidence.

First, the voluntary notification of data pertaining to chemical weapons has begun. Good examples have been set and should be followed, as in the case of factories producing for peaceful purposes chemical products which are known to be suitable for chemical weapons. It would seem to be an elementary necessity to know what the international control measures of the future convention would apply to and the number of countries and installations involved. Secondly, there is international agreement on test inspections, which would be carried out autonomously by several countries. It would be useful to test the inspection procedures which are now being developed in the Conference on Disarmament in the most encouraging manner by the Working Group presided over by Mr. Numata of Japan. Thirdly, signs have appeared at this session of the General Assembly that a consensus is emerging on an essential principle of the future convention, that is, the total prohibition of the production of chemical weapons as from the entry into force of the convention.

Belgium expects of the Conference on Disarmament, to whose work my delegation, led by myself, intends to continue to contribute actively, a sustained but watchful effort to achieve as speedily as possible a good convention on chemical disarmament that is both as coherent and as effective as possible.

Following the Second Review Conference on the biological weapons Convention, measures were recommended to bring about greater trust and openness between the parties, and these were subsequently applied by a number of countries, including Belgium. The scientific progress that we are witnessing in the field of biology and related sciences is such that the use of that progress for military purposes

(Mr. Houlliez, Belgium)

would have incalculable consequences for mankind. We hope that more countries will demonstrate in practical terms their support for the Convention.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament should have been the high point of recent years in the sphere of disarmament. The second special session, in 1982, had not been able to arrive at a new final document and one had hoped that the third special session would not have a similar fate. The firm will to succeed existed; the number of constructive debates and the exchanges of ideas on an unprecedented scale are proof of that. But a consensus could not be reached on a final document setting out the main lines of our future efforts to reach the objective of arms limitation and disarmament.

This should not, however, lead to pessimism or resignation as far as future developments are concerned. All the participants acquired a deeper understanding of the problems. They know that the dynamics of disarmament will not be stopped provided that, first, useful lessons are drawn for the future from the wide-ranging debate on many questions and, secondly, the debate is not divorced from international realities.

The ideas put forward during the special session deserve closer scrutiny during the present session of the General Assembly. The Final Document of the first special session on disarmament remains a fundamental reference document in the field of disarmament, but disarmament requires, above all, concrete achievements. We must take advantage of the existing opportunities for better understanding and greater openness. It is thus that we shall achieve mutual trust, the essential basis for a future of peace, a peace that will be not simply the silence of weapons but a guarantee of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, and freedom with dignity for all men.

It is in that spirit that my country embarks upon the work of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly, in the hope that we shall all

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strive to enhance the effectiveness, and thus the credibility, of this Committee by rational and pragmatic work, by the amalgamation of similar draft resolutions and, above all, by seeking consensus resolutions, so that we may speak with one voice in favour of unanimously supported efforts.

Mr. ARNOUSS (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election as Chairman of the First Committee, and the other Officers of the Committee.

The present session is convening at an important stage in the disarmament process, after the world has seen the conclusion of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty. There has also been a tentative agreement between them on a 50 per cent reduction in offensive strategic weapons, in addition to a commitment on anti-ballistic missile systems and the imminent agreement on a ban on the use of chemical weapons and on nuclear testing.

At the same time the world was disappointed at the failure of the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to achieve agreement, because of major obstacles. That session, however, helped to enhance awareness of the areas on which efforts should be focused in the future, and highlighted the determination of States to strive to serve the common cause of ending the arms race, especially the nuclear-arms race, and achieving disarmament. The beginning of agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union strengthens the hope of specific progress towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The greatest threat to mankind is that of the outbreak of a nuclear war. It would be impossible to control any conflict in which one of the parties initiated

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

the use of nuclear weapons; that would lead to the destruction of the world. The obvious conclusion is that there would be no victor in a nuclear war; rather, the whole of mankind would be the loser.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

Since the theory of universal peace based on nuclear deterrents has been rejected by the international community and cannot be maintained, we must consider working together to eliminate such weapons. As a starting-point for this action it would be wise to reach agreement on a comprehensive ban on nuclear-weapon tests as early as possible in order to protect the environment and man from their harmful effects.

The fact that nuclear States continue to disregard their commitment to implement the resolutions adopted by the United Nations with regard to the comprehensive and complete ban on those tests increases the arms race and brings the world to the brink of a devastating nuclear catastrophe. Effective protection from the dangers of nuclear weapons can be provided only by comprehensive global action to end the nuclear-arms race and to prevent the proliferation of weapons. We believe that the nuclear States should make greater efforts to find a just and appropriate formula for agreement on arrangements to guarantee the non-use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. It is neither fair nor logical for non-nuclear States to remain open to the threat of the use of nuclear weapons against them while at the same time they are called upon to refrain from acquiring those weapons. Unilateral declarations by nuclear States are not, in our view, sufficient to promote tranquillity and confidence.

