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Chairman: Mr. Roche (Canada)

CONTENTS

- GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 52 TO 69, 139, 141 AND 145

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Mr. KAPLLANI (Albania): On behalf of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee, and to congratulate the other officers of the Committee and wish you success in your important duties.

The proceedings of the forty-third session of the General Assembly and the current deliberations on disarmament issues in this Committee are taking place shortly after the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was a clear demonstration of the international community's great and legitimate concern over the frenzied arms race. It was held with a view to paving the way to the process of genuine disarmament and enhancing the opportunities for preserving international peace and security. It offered an opportunity to describe and assess the threats posed by the nuclear and conventional arms races, and it constituted a commendable effort on the part of the United Nations seriously to address the problem by seeing things as they are and by making an objective and realistic analysis of the situation. The debate brought to light the significant fact that the overwhelming majority of Member States have presently become more alert than ever before to the reality of the grave consequences with which the arms race is fraught, just as they are becoming ever-more conscious of the real causes of that race and who its main protagonists are.

However, despite the efforts of the majority of Member States, the third special session devoted to disarmament failed to achieve consensus and to produce a final document. The stumbling block was the difficulties originating from the

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

various concepts and interpretations of certain fundamental aspects of the arms race and disarmament and from the pressure the super-Powers exerted on the rest to evade, extenuate and distort the real picture of the situation surrounding those matters. This is another piece of evidence supporting the fact that, if the world has not so far witnessed genuine disarmament, that has not been because of a lack of desire and effort on the part of the peoples of the democratic and sovereign countries. The arms race continues without let up primarily because, as of now, it has been impossible to suppress the ambitions of the super-Powers, whose policy relies on military might and is implemented from positions of strength designed to establish hegemony and impose diktat on others.

The last decade represents a period during which war arsenals were most heavily loaded, one in the course of which armament expenditures tripled and new weapons of all kinds were introduced. From the earth, sea and air, weapon production is advancing towards outer space. Viewed from the qualitative and quantitative perspective, the dynamic of the arms race manifests itself in the bitter reality of the stockpiling of an arsenal of more than 60,000 nuclear warheads, with the United States and the Soviet Union accounting for 97 per cent of them. Scientists maintain, accurately and alarmingly, that today's nuclear arsenal stands for an equivalent of more than one million bombs of the kind dropped over Hiroshima. If Hiroshima was a holocaust for that city, the marks and physical and psychological effects of which still survive, today even the most optimistic cannot find words to describe the threat posed to all mankind by such gigantic arsenals of weapons of mass extermination.

From this standpoint, we are of the view that there are no grounds for complacency in the Treaty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - under which some hundreds of medium-range and short-range missiles will be abolished. In overstating the importance of the INF Treaty, in fact, the United States and the Soviet Union are playing with the emotions of peoples, particularly the European peoples, who, like others, are exceptionally sensitive to and sincerely interested in nuclear disarmament. The fact of the matter is that the super-Powers installed their missiles on the European continent in disregard and against the will of its peoples. What we now see is that they are endeavouring to present the Treaty as a great favour done to Europe and to security in general. But despite the pacifist rhetoric both of them indulge in, it can never conceal the truth that that Treaty, like any other accord or bargain they strike, relates first to their political, economic, military and even electoral-campaign interests. However, in following the evolution of all the aspects of United States-Soviet Union relations, one cannot fail to reach the conclusion that in the whole process priority is also being given to the military aspect, which the super-Powers have turned into an arena for rivalry and collaboration and, indeed, a bargaining chip in their big-Power game.

They are now promising to save the world from the nuclear threat and the atomic holocaust. As before, the question remains a pressing one: Who threatens the world with a nuclear holocaust? Who possesses the power to do so, and whose policy is it that is heading the world towards the precipice? Facts abound to prove that both in the past and in the present it is the United States and the Soviet Union that possess the greater part of the arsenals of all types of weapons, nuclear included. It is their policies, which aim at domination and hegemony, that endanger international peace and security. Even after the conclusion of the American-Soviet missile agreement, we are still witness to how they are stepping up the arms race.

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

The Euromissile accord has not in the least interfered with their nuclear tests and other military plans for modernizing their nuclear arsenals and conventional weapons, thus establishing new frontiers in the armaments field. With their military projects and programs, both sides indicate that they intend to push ahead with the arms race.

The People's Socialist Republic of Albania has always stood and stands for banning the arms race, as it also stands for the complete and general prohibition of nuclear, chemical and other tests. It is against the escalation of this race into outer space and against every program that increases the threat of war, be it nuclear, chemical or conventional. We are conscious of the fact that the national security of each and every country is a responsibility that cannot be neglected. However, this security cannot be achieved by participation in NATO or the Warsaw Treaty, or by seeking shelter under the nuclear umbrellas of the super-Powers, and even less so by refusing to identify the main protagonists of the arms race. This is why, in our view, when it comes to genuine disarmament, the promoters of the arms race - the real owners of the huge arsenals of nuclear and conventional weapons - must be the ones with whom the disarmament process should start. The view of disarmament according to which all countries stand on an equal footing is an overt attempt by the main protagonists of the arms race to shirk responsibility, and even to shift it onto others.

Albania, for its part, is not a member of any of the military blocs, or of any alliance that can directly or indirectly engage it in a policy harmful to other countries. It maintains no agreement whatsoever that could lead to its damaging the interests of others. We will firmly abide by this principled and resolute stand of our foreign policy, worked out by our socialist State and the immortal leader of the Albanian people, Enver Hoxha. In this way, we defend the freedom and

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

independence of our homeland, while at the same time doing our bit for our neighbours, the peoples and countries of the Balkan peninsula and beyond.

It is a bitter reality that the history of the European continent has never before recorded such a concentration of troops and armaments as the one it is witnessing at present. Millions of troops, nuclear and conventional weapons belonging to the super-Powers, and to the NATO and Warsaw Treaty blocs led by them, continue to be stationed one against the other on the old continent. Without being triggered off, this colossal stockpiling of military potential has created a psychosis of mutual hostility, fear and distrust among the European peoples, generating real premises for division and discord among them. The atmosphere of political and military confrontation prevailing in Europe is a negative phenomenon that is typically exploited primarily by the two super-Powers with a view to imposing and preserving their tutelage over all political, military and other activities on this continent.

Europe is capable of managing its own affairs, without the diktat and the tutelage of the super-Powers, without the political and military blocs they lead, without the American and Soviet weapons, bases and troops. The same thing applies to other regions, too. The further off are the negative factors resulting from the presence, rivalry and the super-Powers' arms race, the better it will be for equal and fruitful co-operation among peoples, for genuine peace and stability.

It must be pointed out that the concern for forestalling the negative factors entailed by the arms race and the super-Powers' political and military presence constitutes an ever-increasing tendency in various regions of the world to strive for the removal of nuclear weapons where they exist and for the non-installation of new such arsenals. There is no denying that this tendency is most rational and compatible with the peoples' aspirations not to become hostage to nuclear threat.

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

This is all the more true considering the fact that in many regions these weapons are foreign and come under foreign control, constituting further cause for political and military complications and for the aggravation of the general climate. Naturally, their removal would free the peoples and countries from the threat that these weapons pose even without being put to use, and would consolidate the atmosphere of mutual trust.

Nevertheless, these measures should not remain circumscribed within regional boundaries alone, for being partial they would be insufficient to eliminate the real threat posed by the super-Powers' colossal arsenals of extremely sophisticated weapons, which in their power, accuracy and range know no boundaries and can reach any point of the globe.

The development of events in various regions of the world constantly demonstrates that the conventional arms race, too, remains a cause for great concern. The fact cannot be overlooked that, despite the existence of nuclear armaments, it is conventional weapons that have been used in every conflict since World War II, causing the deaths of millions along with incalculable material loss. The stupendous expenditure on the manufacture of these weapons, which strips many countries of resources that could be allocated to development and the welfare of their peoples, cannot be ignored either. The intensification of the conventional arms race has become not only a threat to peace, but also a means of diverting and absorbing the financial resources of those who need them most.

The arms trade has become a most lucrative business for the magnates of the war industry and for the "death merchants". The negative effects of this trade on the economies of the countries continuously buying arms, let alone the grave political and military consequences they entail, is strikingly apparent. The cause-and-effect relationship between regional conflicts and the arms trade in the present-day international situation is widely accepted. The truth of the matter is

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

that this interdependence has become stuck in a vicious circle which makes it hard to distinguish cause from effect, for their limits are blurred.

We are currently experiencing a positive process leading to the extinguishing of some of the hot-beds of regional conflicts. It is undeniable that this is to the primary benefit of the peoples and countries directly involved in these conflicts, but it is also to the advantage of peace and stability in the region and in the world. If this tendency is maintained and given full impetus, it will save human lives and will curb the colossal expenditures sustaining these conflicts and wars. The fact that these conflicts flare up or die down according to the climate and the ups-and-downs of the US-Soviet relations, or, at times, at the initiative of these countries and the bargains they strike, is reason enough to doubt that these countries will refrain, if their future interests so require, from impelling the peoples against one another into new disasters.

Therefore, in the Albanian delegation's view, solutions putting an end to these conflicts must come from the parties directly involved and the countries of the region; they should not be conjunctural solutions imposed from above. This is the only way to clear the ground of the seeds of distrust.

Political will is understandably required for the disarmament process to begin. It is the parties engaged in this perilous arms race who must first and foremost demonstrate this will. But, judging from the contradictions and the hot-beds of tension still persisting in the world, which are essentially of the making of the super-Powers whose expansionist and hegemonist aims represent a constant orientation of their policy and their blocs, we cannot afford to cherish illusions that disarmament will be brought about through the super-Powers' goodwill. This explains why the world is still very far from the aspirations and desires of the peoples and sovereign countries who yearn to live free and independent, liberated from the threat of nuclear war and disaster.

(Mr. Kapllani, Albania)

There is no doubt that genuine disarmament would create a climate in which no country, whether big or small, would dread the threat and the danger posed by huge arsenals of armaments, nuclear and otherwise, owned by the super-big. This, naturally, requires the majority of Member States - the entire international community - to make impossible the continuation of the arms race and the hegemonistic policies threatening international peace and security.

In conclusion I should like to reiterate that the Albanian delegation at this session again will spare no effort in support of every sincere and constructive move towards the realization of the legitimate aspirations of peoples to general and complete disarmament with a view to building genuine international understanding and security.

Mr. BURNS (United States of America): It is a privilege for me to be here to day to participate in the debate of this Committee on important international security issues that are of concern to the community of nations.

In the weeks ahead, this Committee will be considering a full agenda of arms control and disarmament topics. All member States will have an opportunity to express their views and put forward their proposals on these issues. For its part, the United States delegation will participate constructively. In addition to stating United States positions as clearly as possible, we will listen carefully during the First Committee debate and will give due consideration to all views and proposals. We will support substantive proposals and draft resolutions that promote international security and stability, that are feasible, and that make sense. We will, however, oppose proposals and draft resolutions that do not meet these criteria and are counter to United States security policies, in particular any such initiative designed to disrupt defence relationships we have with our allies or to challenge the legitimacy of fundamental concepts on which our security is based, such as nuclear deterrence.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

Arms control is not an end in itself; it is an integral part of the security equation. Therefore, it is not surprising that serious participants approach disarmament negotiations with the same care that they give to other important security and defence decisions. While arms control is not devoid of its dramatic moments, progress normally is made one step at a time rather than in some quantum leap. To the extent that arms control and disarmament measures enhance security and stability and can be verified to provide confidence that all parties are in compliance, they are worth pursuing. However, ill-conceived arms control proposals actually may be dangerous and, if implemented, destabilizing. In short, arms control is serious business and should be treated as such.

Is the world community better off today in terms of international security and stability than it was at the beginning of this decade? I believe that the answer is yes, and I believe that arms control has made an important contribution in this regard.

In the area of reducing and eliminating nuclear armaments, on 1 June this year the United States and the Soviet Union exchanged instruments of ratification bringing into force the intermediate-range nuclear forces - INF - Treaty. This Treaty, which is now being implemented, bans an entire class of nuclear arms and provides for the effective verification of their destruction. The INF Treaty is an important step in nuclear arms control. However, additional steps are required if the bilateral nuclear and space talks are to make the full contribution to international security and stability that we all desire.

The second, and more difficult, step will be the conclusion and implementation of the strategic-arms reduction treaty. The United States and the Soviet Union have reached agreement on important elements of such a treaty that will provide for 50 per cent reductions in the strategic offensive arms of the two sides. The

(Mr. Burns, United States)

result for each side will be a ceiling of 6,000 warheads on 1,600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, and sub-ceilings of 4,900 ballistic missile warheads and 1,540 warheads on 154 heavy ballistic missiles. Both sides have agreed that there will be a 50 per cent reduction in throw-weight for Soviet missiles. There is also agreement on a counting rule for heavy bomber armaments and on elements of a verification régime that will include several types of on-site inspection and data exchange. Several difficult issues remain to be settled, including questions regarding air-launched cruise missiles, mobile inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) if these are permitted, limits on ICBM warheads and heavy ICBMs, and some important verification details. For its part, the United States is willing to continue the hard bargaining necessary to bring this task to a successful conclusion.

These negotiations, like any other negotiations, have their own dynamic and imperative. It is neither realistic nor appropriate to attempt to force them to conform to artificial deadlines. What is important is that the end results produce greater strategic stability and a less provocative and less dangerous nuclear balance.

In the defence and space talks, the United States seeks agreement with the Soviet Union on how to manage jointly a stable transition to increasing reliance on effective defences, should they prove feasible, which will threaten no one. Greater emphasis on strategic defence is the only way that has been suggested in recent times that has a realistic possibility of reducing the dependence on nuclear deterrence. It is not yet clear whether or not the United States Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI), or long-standing efforts by the Soviet Union in this field, will fulfil their full potential. However, we already know, from the United States perspective, that there is considerable promise. Once again, I would like to state

(Mr. Burns, United States)

that the United States will not bargain away its SDI programme or accept any provisions that would cripple its research, development and testing programme, which is in full compliance with the anti-ballistic missile Treaty.

I would note, however, that the United States believes that the existence of the large phased-array radar at Krasnoyarsk in the Soviet Union is a significant violation of a central element of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, and that measures must be taken to resolve this serious problem.

In the area of nuclear-testing limitations, the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to deal with the issues involved through full-scale step-by-step negotiations. As the first step in these negotiations, the two sides are hard at work on new protocols that will provide for effective verification of the threshold test-ban Treaty and the peaceful nuclear explosions Treaty, which will make it possible to ratify these two treaties. There has been considerable progress in these negotiations, as well as on the recent joint verification experiment. At the Washington summit in December 1987 it was agreed that each side would conduct a nuclear test at its own test site while the other side used its own instruments to measure directly the yield of the test. These tests and measurements have now been carried out. If anyone had suggested 10 years ago that such an experiment could be carried out, he would have been considered out of touch with reality. Yet today, this important co-operative measure is likely to facilitate further negotiations on nuclear-testing limitations.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

Following ratification of the two existing Treaties, the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to proceed to enter into negotiations on ways to implement a step-by-step parallel programme - in association with the programme to reduce and ultimately eliminate all nuclear weapons - of limiting and ultimately ending nuclear testing.