The failure of some nuclear States to comply with the principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has enabled the Pretoria and Tel Aviv régimes to acquire nuclear military capability and to develop it in a manner that threatens international peace and security. It is therefore essential that genuine and effective guarantees be provided to non-nuclear States against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons against them. As a serious step in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons the nuclear States and the world as a whole must work harder to increase the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

In this regard, the Syrian Arab Republic has fully supported the establishment of such zones and has stressed the need to transform the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Africa and other regions of the world into nuclear-weapon-free zones. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would contribute effectively to the security and stability of the region. In order to establish such a nuclear-weapon-free region, Israel must be compelled to comply with the resolution of the General Assembly by acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and by placing its nuclear installations under the safeguard régime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Moreover, as a basic condition for the establishment of such a zone Israel must destroy its nuclear arsenal and desist from the development and production of those weapons.

Moreover, the policies of the apartheid régime in South Africa and its collaboration with its counterpart in Tel Aviv, which has been condemned by the international community, prevent the implementation of the provisions in United Nations resolutions calling for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. Such policies threaten both Africa and the Middle East and jeopardize international peace and security. Appropriate international action must be taken, including the imposition of a nuclear ban and binding sanctions against the Pretoria and Tel Aviv régimes in order to force them to place their nuclear installations under the safeguard régime of IAEA, in implementation of United Nations resolutions. Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons jeopardizes peace and security not only in the Middle East but also in the world as a whole.

The Syrian Arab Republic supports the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and the efforts to convene an international conference for that purpose. The Syrian Arab Republic also supports the call by the Democratic

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People's Republic of Korea to transform the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone of peace free of military bases.

The Syrian Arab Republic co-sponsored the request to include in the agenda the item proposed by the States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty, entitled "Implementation of the conclusions of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and establishment of a preparatory committee for the Fourth Review Conference". We hope that the General Assembly will be able to adopt a resolution on that item.

The international community has unanimously recognized that outer space is the common heritage of mankind. Hence, we must expand international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. The essential condition for the achievement of this objective lies in keeping outer space free from all kinds of weapons, and this includes preventing the development, testing and deployment of space weapons systems in outer space. There can be no end to the nuclear-arms race and that race can be reversed only by putting an end to those activities. This must be followed by an agreement to prevent the militarization of outer space. This is absolutely necessary for the achievement of comprehensive, universal security based on an international régime free from violence and nuclear weapons. The international community has expressed its firm opposition to the Star Wars programme and to the extension of the arms race to outer space. Moreover, the involvement of Israel in this programme as a strategic ally of the United States of America only serves to increase the danger of such a programme and constitutes a continued and direct threat to the cause of peace. This involvement has been characterized by increased activity in respect of those plans and allows Israel to acquire the latest technology with regard to the use of nuclear weapons. This enhances its nuclear military capability and strengthens its settler, colonialist, expansionist policy in the occupied Palestinian territories and other occupied Arab territories.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

The Syrian Arab Republic draws attention to the fact that the strategic co-operation between the two countries allows Israel to develop and produce nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including weapon delivery systems, such as planes and missiles, and provides it with all the means necessary to strengthen its military capability with a view to achieving its aggressive objectives.

In this context, the launching by Israel on 19 September 1988 of the man-made satellite OFFEQ will increase the arms race in the region and leave it open to further threats. Were it not for the co-operation between those two allies, Israel would not have achieved such an objective.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

In confirmation of this, Moshe Peres, the Director of the Israeli aeronautical industries stated after the launching that important technology was used in launching OFFEQ-I. This satellite will be used for espionage and aggressive purposes, as stated by Mordechai Gur, the former army Chief of Staff, now a Cabinet Minister without portfolio, who said that

(spoke in English)

"... Israel had begun work to develop a reconnaissance satellite after it decided that it could not rely on the United States to provide full intelligence information." (The New York Times, 20 September 1988, p. 1)

(continued in Arabic)

A specialist Soviet journal confirmed this and indicated that Israel was planning to launch another spy satellite to replace the first one, which it launched last month. The journal indicated that the service plan for the new space spies would focus on gathering information on Arab armies and their movements, in addition to monitoring strategic installations in States neighbouring Israel, and guiding CHETZ or OFFEQ-I Israeli rockets towards those important installations.