At the Conference on Disarmament the United States continues to support the establishment of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban on the basis of a non-negotiating mandate that would permit substantive examination of specific issues relating to a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, including scope, verification and compliance. However, the United States is not prepared to engage in negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty at this time and consequently would oppose any call to initiate such negotiations.

By the same token the United States is opposed to the proposal that has been made to amend the limited test-ban Treaty of 1963 to make it a comprehensive test ban covering all environments. We believe that it would be a waste of the parties' time and resources to convene an amendment conference. Under the provisions of the Treaty, for any amendment to be accepted it would be required, inter alia, that all depositaries approve it. The United States will not approve any amendment that would turn the limited test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test ban. The limited test-ban Treaty, the first international arms control agreement in the nuclear era, was concluded a quarter of a century ago. It is a very important instrument, which has served the interests of mankind all these years. It should not be used as a political football in international debates over the issue of a comprehensive test ban. None the less, despite its opposition to this amendment and to the holding of an amendment conference, the United States has met all its obligations as a depositary and will continue to do so.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

My Government considers one of the most urgent arms control challenges facing the community of nations today to be illegal chemical-weapons use and the dangerous spread of chemical-weapons capabilities. The best solution to this problem, in our view, would be a truly global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable ban. In 1984 Vice-President George Bush presented a United States draft text of a chemical-weapons convention to the Conference on Disarmament. Largely on the basis of this initiative and of the proposals of other participants, the Conference on Disarmament has made considerable progress in negotiations on a chemical-weapons convention, but a considerable amount of work remains to be done.

In his address to the General Assembly at its 4th plenary meeting, on 26 September, President Reagan called on the parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and all other concerned States to convene a conference to take action to reverse the serious erosion of respect for international norms against the illegal use of chemical weapons in armed conflict. Such a conference is not intended to delay, or be a substitute for, the ongoing negotiations in Geneva on a comprehensive ban. In fact, it should give additional impetus to the negotiations. By focusing high-level attention on the part of the Governments of the world on the questions of the illegal use and proliferation of chemical weapons, we will work towards broadly acceptable solutions that could be expressed collectively by the participants. A renewed international commitment against illegal use of chemical weapons is needed now to give a comprehensive ban a fighting chance.

The United States also supports the continuation of the work of the group of experts who are assisting the Secretary-General to develop further technical guidelines and procedures for investigation of possible use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons. This work should be completed promptly in order that it might be available to the Secretary-General for appropriate use.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

There is broad international recognition of the fact that the spread of nuclear weapon would threaten regional and global stability and there is wide support for international co-operative efforts to confront this threat. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) all contribute significantly to non-proliferation objectives and will continue to receive strong support from the United States.

This year, during the work of the First Committee, the States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty will organize themselves to prepare for the review of the Treaty in 1990. The Treaty has made an important contribution to international security and to the peaceful use of the atom. Today the world is a safer place for both parties and non-parties because of the broad observance of the provisions of the non-proliferation Treaty. The fact that the non-proliferation Treaty continues to attract important new adherents is testimony to its vitality. For its part the United States will work together with the other parties to ensure that the 1990 Review Conference will examine the Treaty thoroughly in order to make sure that it continues to function effectively.

The United States also remains committed to making the peaceful benefits of the atom available to those who have demonstrated a commitment to the principles of the non-proliferation Treaty or any comparable internationally binding commitment not to acquire nuclear explosive devices and who are responsible members of the world community. While the growth of nuclear energy has slowed somewhat over the past decade, owing in large part to the changing economics of energy, many nations will become increasingly dependent upon nuclear power as a safe, reliable and environmentally friendly source of energy in the years ahead. Also the applications of nuclear isotopes in medicine and agriculture are growing and are becoming more important.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

It will be necessary to maintain strong support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in particular for its efforts to implement the best possible safeguards system on civil nuclear activities. This will require co-operation and contributions on the part of all States, especially those with substantial nuclear programmes. It seems clear that the importance of the Treaty and of IAEA will continue indefinitely into the future and that they should remain key elements of international security.

As the United States and the Soviet Union continue to negotiate towards significant nuclear reductions, so must all States maintain their support for efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. Nuclear threshold States that have rejected the non-proliferation Treaty cannot escape their responsibility in this area. We urge them to consider parallel initiatives on a regional or international basis to reduce the risks of nuclear weapons proliferation.

In the Conference on Disarmament the United States has supported the work of the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for the consideration of outer space arms control issues of global interest. This Committee was established originally, and has continued to operate, on the basis of a non-negotiating mandate. The United States has made a serious attempt to identify measures that might be feasible and desirable as the basis for negotiating further multilateral arms control agreements that apply to outer space. We remain willing to listen to any proposals and to give them the consideration that is their due. However we have identified no appropriate measures and have seen no proposals from others that we believe would enhance international security and that are both feasible and verifiable. Frankly, at this point my Government is skeptical that there are any new multilateral outer space arms control measures just waiting to be discovered that make sense.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

Conventional arms control also deserves serious consideration, for it is these weapons that have caused millions of casualties since the founding of the United Nations. On the positive side, the implementation of the measures agreed to in Stockholm in 1986 has proceeded smoothly. Today, as a result there may be less likelihood of war in Europe caused by miscalculation or misunderstanding.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

However, Europe remains the most heavily armed region in the world, where major imbalances of forces exist. Therefore, the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies have proposed two sets of negotiations to deal with conventional forces in Europe. In one set of negotiations between the 23 members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact we seek to enhance stability at a lower level of conventional forces. The other negotiation among the 35 Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) States will build upon and expand the measures agreed to in Stockholm.

While situations in other regions of the world are different, perhaps the European experience in developing confidence-building measures and considering limitations on forces and equipment might be adapted to fit in certain other cases. In particular where there are tensions among neighbours, or conflicts are coming to an end, the role of confidence-building measures tailored to the specific situations might contribute to greater regional stability and help to dispel long-standing suspicions. The United States would be prepared to share its experience in this regard with any country or group of countries that might have an interest.

The fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission is now seized of the subject of conventional disarmament indicates a broad recognition of the global importance of this issue. The specific questions involved, including the causes of the accumulation of conventional arms, may differ from one region of the world to another. This makes the task of the Disarmament Commission extremely complex, but all the more important. We hope that all Member States will make every effort to see that conventional disarmament issues receive the attention that they are due.

We understand that this Committee may be presented with arms proposals for limits or constraints on naval activities. This makes it necessary to state the firm position of the United States regarding such proposals. Requirements for

(Mr. Burns, United States)

naval armaments and activities of various nations are inherently asymmetrical and are based on broader geographic, political, strategic and other military factors. Located between, and separated from, allies by two oceans, the United States relies on maritime activities and freedom of navigation under international law to protect its security and trade interests. Therefore, the United States cannot agree to any arms limitations or additional constraints on its naval activities.