Disarmament questions have now become among the most urgent in the world, which has been transformed into a huge arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Today's world, which has acquired the ability to provide the means for the most advanced and prosperous life, while using technology to further the progress of man, has also devised the means of destroying, whether through the use of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction or chemical weapons and biological weapons, the use or stockpiling of which must be prohibited. We should without further delay impose a comprehensive ban on these lethal weapons and prepare and conclude the necessary legal instruments to that end.

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

The major achievements on the way to disarmament make it possible for peoples to foster the climate necessary for their development and prosperity, because disarmament and development are linked in a mathematically progressive manner, and any progress in disarmament will be clearly reflected in development, as the resources released by disarmament can be channelled towards the implementation of development plans, especially in the developing world.

Syria welcomed the convening of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and believes that its conclusions are an encouraging contribution to the efforts to achieve the objective desired by all the peoples of the world, namely, a world free from all forms of aggression, racism, domination and foreign occupation; a world of peace, prosperity and justice.

Syria also welcomes the African Group's initiative concerning the inclusion in the agenda of an item on the dumping of industrial and nuclear waste in Africa. While on the subject of development, we must draw attention to the grave consequences of the transfer of dangerous toxic wastes from the industrially developed States to be dumped in developing countries. This is a serious matter of concern to the entire international community. It seriously affects the lives of the people and the environment in the countries wherein these toxic and dangerous wastes are dumped. The international community must therefore make a combined effort to help the peoples of the developing countries, which lack the scientific, technical and material means to face this threat. Furthermore, this affects the development process in the developing countries in various ways.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the international community to draw up comprehensive international instruments prohibiting the transfer of dangerous toxic wastes from the industrialized countries to the developing countries, and the burying of such wastes in those countries, and to ensure that such wastes are

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab
Republic)

processed in the territories of the producing States. It calls upon the developed States to enact national legislation prohibiting the export of the wastes, and upon the developing countries to enact national legislation blocking the entry of such wastes into their territories. Syria feels that it is the duty of all States to co-operate in controlling the transfer of such substances from the developed to the developing countries.

In conclusion, respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter, and the enhancement of the role of the international Organization so as to reaffirm its purposes and principles and objectives - namely, the equal sovereignty of all States, non-recourse to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State, respect for the right of peoples to self-determination, and the elimination of aggression and occupation - will inevitably lead to accelerating the process of disarmament and the establishment of a world in which peace, prosperity and justice prevail.

Mr. RANA (Nepal): The First Committee of the forty-third session of the General Assembly is meeting barely four months after the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The special session offered us an opportunity to express our position on a wide range of disarmament issues. We had expected the concluding document of the special session to contain specific guidelines for disarmament negotiations for the last decade of this century. Notwithstanding the inability to reach an agreement on the final outcome of that session, we feel that the third special session on disarmament was not an exercise in futility. This is because it offered a unique opportunity for an in-depth examination of issues and for appreciation of major concerns of the international community related to disarmament, development and international security.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

We stressed at the special session, and reiterate now, that the international community must continue to exert every effort to capitalize on the visible relaxation of tension in East-West relations. We have no illusion that general and complete disarmament under effective international control is not still a distant goal. We cannot, however, ignore the propitious climate for serious disarmament negotiations present today. The recent agreement on the effective reduction of military nuclear capacity and the elimination of a whole category of armaments is a case in point. We welcome the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - as a good basis and beginning for the new developments towards a more secure, stable and, ultimately, nuclear-weapon-free world. While the attainment of an agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in the strategic capacities of the two super-Powers during the course of this year now looks rather unlikely, we are confident that the United States and the Soviet Union will continue to negotiate in all seriousness and sincerity towards that intermediate goal.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

The conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban is of critical importance for the future of arms limitation and disarmament. It is widely regarded as the first and most urgent step towards the cessation of the nuclear arms race, especially in its qualitative aspects. While not underestimating the importance of bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, my delegation wishes to emphasize the great stake the whole world has in this question. The report of the Conference on Disarmament concerning a comprehensive test ban falls far short of general expectations. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to persist in its efforts, as the comprehensive test ban is a litmus test of the willingness of the nuclear-weapon States to pursue nuclear disarmament. Recent developments on joint verification experiments between the United States and the Soviet Union have increased our hope that the major Powers will have no difficulty in co-operating fully with the Conference on Disarmament in fulfilling its mandate on a nuclear-test ban.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the only international instrument in the efforts to prohibit horizontal proliferation while restraining the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. This Treaty represents the good faith of the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to it. My delegation supports the convening of the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. However, we are afraid that continued failure on the part of the nuclear-weapon States to honour their obligations under the Treaty may, in the long run, lead to the weakening of this important international instrument. Thus the 1990 Review Conference will have a special bearing on the continuing viability of the NPT beyond 1995 and, at the same time, provide an impetus for universal accession to the Treaty.

Nuclear disarmament commands the highest priority among disarmament agenda items. The experiences of the past four decades, however, demand simultaneous

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

progress in many other areas. Chemical weapons present just such a challenge to the international community. The widespread use of these weapons in the recent past demands immediate action on the part of the international community so that this does not become a regular feature of conventional warfare. The experiences of the recent past have called in question the effectiveness of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Security Council resolutions 612 (1988) and 620 (1988) are expressions of universal concern over the repeated use of chemical weapons. Nepal, therefore, supports the proposal to convene a meeting of the parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925. We sincerely hope that this conference will contribute positively to the efforts currently under way in the Conference on Disarmament concerning chemical weapons. A comprehensive accord on chemical weapons, including the prohibition of their production, possession and stockpiling, is the only effective means of controlling and contain the menace. Total, verifiable elimination alone can ensure the non-use of chemical weapons.

The question of conventional arms limitation and disarmament was accorded the attention and importance it deserves during the third special session devoted to disarmament. The escalating race in conventional arms is both disturbing and dangerous. The experiences of the past are painful reminders of the tragedy and tensions generated by the conventional arms race. The international community cannot keep this issue on the back burner and still feel safe. While conventional disarmament is a common concern and responsibility of all nations, it is both necessary and practical that the process should begin with some of the heavily armed regions, such as Europe. The absence of positive movement in Europe, however, cannot justify the lack of progress in developing countries. The present economic difficulties have placed even greater responsibility on the developing world to enter into serious bilateral and regional negotiations on conventional disarmament. Equality and parity, transparency and verifiability, on military

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

matters, my delegation believes, will facilitate movement aimed at conventional arms limitations and disarmament.

The international transfer of arms and related technology is equally relevant to conventional disarmament. My delegation reaffirms its support for the proposal to request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly plans for encouraging greater openness in all types of international transfer of conventional weapons. The Secretary-General could also be requested to put forward proposals for a system whereby the Member States would report to the United Nations a list of hardware and technology, as well as the value of their imports and exports, on a universal and non-discriminatory basis.

The International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development made a series of important recommendations. At this point my delegation wishes only to underline the urgency of implementing those recommendations.

The illegal dumping of radioactive and toxic waste in the territories of developing countries has become a new source of concern. We fully share the grave concern voiced by the African and the Caribbean States on this issue. The inclusion of a new sub-item, sub-item 65(k), on the agenda of this Committee reflects the seriousness with which the international community views this matter. We hope that the deliberations on this question will mark the beginning of a new international effort to tackle the problem with due regard for the human and marine environment.

While our immediate concern should no doubt be to control and curtail weapons of mass destruction, the international community should also be working together in promoting and strengthening measures that serve to relax tension, contain conflict

(Mr. Rana; Nepal)

and promote trust and confidence. We were gratified to note that these measures received due attention in the deliberations of the third special session devoted to disarmament. There is now a growing consensus on the need to reach an early agreement leading to the conclusion of an appropriate international instrument to assure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We are also convinced that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones supports and supplements our disarmament efforts and objectives. The Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga are measures of immense importance for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America and the South Pacific region respectively.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

We support the proposal for the establishment of similar zones in Northern Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa, and our own region of South Asia. Similarly, the establishment of zones of peace can contribute to the security and development of a State or States and the peace and stability of the relevant region. We firmly support an early convening of the Colombo Conference to secure the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Likewise, we support the efforts of the countries of the South Atlantic to give practical shape to the zone of peace and co-operation, a determination which was reaffirmed at the meeting of the Heads of State held in Rio de Janeiro in July this year. The proposal of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to make South-East Asia a zone of peace and co-operation also has our full support. In this context, I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the proposal of His Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev to have Nepal declared a zone of peace. The single-nation zone of peace concept, we believe, would be a valuable addition in our common efforts to consolidate the process of peace generally, wherever possible, and brick by brick, if necessary.

I have outlined the view of my delegation on a few of the items on our agenda. There are other important issues I have not touched on in this statement - the question of the peaceful uses of outer space, naval disarmament, the reduction of military budgets, verification and confidence-building measures. South Africa's defiance of the unanimous desire of the African continent for a denuclearized Africa is a major problem in itself. The process of arms control and disarmament is a political, as well as a military, one. It requires a will for dialogue and co-operation. What is more, the willingness to enter into serious negotiations on disarmament issues represents the recognition of the fundamental right of all States to security and peace. The progress of the recent past would have been impossible without a measure of mutual trust and a spirit of accommodation.