If arms control measures are to be effective, the parties must comply with all of the provisions. It is not only important for each party to make sure that it is in compliance; it is just as important to remove any doubts that others may have regarding that party's compliance. Confidence in the effectiveness of existing agreements is an important part of the foundation of future agreements. Over the past several years the First Committee has given recognition to the importance of compliance with arms-control agreements if the benefits of such agreements are to be realized. Again this year the United States, together with a number of co-sponsors, intends to introduce a draft resolution that encourages faithful compliance with arms-control obligations. We would welcome the continued support of all Member States for the draft resolution.

The United States shares the disappointment that many others have also expressed that it was not possible to reach consensus on a concluding document at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. But we do not judge the session to have been a failure. The exchanges of views that took place and the work carried out in attempting to achieve a consensus on a concluding document point to a deepening understanding of the real issues involved in our search for a more peaceful and secure world. Realism in our work is always needed. As the Secretary-General also noted in his recent report on the work of the United Nations, the discussion during the special session demonstrated that arms control cannot be separated from the general state of relations in the world.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

The Committee will be considering many issues and many draft resolutions in the weeks ahead. There will be many opportunities to examine long-standing issues once again and to consider new issues. One of the most important contributions that the Committee can make is to discover the common ground that can serve as the basis for progress in ongoing work or new actions. This search for common ground, for meaningful consensus, is not easy. Posturing and polemics should be set aside. Where serious security concerns have been expressed they must be considered and taken into account. They cannot be swept aside for the sake of good will.

The world remains a dangerous place. There is still aggression and suppression of freedom on a massive scale. The most effective way for most countries to protect themselves remains the deterrence of aggression and maintaining the ability to defeat aggression should it occur. The Charter of the United Nations recognizes the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against any Member State.

Our goal, and a goal that most other countries share, is to make the world safer, to reduce the opportunity for aggression. But a safer world is not enough. We must seek a better world - a world where disputes are settled peacefully, a world where the rights of nations and the rights of individuals are respected and protected, a world where there is justice and freedom, a world where all countries are at peace with one another and with themselves.

The United Nations is playing an important role in helping to restore the peace in many areas. We should all be grateful for the fact that this institution, which was founded on such lofty principles and with great expectations, is reinvigorating its utility and purpose in the area of peacekeeping.

(Mr. Burns, United States)

As we undertake our work in this Committee, let us move down the path towards a better world. We have made progress. Additional progress can be made. We should not despair that the end of the road is not in sight. Let us continue our journey, one step at a time.

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): It is noticeable that the statements being made here, and in the General Assembly itself, exhibit a degree of hopefulness such as has not been heard in this forum for several years. The reasons for this are not hard to find. In the relations between the two leading military Powers bellicose posturing has been displaced by sustained, serious negotiations which have already produced important agreements and hold out the promise of more. In the Gulf region, scene of the longest and deadliest war of this half century, the guns have been silenced and the negotiators have begun their work. In Afghanistan foreign military forces are being withdrawn and the means for national reconstruction are being mobilized. In other regions long victimized by military conflict or foreign occupation, such as Namibia and Kampuchea, new voices of realism are being heard.

A great poet once referred to hope as "a strange invention" which seems always to be intermingled with our fears - fears that our hopes cannot be realized. And yet without hope we cannot muster the boldness and daring needed to face down our fears and seek to resolve them. The expressions of renewed hope we are hearing are, I trust, an augury of the growing readiness of peoples and their Governments to address the real problems we confront and seize opportunities for their solution.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Hope that is not grounded on hard experience can be dangerously illusory. What has been achieved thus far remains fragile. Conflict continues in some areas and is scarcely held in check in others. Guns silenced are not guns abandoned. Negotiations alone cannot eliminate deep-seated enmities nor quickly meet long-neglected social and economic needs. Our central task must be to consolidate the gains that have been made and to build on them. We must aim to institutionalize peace. We must try to make peace contagious.

Calls for sweeping transformations of international institutions or prescriptions for the quick negotiation of agreements within a calendar of arbitrary deadlines are not the answer. That is the path of false hope and can lead only to disillusionment. On matters of international security there can be no quick fixes. The central ingredients of success are patience, persistence and realism.

That, in fact, is the recipe that has begun to bring about what we must hope will be a remarkable and lasting transformation in East-West security relations. Careful, painstaking negotiation between the United States of America and the USSR has resulted in the welcome Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - the first-ever agreement providing for real nuclear-arms reductions. Moreover, the negotiating agenda between those two great Powers remains encouragingly crowded: reductions in strategic nuclear arsenals, on which major progress has already been made; the step-by-step limitation of nuclear tests, leading to their eventual elimination; the role of strategic defence in relation to outer space. Canada urges the two countries to persist in those negotiating efforts with a view to concluding, as soon as possible, further verifiable agreements.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Just as important, the members of the two major military alliances, as well as the other countries of Europe, are in unprecedented ways addressing issues relating to the conventional-arms balance in Europe. Within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the 1986 Document of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, with its provisions for advance notifications, observations and international inspections of conventional military activities, is being effectively implemented. Additional confidence-building and security-building measures in Europe are to be negotiated. Further, within the same broad institutional framework, members of the two alliances are on the eve of launching negotiations towards a balance of conventional arms at lower levels in Europe.

None of that progress has occurred quickly or easily. There have been set-backs, and, indeed, many hurdles remain to be overcome. It is the firm view of the Government of Canada, however, that it is only through careful, step-by-step negotiating approaches, such as those that have begun to register significant achievements in the East-West context, that effective and lasting progress in arms control and disarmament can be accomplished.

It is cause for special satisfaction to the Government of Canada that there appears a reawakening within the international community to the effective and practical role the United Nations can play in promoting peace, security and disarmament. Its usefulness, for example, in facilitating the settlement of regional conflicts and in investigating alleged breaches of international treaties has been recently demonstrated. The timely award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces is symbolic of that new awareness. Canadians took special pride in the award, since over 80,000 citizens of our country have served in United Nations peace-keeping contingents, 78 of whom have given their

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

lives in the course of their peace-keeping duties. As Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, has recently observed, Canada's participation in every peace-keeping action thus far would not have been possible without the unwavering support of the Canadian people to the ideas and the aims of the United Nations Charter.

Canada's commitment to the principles and objectives of the Organization, therefore, cannot be in doubt. Successive Canadian Governments, without exception, have advocated strengthening of the United Nations system and its effective use by its membership. We are very gratified indeed that others seem to be rediscovering the capability of the United Nations to play a significant and constructive role. I would like to note particularly the assistance the USSR provided to Canada in carrying out its peace-keeping tasks in Iran and Iraq. That represents one of several welcome new developments in the Soviet Union's approach to the United Nations.

It is precisely because of the firmness of Canada's support for the United Nations system and our belief in its central role in building peace and enhancing security that we have always examined carefully and in a positive spirit any proposal for the strengthening of United Nations machinery or for improvements in its procedures and methods. We will continue to do so. However, that same concern for the viability of the United Nations has also prompted us to be cautious about proposals for major restructuring of existing machinery or for the elaboration of supplementary or parallel institutions.

In the Canadian view the United Nations Charter remains valid in its totality and is not in need of rewriting. Neither do we see any need for a major overhaul of our institutional structures. We are similarly doubtful about the utility or even the wisdom of selecting from among the principles on which United Nations

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

institutions are now based with a view to bringing about major reorientations in our structures or procedures. What is needed is a sustained political will and determination to put to the best possible use the machinery that is already at our disposal. That applies, a fortiori, in the areas of peace, security and arms control.