(Mr. Rana, Nepal)

The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament emphasized the importance of States abiding strictly by their obligation under the Charter if anything desirable and durable is to be achieved by way of disarmament. The landmark breakthrough in the form of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - INF Treaty - was achieved through bilateral negotiations. But this success in no way diminishes the importance of the multilateral approach. The United Nations has a central role and responsibility in disarmament and security-related issues because it embodies the conscience of the international community. It alone can define the purposes and principles relating to disarmament, and it alone can design a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

The performance of United Nations bodies in the field of disarmament has been uneven, but important. The last session of the Disarmament Commission achieved a significant convergence of opinion in the area of verification and, to some extent, on confidence-building measures. The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating forum, needs to move resolutely further from a general discussion of disarmament issues to negotiations on specific instruments, thus fulfilling the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the United Nations.

The United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament has been playing a very useful role in helping developing countries like Nepal to create a core of experts on disarmament matters. The World Disarmament Conference is equally important in mobilizing world public opinion in favour of disarmament. In this context, I wish to express the deep appreciation of my delegation to all Member States for the honour accorded to Nepal through its selection as the venue of the United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific. I feel

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happy to report that the agreement establishing the Centre has been signed between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the United Nations through the Department for Disarmament Affairs. The Centre will become operational in a few months. His Majesty's Government of Nepal is fully committed to do everything within its limited capacity to make the Centre active and effective. The success of the Centre will, however, depend on the continuing interest and support of Member States. We hope that Member States will not allow financial constraints to cripple the organization they have set up for the Asian and the Pacific region. While talking of the role of the United Nations in disarmament, I cannot overlook the important role being played by the Department for Disarmament Affairs, under the leadership of its able Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Yasushi Akashi. We support the strengthening of the Department, commensurate with the growing role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

As we discuss the disarmament issues of fundamental importance, we are happy to have you, Mr. Chairman, an eminently qualified diplomat and a committed person, to guide our deliberations. You not only bring vast experience and skill to the job, but also represent a great country, Canada, which is regarded very highly in these corridors for its positive and valuable contributions in the field of arms control and disarmament. Your chairmanship, therefore, augurs well for the success of the work of the First Committee during the current session.

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure to begin where my Nepalese colleague left off. Mr. Chairman, the great work you have done during these past days and the plans we know you have for our Committee and the future make it incumbent on me to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of our Committee and to pay a tribute to your wisdom and experience. This assures us of the success of our Committee. Thus, I hope you

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

will allow me, Mr. Chairman, to extend to you and the members of your Bureau the congratulations you truly deserve.

There is no doubt that our present session is witnessing unprecedented signs of international political transformation in the direction of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and evidence we have not seen for a long time of a movement towards the peaceful solution of regional disputes.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

The recent important development in American-Soviet relations, resulting in the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - created a climate that is encouraging to the international community in all its efforts towards peace, and, of course, to this Committee in its work.

A few months ago the General Assembly held its third special session devoted to disarmament. The attendance of a large number of heads of State or Government, and an even larger number of Foreign Ministers, reflected the great importance attached by the world's countries to the question of disarmament, which is central to this Organization's most important task: the search for a secure, safe and stable future for humanity. Despite the Assembly's failure at that special session, to adopt a final document, the session did indeed contribute to awareness of the areas on which we should concentrate our efforts in the future, and it affirmed the intention of countries and peoples to do whatever they could to put an end to the arms race.

The Mayor of Hiroshima, in an appeal to the General Assembly at the current session, said that if we did not put an end to atomic weapons they would put an end to us. If we compare the relatively positive world climate this year with that which existed during the first and second special sessions on disarmament, in 1978 and 1983 respectively, we will find that there has been promising, tangible progress in this Committee's field of work and on the road to the protection of humanity against a nuclear holocaust.

It will also be noted that an increasing number of countries are interested in treating the question of disarmament in a pragmatic and realistic manner. Observers are unanimous in their view that it is very important to build trust and arrange verification, and that encouraging progress has been achieved under

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conventions and treaties. As in the past, international legality necessitates that the trust-building measures should not be treated as a replacement for, or as a pre-condition of, disarmament measures, nor should they be used as a means of diverting attention from disarmament.

The inclusion by the General Assembly, in its agenda, for the first time, of an item on a world disarmament conference was extremely significant. Although there was a lack of crystallization on implementation, this was certainly an important step which, we hope, will turn out one day to be an important contribution towards halting and reversing the arms race.

But we should not confine our hopes to a specific step; we should do everything possible - for instance, by helping the Conference on Disarmament to carry out its responsibilities through negotiations - to arrive at and adopt tangible measures for disarmament and, thereby, encourage all countries to aim for general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Kuwait is definitely eager to do everything possible to serve this very important purpose, as was reflected in the statement of His Majesty the Amir to the General Assembly this session, in which he paid tribute to the American and Soviet peoples for the great steps their leaders had taken towards reducing the arsenals of nuclear weapons, the use of which would definitely mean the end of life - the end of humanity.

My country is a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and respects the principles of that body. I should therefore like to pay a tribute in respect of two final communiqués: that of the Foreign Ministers who met in Havana last May to discuss disarmament, and that of Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries, following their conference in Nicosia, Cyprus, last month. Those two communiqués have demonstrated, once again, that complete and general disarmament is one of the most important areas of concern to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and have

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re-emphasized the non-aligned countries' conviction that international peace and security can never be achieved except through nuclear disarmament - indeed, general disarmament, regional and conventional disarmament.

Our awareness of the fact that increasing expenditure on arms is illogical in the light of the economic situation of the world today makes us seize every opportunity to remind people of the programme of action adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held last year for a very noble purpose - namely, to release additional resources for development through disarmament measures, and to put an end to the harmful effects of the arms race on the social and economic circumstances of developing countries. As is well known, this purpose can be achieved only through great and sustained political will on the part of the developed countries.

For many years in statements made here about the different aspects of disarmament reference has usually - and quite logically - been made to the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world and of drawing the attention of world public opinion to the obstacles that some put in the way of achieving this purpose. Perhaps the best examples of such obstacles are the activities of Israel and South Africa. The international community has become well aware lately that the purpose of the racist allies in South Africa and the Zionist entity in resorting to military force is continued usurpation and occupation of the land of the peoples of those two countries.

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The fact that they fear the final doom of their inhuman practices prompted them to possess a nuclear-weapons capability as a means of terrorism, aggression and blackmail. All of us know from the reports that the two racist régimes have developed ballistic missiles and a neutron bomb in addition to other weapons.

The situation becomes more dangerous when we find out that the two racist entities resort to every technical piracy possible so that they can develop weapons of mass destruction at a time when they do everything possible to prevent their allies from giving their neighbours whatever other weapons they can get to defend themselves, their rights and their territories.

I think it is appropriate to refer here to the latest events. I remind members of the crisis, still existing, between Norway and Israel, about the misuse of heavy water from Norway which was given to the Zionist entity. All of us know that it was used in its nuclear programmes, which were legitimately condemned by the international community.

Among the last links in this chain of illegitimate actions is the fact that Israel recently launched a satellite, thereby extending the arms race, which it dictated to the Middle East, to space at a time when the international community, including Arab countries, wish to put an end to the arms race and to replace it with development. That is why we call upon all States Members of the United Nations and all those keenly interested in international peace and security not to co-operate with Israel or South Africa in the nuclear field or anything related to that field.

Once again we call for the prevention of an arms race in space, because that would be very dangerous for the peace and security of the world. Here we add our voice to the legitimate voice of the international community in calling for the conclusion of a convention or conventions to prevent such a race in any form. Our

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position is well known, namely, that it is necessary urgently to protect the non-nuclear-weapon countries against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Although 25 years have passed the United Nations will continue to call for a comprehensive ban on all nuclear tests and on the necessity to negotiate an international treaty in this field without resorting to any talk about verification of that treaty. We also support any steps or initiatives that can be taken in order to have an effective ban on biological and chemical weapons and immediately to stop their use, development and stockpiling.

In view of the fact that the development of conventional weapons contributes to the arms race we call for an immediate reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments and a gradual further reduction in these forces in addition to the freezing and reduction of military budgets.

Before concluding I should like to express the full support of my country for the central role of the United Nations and its main responsibility in the field of disarmament and again emphasize that we also support and encourage all movements and campaigns all over the world against the nuclear-arms race so that we can have security and peace for the whole of humanity.

Mrs. URIBE de LOZANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): We shall heed your recent reminder, Mr. Chairman, about rule 110, but first let us state our admiration for your record as a fighter for peace and disarmament and our admiration for your many human and intellectual qualities, from which we stand to gain in this Committee. We wish you the best of luck in your work and we assure you of our co-operation.

At this moment when favourable winds are strengthening the work of the United Nations and when the effects of détente between the great Powers are beginning to make themselves felt, we wish to reiterate our hope that reason will prevail in all deliberations on issues crucial to the future of mankind.

(Mrs. Uribe de Lozano, Colombia)

If the historical process we are now witnessing can be considered the harbinger of genuine peace we may also hope that many opportunities will arise to sow and also to reap the humanism and solidarity to which the founders of the United Nations aspired.