It must be conceded that in the area of disarmament the recent record of the United Nations, and of the First Committee specifically, has been, at best, mixed. True, there have been some notable achievements. The elaboration by the United Nations Disarmament Commission of agreed sets of principles relating to confidence-building measures and to verification are solid examples. But, on the whole, our record has not been one about which we can boast. The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament did not reach consensus on a concluding final document. Within the First Committee, recent years have witnessed a proliferation of resolutions and a general dispersal of effort.

It might be said that the situation is not one to be deplored but one that simply illustrates the function of this forum as a political seismograph giving voice to and reflecting accurately the diversity and contention that undeniably exist within the international community on the sensitive, difficult issues touching on peace, security and arms control and disarmament. That, of course, is a legitimate and necessary function of this forum. No participant here should ever feel inhibited from expressing governmental views and interests with directness and emphasis.

Nevertheless, it is not our sole function here to register national positions. If we are to have any real influence, if we are to contribute to the reconciliation of divergent views and the setting of priorities for concerted

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

international effort, we must also seek out common ground. In practical terms, that means we must try to reduce the number of our draft resolutions. We must seek consensus on as many draft resolutions as possible. We must be discriminate and realistic about urging particular actions and undertakings of other forums. Only in that way can we realistically expect to have some influence on deliberations and negotiations elsewhere, such as at the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

I have outlined the broad perspective from which Canada is approaching our deliberations in this Committee this year. Now I would like to remark briefly on the particular subjects and issues to which Canada's delegation will be giving priority attention.

It is now virtually universally accepted that effective verification is an essential element of the arms control and disarmament process. This consensus has been concretely registered in the set of verification principles which were agreed upon in the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its past two sessions. Canada hopes and expects that the General Assembly will give its unqualified endorsement to those verification principles at the current session. The Canadian Government also firmly believes that the United Nations can have a significant and positive role in promoting and facilitating effective verification. We have therefore examined closely and in a positive spirit various proposals that have been made for a United Nations role in verification. We have consulted closely with the Governments which have put forward such proposals. Our central concern is to ensure that the United Nations can acquire an appropriate role in verification which will strengthen the arms control and disarmament process by facilitating the conclusion and implementation of agreements and will enhance the authority and credibility of the United Nations system. It is our carefully considered view that, pursuant to this objective, an expert study under the authority of the Secretary-General would be the wisest next step. In close co-operation with several other delegations, Canada will be sponsoring a resolution calling for such a study, as well as endorsing the verification principles agreed at the UNDC.

There is at this juncture a perhaps unprecedented global awareness of the abhorrent nature of chemical weapons. The main reason for this is not to be welcomed - the deplorable repeated use of chemical weapons in the Gulf war, as investigated and reported by the Secretary-General. Canada, like many other

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

nations, has welcomed President Reagan's call for and President Mitterrand's offer to host a conference to reverse the erosion of the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of chemical weapons. What these events underline is the urgency of concluding as soon as possible a comprehensive, verifiable global ban on chemical weapons, as it is being negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament.

For many, including the Canadian Government, the progress in these negotiations must seem frustratingly slow. But in our judgement, this is not because of a lack of serious effort and intent on the part of participants in the negotiations. Rather, it reflects the genuinely difficult technical and legal issues involved, particularly in relation to various aspects of the verification provisions of the treaty under negotiation. The Canadian delegation, in close co-operation with the delegation of Poland, will work to ensure that this Committee again registers by consensus its view on the urgency of concluding the negotiations towards a global, verifiable chemical weapons ban.

The conclusion of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing has long been, and remains, a fundamental Canadian objective. The progress being made in this area by the United States and the USSR is welcome and should be energetically pursued. With other delegations, we will again be sponsoring a draft resolution urging steps toward the earliest attainment of this objective.

The Canadian delegation will also be giving special attention to other issues which we regard as of priority concern. One of these is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This has been under active discussion at the Conference on Disarmament since 1985. Canada has made major contributions to those discussions, which we believe have contributed usefully to clarification of the issues involved. We will continue to do so. Clearly, the negotiations between the USA and the USSR in this area are of crucial importance and should be supported. Continued strict compliance with existing relevant treaties, including the 1972

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, remains critically important. Equally clearly, this is a subject area of legitimate multilateral concern, and decisions on whether additional legal measures may be required are of broad international interest.

For more than three decades the international arms control and disarmament agenda has been dominated by issues related to nuclear weapons. This dominant concern was clearly recorded in the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. This preoccupation was not misplaced and there must be no slackening of efforts to reduce reliance on nuclear arms.

However, tens of millions have been slaughtered by the use of conventional weapons. Moreover, technological advances are resulting in quantum leaps in both the destructive capabilities of non-nuclear weapons and the costs of their development and production. It is especially tragic that countries which can ill afford the diversion of resources from pressing social and economic needs feel compelled to resort to large-scale acquisition of such weaponry. The Canadian delegation is therefore eager to engage with other delegations in constructive and dispassionate dialogue on how best to bring the conventional arms race, in both its quantitative and qualitative dimensions, under more effective control. At the heart of such a project is how to reduce the sense of insecurity which leads States to rely increasingly on arms as a basis for security and, equally, how to bring arms-related technological developments under more effective policy direction.

I began my statement with some brief reflections on the ambivalent nature of hope in human affairs. Hope, while subject to deception, is a necessary pre-condition for any kind of human achievement. Our sense of the present situation is that there is a bit more hope in the air than we have recently been

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

accustomed to. We must build on this and we must build carefully. Peace must become embedded in our institutions and our habits. The United Nations must be the premiere forum for this collective endeavour. Let us use it well.

Mr. STEPHANOU (Greece): It is my privilege today to take the floor on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States. In doing so, I should like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, whom I welcome as representing a friendly country, our sincere congratulations on your election to this demanding office. It is known to all of us that you have spared no efforts in your endeavour to improve the working methods of this Committee. Our congratulations are also extended to the other members of the Bureau. We trust that under your leadership this Committee will conduct its business not only efficiently but with success, and we can assure you of the full support of the Twelve in this work.

East-West relations have markedly improved during the last 12 months. While much remains to be done, new and more favourable conditions have nonetheless emerged for the achievement of significant progress in the process of arms control and disarmament and of strengthening peace. Unprecedented results have already been achieved in certain important areas.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

A breakthrough has been achieved, mainly by the conclusion of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - and the commitment by the United States of America and the Soviet Union to negotiate a 50 per cent cut in their strategic nuclear arsenals. The Twelve attach great importance to the achievement of an agreement on a 50 per cent reduction in the strategic nuclear arsenals of the two super-Powers in accordance with their agreed objective.

Progress has been recorded in the negotiations on a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons.

The Twelve have long advocated progress in those areas. They will continue to work resolutely for further results with a view to strengthening international peace and enhancing security and stability at the lowest possible level of forces.

Bearing in mind the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the Charter, the Twelve stress the Council's importance in promoting a more stable political climate, which in turn would be conducive to arms control and disarmament. The Security Council also has a primary role in the prevention of the use or threat of the use of force and in the solution of regional conflicts, thus contributing to an improvement of conditions, in which arms control can be promoted.

The positive political climate created by the Washington and Moscow summit meetings and contacts at the highest levels between the United States of America and the Soviet Union should be preserved. Such contacts have already amply demonstrated the impetus they can add to the negotiations between the super-Powers on the various aspects of their agenda, and not least in the central area of arms control and disarmament. The Twelve hope that these high-level contacts between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will continue into

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

the future, thus consolidating this most vital of bilateral relationships and developing still further areas of co-operation and common ground. This enhanced United States-Soviet relationship offers us an invaluable opportunity in this Committee to make speedy and substantial progress in the work before us.