The United Nations, which was founded to assemble peace-loving nations, was based on the principle of complete equality and acceptance of coexistence and co-operation of countries governed by different economic and social systems. This fact evidently expressed a recognition that the human species is one as well as the common interest of mankind in peace and orderly development. Even the acceptance of privileges benefiting the great Powers confirmed a faith that those countries would be able to harmonize their interests without those of the larger community of mankind. But those privileges should not exclude - and this was the intention of the Charter when the United Nations was founded - the intervention of all States in keeping the peace and consequently in disarmament, which would in turn make it possible to devote appropriate resources to development. Even the League of Nations sought to ensure that those negotiations would involve not only the great Powers, among which confrontation was to be feared, but also the representatives of those nations which stood apart from the acute rivalry of those Powers. This was a recognition that disarmament concerned the whole world.

Disarmament concerns all peoples. It concerns the ordinary people of the developed areas and of the developing areas; it concerns those who are aware of the danger of weapons and those who suffer the consequences; those who believe in the United Nations and those who believe that its efforts are part of a universal endeavour, the purpose of which is to avoid war and to assure peace.

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Certainly, disarmament is of vital interest to all of us who, representing those millions of men and women, take part in efforts being made to help the United Nations perform its proper role in this process. The real fight against the arms race must be fought, therefore, with the participation of all States and for the benefit of each and every one of those millions of people who inhabit this planet. Because disarmament will have to lead to peace, and that peace will not be genuine if disarmament measures were to meet only the needs of the powerful while disregarding the aspirations of the common man.

The common man had hoped that the third special session would make progress towards universal understanding, which would replace weapons by the serene awareness that security cannot be based on a capacity for self-destruction and annihilation. He had also hoped that it would be firmly acknowledged that disarmament and development were indispensable to peace. However, we learnt that, as a desire, peace is something we all have, but as an attitude it is still far from attainment.

At the third special session there was an intensified dialogue, however, which did contribute to a better understanding of the fragile state of security of the developing countries, of its close relationship with social conflicts and economic instability and of its interrelationship with international security.

All we have heard and experienced about the movement towards development confirms our belief that we cannot speak of peace at all so long as poverty exists. We have also learnt a version of development which is less acceptable than that professed by those who assume that development, once it starts, will produce a gradual lowering of social tension and a gradual increase in the confidence and satisfaction of the people.

On the other hand, the movement towards development may well be characterized by a growing gap between hopes and achievements, in other words, by a greater

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awareness of deprivation and a lower level of tolerance of poverty and privilege. For the masses oppressed by poverty, the road to development may be a period of incipient hostility, of repeated frustration and mounting disquiet and dissatisfaction.

But the development process also has its price, a price that must be paid by the better educated and more enlightened levels of society. The inevitable social readjustments, the collapse of old sets of values and the resentment aroused by new classes achieving a political, social and economic status - all of these are factors inherent in that evolution. It is wrong, therefore, to imagine the movement towards development as a period of steadily increasing social harmony. It is much more likely to be a period of division and discontent.

Those who try to interfere in the peaceful movement towards the development of the under-developed countries - a process that is inherently turbulent - are well aware of their vulnerability. Ideology and weapons, terrorism and subversion, prophecies and propaganda cross seas and continents and adapt themselves to the most varied and heterogeneous features and idiosyncracies in order to achieve world domination, which today is just too risky a goal to pursue by means of war. It is not difficult to conceive of expressions of violence as integral parts of a global system in which situations that threaten world security all interact.

Traffic in armaments has a pernicious effect on the international scene also. We are aware of the serious problem posed, for countries such as Colombia, by manipulation on the part of those who produce and deal in arms in order to establish the arms traffic. We must understand the dimensions of this crime and explain its link with the political turbulence of many countries and its impact on their prospects for peace and development. Those who commit the crime of arms trafficking succumb to the lure of money. They instigate violence and in most cases attack the fundamental values that give our democracies their strength. They

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would be less successful, however, were it not for certain sectors that seek to confer legitimacy on the arms trade because it is so lucrative.

We recognize that one of the obstacles in the fight against this scourge, which is so damaging to so many countries, is the clandestine nature of much of the arms trade.

None the less, we believe that vigorous and fruitful understanding, prompted by strong rejection of all the impediments to better relations among countries, will be the best way to solve a problem which, like arms trafficking, aggravates international friction and can easily cause mere tension to escalate into a state of open conflict in various parts of the world.

Frequently, arms trafficking goes hand in hand with the powerful drug trade and terrorism. Unfortunately, these epidemics strike at the same time and with boundless cruelty in various parts of the world, in a type of diabolical synchronization.

I wish now to quote a statement made by Mr. Julio Londoño, the Foreign Minister of Colombia:

"The frantic production by the industrialized countries of conventional armaments for profit and the alarming indifference of States where those conventional armaments circulate, almost publically, in the hands of the black marketeers, is leading to the strengthening of this exceedingly damaging market, a market in which crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, with boundless economic resources, can acquire all the instruments necessary to carry out their sinister purposes or sustain forces which would destabilize through proxies genuinely democratic Governments.