The Twelve have frequently underlined the central role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament. In the statement made on behalf of the Twelve by the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. Genscher, at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Twelve stressed the need for constructive parallelism between the bilateral and the multilateral processes. This implies a role for the United Nations which will allow it to make headway on the many important arms-control and disarmament issues which are on its agenda. Multilateral action is of increasing importance, and international peace and security will not be fully realized in its absence.

Despite the fact that at its third special session devoted to disarmament the General Assembly was unable to agree on a concluding document, useful progress was made in some areas. The Twelve took an active part in endeavours to make the special session a success, and we regret that it was not possible to reach agreement in the end.

While it is natural that in our deliberations we will reflect on the outcome of the special session and on the differences that prevented the adoption of a final document, it is the sincere hope of the Twelve that this session of the First Committee will preserve the positive and constructive atmosphere of the special session and the forty-second regular session. We believe that our debate should be focused on concrete and constructive proposals. The task ahead now is to build on the areas of agreement - and many such areas were identified at the special session - and to redouble our efforts in those areas where agreement proved elusive.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

Numerous interesting and valuable ideas and proposals have been put forward, and these could be explored further during this session of our Committee. Only a positive approach towards the future can be of any value for our work. Our burden of work is a heavy one, as is our responsibility to make progress in those areas where progress is possible. For their part, the Twelve will do their utmost to assist you, Mr. Chairman, in your task. Thus, we look forward to this session of the General Assembly giving us new opportunities to promote the solution of problems unresolved by the special session and to enhance the consensus reached on a number of points. The challenge of interdependence must be met with a universal commitment to appropriate international action. International peace and security cannot be achieved in an atmosphere that fosters an ever growing accumulation of weapons.

The Twelve firmly believe that recent progress in disarmament must gain global recognition in a framework of positive interaction between the multilateral and the bilateral dimensions of the negotiating process. Concrete conclusions must be drawn from this progress with a view to pursuing significant efforts in all relevant areas that can ease international tensions and promote arms control and disarmament.

Military threats and existing imbalances challenge security and stability. They should be eliminated through balanced and verifiable arms-control agreements, ensuring security at lower levels of forces and armaments. Resolving the underlying political tensions and differences between States, and building confidence between States, are important tasks for us all.

The reduction of nuclear arsenals remains one of the highest priorities, and the United States of America and the Soviet Union have a crucial responsibility in this respect. The Twelve continue to see as central and pressing tasks for the

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

international community progress towards balanced and verifiable reductions of conventional armaments as well as the complete elimination of chemical weapons.

Specific bilateral, regional and multilateral efforts should be further strengthened to reduce and ultimately eliminate the risk of war. In those efforts, the greatest emphasis should be placed on all elements across the range of military arsenals: nuclear, chemical and conventional. The Twelve welcome the ongoing efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union to consider ways to avoid unintended military confrontation.

The Twelve hope for a solution to the problems relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They underscore the importance of observation of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty, in the light of recent consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two super-Powers should be encouraged to pursue their talks. The Conference on Disarmament should, for its part, be encouraged to continue its efforts on this point. All relevant questions, including multilateral and bilateral aspects of this issue, should be taken into account.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles is a milestone in the field of nuclear arms reductions. It marks a breakthrough from arms control to genuine arms reductions. For the first time an entire class of nuclear weapons is being eliminated. The conclusion of this Treaty should give further impetus to substantive progress in the whole range of bilateral, regional and multilateral negotiations on arms control and disarmament. The far-reaching co-operative verification measures and asymmetrical reductions contained in it should serve as an important precedent.

The Twelve also welcome the agreement reached between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on notification of launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The agenda of the First Committee contains, as in previous years, proposals concerning nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain parts of the world. The creation of such zones could contribute to stability in the areas concerned, to non-proliferation and to the disarmament process in general, provided that the States concerned are prepared to participate on the basis of agreements freely entered into and in keeping with internationally recognized principles.

The Twelve believe that no one can gain through a proliferation of nuclear weapons. Greater co-operation by all States is necessary to strengthen non-proliferation, which makes an important contribution to international security. The Twelve attach the utmost importance to an effective international non-proliferation régime. They firmly support international co-operation for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under appropriate international safeguards. Those of the Twelve that are parties to the non-proliferation Treaty hope that the forthcoming non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference will further serve to underpin the non-proliferation régime.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The question of a comprehensive test ban remains on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. The Twelve note that agreement on a mandate to establish an ad hoc Committee on this issue remains to be achieved. They also note the useful work of the seismic experts.

The Twelve also note the commencement of full-scale, stage-by-stage negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear testing in order to facilitate an early ratification of the United States-USSR Threshold Test Ban Treaty of 1974 and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty of 1976.

Conventional disarmament is essential and should be pursued urgently as an integral part of the overall disarmament process, in which all States of the world should be actively involved. The subject of conventional disarmament should thus be kept at the forefront of the multilateral debate on disarmament. We hope that the Disarmament Commission at its 1989 session will be able to agree on a substantive report on the subject.

Innumerable lives have been lost throughout the world in conflicts waged with conventional weapons. Increasingly powerful weapons continue to be developed. Regional agreements are of particular relevance. The emerging consensus on these basic considerations, as well as the growing recognition of the overall importance of conventional disarmament, should be welcomed. Furthermore, the expenditure on conventional armaments and forces absorbs an overwhelming proportion of all military budgets in the world and thereby has increasingly become a serious economic strain on a large number of countries.

Conventional arms control is an issue that we take very seriously in Europe, where the concentration of troops and armaments is high, and we are making urgent efforts to deal with this question. To enhance security in Europe it is necessary to establish a stable and secure balance of conventional forces at lower levels and to introduce a further set of confidence- and security-building measures. We look

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

forward to the start within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process of negotiations on such confidence- and security-building measures and on conventional stability where the aim will be to eliminate existing disparities prejudicial to stability and security and to eliminate the capability for launching surprise attacks and for initiating large-scale offensive actions. In view of the potential offered by negotiations on conventional stability covering the whole of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, particular importance is attached to the achievement of a mandate and to the early commencement of these negotiations. A successful conclusion of the Vienna Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting would secure the opening of these negotiations.

The Twelve are firmly committed to a balanced outcome of the Vienna follow-up meeting, which benefits all people in the 35 participating States. The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) process remains the central element of an East-West policy aimed at peace and security based on co-operation and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Twelve are firmly convinced that reliable and effective verification is both feasible and indispensable. It remains an integral part of arms control. The development of confidence-building measures and the promotion of more openness and transparency in the military field are central elements for progress in arms control, at both the global and regional levels. The 12 member States of the European Community remain convinced that a better flow of information on military capabilities would help to relieve international tension. They have consistently implemented a wide variety of measures whose aim is to contribute to the widest possible degree of openness in military matters in general. The adoption of measures that contribute to greater openness and transparency helps to prevent

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

misperceptions and miscalculations of the intentions and military capabilities of others.

The convergence of views on issues related to verification and compliance with arms control and disarmament agreements achieved in the Disarmament Commission is most encouraging. These efforts should be resolutely pursued with a view to agreeing on a number of principles to be made applicable, when necessary, to various verification régimes tailored according to the particular needs of each arms control agreement.

Furthermore, multilateral aspects of the verification of arms control and disarmament agreements deserve further in-depth consideration.

The adoption of concrete confidence-building measures is required to strengthen international peace and security. The Twelve note with satisfaction an increased awareness of the importance of confidence-building measures for the enhancement of international peace and security. Measures in this regard would serve to reduce mistrust, misunderstanding and miscalculation and to further the relaxation of international tensions.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

In this respect, the Twelve consider that the results achieved at the Stockholm Conference and the encouraging experience gained so far with the implementation of the Stockholm Document have contributed significantly to improving confidence and mutual trust in Europe. What we now need is an enhanced system of such measures aimed at promoting more openness and transparency in the military field. The Twelve, like many other Europeans, are firmly committed to the new round of confidence- and security-building measures negotiations.

This year the United Nations Disarmament Commission agreed, following the initiative of one of the Twelve, on a catalogue of guidelines for confidence-building measures. The Twelve wish to ensure that the network of confidence-building measures is expanded and intensified on a global scale. This catalogue can now at last be adopted by the General Assembly and then applied by each country in accordance with its own particular situation.

Confidence-building has played and will continue to play an important role in multilateral disarmament affairs. It is to be welcomed that this notion is now widely accepted. In this context the United Nations standardized reporting system is an important means for making military expenditures comparable world-wide and more transparent. The Twelve call on all Member States to take part in it in the near future.

Greater transparency and openness in military matters, including defence budgets, is a fundamental requirement. Likewise, as suggested by Foreign Minister Genscher in his statement on behalf of the Twelve at the third special session devoted to disarmament, would it not be possible for the United Nations to provide a framework for more openness and transparency with regard to world-wide arms exports and imports?

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The Twelve underline their commitment to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in the United Nations system. It remains an indispensable forum in the field of disarmament. The Twelve look forward to the results of the discussions undertaken within the Conference on Disarmament, which we hope will enhance and strengthen the effectiveness of the Conference in its disarmament efforts.

The Twelve attach particular importance to the negotiations on chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. They strongly advocate the early establishment of a global and effectively verifiable ban on chemical weapons, and reaffirm their commitment to the total elimination of those weapons. Joint efforts can bring closer the resolution of the pending problems, including the complex but fundamental verification issues, in a way acceptable to all. Those of the Twelve that are participants in the Conference will continue vigorously to pursue this goal at the negotiations.

The use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq conflict has been condemned resolutely by the Twelve and the international community. In this context the Twelve welcome the consensus reached for strengthening the application of the 1925 Protocol and provisions for United Nations investigations of allegations of the use of chemical weapons. They welcome and warmly support the proposals of the President of the United States of America and the President of France, made before the General Assembly, to convene an international conference on the problem of the use and proliferation of chemical weapons.

The Twelve are also gravely concerned at reports of the alleged use of chemical weapons against the Kurdish civilian population. They call for respect for international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Protocol of 1925 and Security Council resolutions 612 (1988) and 620 (1988). They confirm their previous positions, vigorously condemning the use of these weapons.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The actual use of chemical weapons has underlined the importance and urgency of the conclusion of a comprehensive, verifiable and global convention on the elimination of chemical weapons, and has highlighted the consequences of their use in any regional conflict and the dangers of further proliferation.

The Twelve are encouraged by the results of the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. They welcome the measures adopted for voluntary confidence-building and look forward to a widespread response among the States parties.

The International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development was a significant event. It contributed to a more substantial and comprehensive understanding of the matter. The Conference reaffirmed the crucial importance of the question of security in any detailed analysis of the relationship between disarmament and development. The Twelve participated actively in the Conference and subscribe to the need to implement its Final Document.

The role of the United Nations in disarmament is an important subject, which for some years has been under consideration in this Committee and the Disarmament Commission, and it was also considered at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The Twelve are convinced that, in accordance with the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter, the United Nations must play a central role in the quest for disarmament.

The General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies should continue to carry out their deliberative functions. In particular, the First Committee should continue to serve as the Assembly's main Committee for dealing with disarmament and related international security questions. It is important to enable this forum to become

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

more effective. In the view of the Twelve, it is the extent of meaningful consensus, and not the number of resolutions submitted and voted upon, that will enhance the credibility of the Committee. A serious and successful effort, supported by the Twelve, was made during the forty-second session. Let us hope that this encouraging precedent will guide our work during this session in order to expand the area of consensus.

The Twelve support the concept and objective of the United Nations disarmament studies programme. The machinery provided by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) can usefully supplement the programme. The role of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Studies is quite evidently crucial. It is important that we focus on study activities that can enhance the quality of our deliberations, taking into account the fact that resources are scarce and that choices will have to be made.

The Disarmament Commission, which held its session this year shortly before the third special session, achieved agreement on verification as well as on confidence-building measures. It is a positive step. The Twelve hope that this achievement will prove conducive to the relevant work in the First Committee, and it must gain its recognition.

(Mr. Stephanou, Greece)

The Twelve wish to reaffirm their conviction that the Disarmament Commission serves as a place for in-depth deliberations and thus constitutes an indispensable link in the multilateral-disarmament process.

We are looking forward to supplying more specific comments when items on our agenda are discussed and draft resolutions submitted.

In conclusion, I should like to pledge the full support of the 12 countries of the European Community for the work of the First Committee. We are ready to play an active and constructive part, and we will make every effort to contribute to a successful conclusion of the work before us.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): The international political situation seems to be more propitious than ever for the work of the forty-third session of the General Assembly and its First Committee. The positive trends generated by the need for and feasibility of security for all through disarmament are taking on substance. Thus, last year the General Assembly welcomed the Soviet-United States agreement on the elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, and today we are witnessing the destruction of those weapons, weapons that are capable of wiping entire cities off the face of the earth in a split second. A new page has been turned in the history of human relations, which may and should become the beginning of a new chapter of co-operation, interaction and trust on behalf of progress in the process of shaping comprehensive security.

The task of writing this new chapter of history is a task for the entire world community. Plato once said that history is created by a multitude of actors, and even though for a time history may seem to be shaped by a chosen few, each step taken will eventually have to pass the test of collective reason. In our age of

(Mr. Apt'ovskiy, USSR)

interaction and multilateralism the ancient philosopher's idea has acquired a special significance. Indeed, no historic challenge facing mankind today can be met without collective thought, without common, agreed conclusions and approaches, without joint action.

Disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, which is the most important military area of comprehensive security, is no exception. As a result of historical circumstances it is the Soviet Union and the United States that have led the way in nuclear disarmament. Although only Soviet and United States nuclear weapons are being eliminated, the result is increased security for all, not just for those two States. The Soviet Union and the United States concluded their bilateral Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - but it would be no exaggeration to say that that Treaty embodies the collective wisdom of the entire community of nations and its urgent call, voiced from the rostrum of the United Nations, to make a start on real nuclear disarmament.

Representatives of a number of States and of the United Nations Secretary-General witnessed the destruction of the first Soviet missiles. That event, which far transcends mere protocol or symbolism, highlights another feature of the present day, namely, openness and democratization.

The world community is beginning to tap the vast potential of common creative effort through joint and open actions and through the channelling of all its unilateral, bilateral, regional and global efforts into one course propelled by collective reason.

That creative effort is the driving force behind comprehensive international security, reliable and equal security free from mutual apprehension or suspicion. The dialogue at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

disarmament, with its predominantly action-oriented atmosphere, generated many productive ideas that, despite their diversity, had one common element, namely, the desire to internationalize efforts and to initiate an effective search for ways of inhabiting our common home that will worthy of our civilization.

We do not wish to make too much of the fact that the special session failed to adopt a final document, although one was, as they say, almost within its grasp. We regard the special session's determination to make disarmament the dominant factor in international relations and to put multilateral mechanisms into high gear as a positive achievement and as a contribution to true progress towards security through disarmament.