"The General Assembly and other international forums must take into account the consequences of the conventional arms race for certain developing

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countries, countries whose defence budget is necessarily limited and which have become victims of the war industries of other countries."

In his address to the General Assembly at its third special session devoted to disarmament the Foreign Minister said:

"The international community cannot remain indifferent to the escalating trade in illegal arms. In many cases the identity and whereabouts of the arms brokers are well known. Indeed, it appears that only the Governments of countries where these activities are generated remain uninformed about how the instruments of terrorism and war are exchanged.

...

"I am convinced that Member States are capable of strengthening their systems of internal control if they wish to reduce the illegal trade which inflames conflicts around the world, with no respect for geographical or ideological boundaries". (A/S-15/PV.10, pp. 22 and 23)

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It would be difficult to add to those powerful arguments advanced by my Minister, but we have the authoritative voice of Pope John Paul II, who said in his encyclical "The Social Concerns of the Church":

"If the production of arms is a grave disorder prevailing in the present world in respect of various needs of man and the use of appropriate means to satisfy them, it is no less true of the arms trade. It is essential to add that one's moral judgement must be even more severe. We find ourselves with a strange phenomenon: while economic aid and development plans run into insuperable ideological barriers, tariff barriers and market barriers, arms, no matter where they were manufactured, circulate with virtually total freedom in various parts of the world. Everyone is aware that ... in some cases the capital loaned by the developed world has been used in the underdeveloped world to buy weapons."

We have heard several times in this room that the key to peace through disarmament is realism. We agree. Let us focus on this reality: are the dead, the mutilated bodies, the lacerated bodies, that the media show us every day real? Unless the pictures we see in the newspapers are faked and the television news from areas of conflict has been rigged, we should have to be blind and deaf not to conclude that the daily manifestation of world reality is precisely the victims of conventional weapons manufactured to kill people as expeditiously and efficiently as possible.

By permitting free access to the instruments of death, the unrestricted arms trade jeopardizes the most sacred rights of all human beings, and above all the right to life itself.

Because it is clear that the arms trade involves a dehumanized political and economic perspective, it is essential to create at the international level an awareness of the problem consonant with human rights and the norms of international

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law enshrined in the Charter. In this regard my Government has contributed its views to document A/43/668 of 30 September, which was distributed in connection with various agenda items allocated to the First Committee and the Third Committee.

As we once again take up at this session the subject of international arms transfers, we are not merely seeking condemnation of such transfers, which violate human rights and international norms. What we are seeking is to create a consensus on the need to consider the multilateral, regional and national mechanisms needed to deal with the problem. To that end the Governments of Colombia and Costa Rica will submit to the First Committee a draft resolution whose ultimate objective is the regulation of international arms transfers.

We are now at a stage of recognition of the problem in all its dimensions - not only its consequences, which we already know, but also the way in which arms transfers have tightened their grip on the world economy and their impact on international security.

A number of speakers have voiced their concern about the problem and advanced valuable arguments calling for consideration of the problem at the United Nations with the seriousness it deserves. We hope that we can continue to have the benefit of their enlightened opinions and support in our deliberations on the subject during this session. We also hope to have the collaboration of all Member States in reaching a consensus, which will make it possible in this case to bring about genuine confidence-building measures at the international level and to show the world community that our Organization is really working to advance the principles for which it stands, with no subject being off limits, thus strengthening confidence in every aspect of the system and facilitating disarmament and international coexistence.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to say a word about the opening week that we are now concluding.

I wish first to express my appreciation to all delegations for the co-operation I have received in this opening week, in which I believe we have got our work very well launched.

The speeches have generally been marked by a high tone, reflecting the more positive international atmosphere today. But in addition to the speeches that we have heard there have been intensive consultations about a number of draft resolutions, and I think that those consultations augur well for the success of our work.

We also held a meeting of the Friends of the Chairman earlier this week to consider the question of the rationalization of the agenda. That work is progressing, and I intend to put before a subsequent meeting of Friends of the Chairman some suggestions for rationalization, so the Committee will be hearing from me shortly on that matter.

I want also to thank my fellow officers of the Committee for their co-operation with me, and the members of the Secretariat who are here with me on the podium - and, indeed, all those in the Department for Disarmament Affairs who have been working so hard for us.

I think it is also appropriate to thank the conference officers who are here in the room with us and the interpreters, all of whom contribute so valuably to our work.

So I close our business in this first week on a very positive note and in a very positive atmosphere. I think we are well started on a successful session of the First Committee this year.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.