Multilateralism has acquired a new dimension in a situation in which disarmament has begun and is gaining momentum on the bilateral level. It is our hope - and the results of the recent meeting between our Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, and the United States Secretary of State, George Shultz, have strengthened that hope - that the intensive Soviet-United States talks on 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive weapons in the context of compliance with the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, now under way at Geneva, will soon provide us with an opportunity to witness the destruction, this time, of strategic arms.

Most importantly, the talks have laid a solid foundation for future agreements that will make it possible to negotiate an early agreement on truly major reductions in nuclear arsenals, provided there is reciprocal movement.

Nuclear disarmament, however, is an all-embracing process, and not only because of its results. It must also be all-embracing in terms of involving those indirectly concerned and not only the nuclear Powers, for without them a nuclear-weapon-free world is impossible. All States can and want to contribute to

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

accelerating the movement towards a world free from nuclear weapons. Their contribution includes moral support for the efforts of the two or five nuclear Powers, as well as tangible material multilateral actions. In the context of common international actions and democratic international relations, it is not enough for some States merely to provide others with information, no matter how complete such information may be. What is required here is vigorous action by all to prevent a nuclear war, to achieve nuclear disarmament and to discuss in a business-like manner all those problems at a multilateral level, principally at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is an important area of nuclear disarmament in which multilateral efforts are required. Here, each State can add its strong voice in favour of nuclear-weapon-free security and prevention of the destabilization of international relations which can result from nuclear weapon proliferation. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has been effectively in force for more than 20 years. The maintenance and strengthening of this key document, its universalization, are prerequisites of a steady, continuous and expanding process of nuclear disarmament.

We are convinced that only a comprehensive international treaty preventing the re-emergence of nuclear weapons, following their total and complete elimination, can supersede the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

It is our view that the next multilateral task in this field is that of ensuring that the Fourth Review Conference of the parties to the Treaty, to be held in 1990, is successful and makes possible a real strengthening of the non-proliferation régime.

That multilateral efforts to strengthen this régime and achieve nuclear-free security are effective and fruitful is vividly demonstrated by the emergence of the first nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world and by a growing movement for the establishment of such zones. We view this too as an affirmation of the democratic foundation of world politics. Wherever they live - be it in the vast expanses of Latin America or the crowded crossroads of Europe - the peoples of the world want to protect themselves against the nuclear threat and are justified in their desire. They have every right to demand that their interests be respected and guaranteed. The reaction to such demands is an indication of the attitude towards democratic principles in international relations and of a willingness to communicate with the international community in a civilized language as an equal partner rather than from the posture of a "nuclear élite".

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

For its part, the Soviet Union is entirely ready to give up its nuclear status - and the sooner the better - and would favour the elimination of the "nuclear club" altogether. But while we still hold this status - and that is a reality - we are prepared to restrict it drastically and to provide appropriate guarantees to States participating in nuclear-free zones.

In particular - and we'd like to make this point clear today - we would be prepared to be guarantors, together with the United States and the People's Republic of China, of the proposal now being made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a nuclear-free zone in the Korean peninsula. We share the view that the Tlatelolco and Rarotonga Treaties, the Declaration on establishing a nuclear-free zone in Africa, the process of creating a zone of peace and co-operation in the southern Atlantic as well as a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean provides favourable conditions for declaring in the foreseeable future the entire southern hemisphere such a zone. We are prepared to apply ourselves to a workmanlike discussion of this idea and do our best to put it into effect.

A combination of unilateral, bilateral, trilateral and multilateral efforts embodying true internationalism in action is also needed to resolve the nuclear-test-ban issue.

August 5 1988 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water. Since then, over 100 States have acceded to it, which graphically demonstrates that the initial efforts of just a few States can give a powerful impetus to others. This document has securely blocked the possibility of nuclear tests in the three environments. In the view of experts, this has contributed to a decrease in the global fall-out of radioactive substances from the upper atmosphere accumulated as a result of direct atmospheric explosions.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

To this very day, however, nuclear tests continue underground, thus providing the nuclear arms race with its very life-blood. The Soviet Union has advocated and continues to advocate a drastic solution - an immediate and comprehensive nuclear-test ban. We have also taken unilateral steps towards that objective. Our moratorium on nuclear tests was in effect for over 18 months. The Soviet delegation is authorized to declare today to the members of this Committee that the Soviet Union is ready immediately to declare a moratorium on nuclear tests on the basis of reciprocity with the United States, a moratorium of either unlimited duration or with a specific time-frame to be agreed.

Taking into account the positions of the other nuclear Powers, particularly that of the United States, the Soviet Union does not rule out the possibility of a stage-by-stage cessation of nuclear tests. The on-going Soviet-US negotiations are considering an improved verification system, permitting the ratification of the 1974 and 1976 threshold Treaties. The Joint Verification Experiment has recently been successfully completed, and this demonstrated an unprecedented degree of co-operation and openness in verifying compliance with nuclear testing limitations and confirmed the feasibility of effective verification of prohibition of these tests. The negotiators are still to conclude a new verification protocol to the Nuclear Peaceful Explosions Treaty and work on this is nearing completion, as well as a new verification protocol to the Threshold Test-Ban Treaty. The sides have agreed to work for the submission of these documents for ratification at an early date.

Subsequent stages of the negotiations will have to solve the problem of further yield and quantitative limitations of nuclear-weapon tests with a view to their ultimate complete prohibition.

We regard our bilateral negotiations on nuclear testing as part of a general international process. The start of the negotiating work at the Geneva Conference

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

on Disarmament should become an organic part of this process, particularly as the proposals made by the participants in the forum, including the Soviet Union, have provided a practical basis for such work.

Barring the arms race from space is a necessary prerequisite for movement towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. The universal significance of this issue requires an in-depth and substantive dialogue at the Conference on Disarmament. Guided by the interests of tomorrow rather than of today, we must be energetic and persistent in seeking and solidifying areas of multilateral agreement and in creating an atmosphere of openness and mutual trust in this area.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

A peaceful outer space means not just an outer space free from nuclear weapons; it means an outer space open for broad international co-operation for use in the interest of mankind. The creation of a world space organization would facilitate comprehensive solutions in this area. It is time now to focus on promising areas and specific projects that could be implemented through joint efforts and later co-ordinated within the framework of a future world space organization.

The Soviet Union proposes to create on the basis of the Krasnoyarsk radar a centre for international co-operation for the peaceful uses of outer space, and to include this in a world space organization system. We state here that we look forward to consultations with scientists of all countries who are interested in this project.

That is our concrete response to Western concerns regarding the Krasnoyarsk radar. However, our concerns regarding the construction of United States radars in Greenland and Great Britain still remain. Experts view the construction of those radars as direct violations of the anti-ballistic missile Treaty. We expect a constructive response to our initiative.

Today, chemical weapons are the focal point of multilateral disarmament. We can now clearly envisage the possibility of the early conclusion of a universal and verifiable convention on the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. Most of the fundamental problems have been resolved or are near solution. Naturally, we are not unaware of the complex unresolved issues that certainly exist, but in our view their very complexity is an additional stimulus, even a challenge which should call for an even greater effort to conclude the work.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The growing risk of the proliferation and use of chemical weapons has also made it urgent and imperative to make the final triumphant dash to the finish line in the negotiations to achieve an effective and verifiable prohibition of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union clearly and unambiguously condemns any use of chemical weapons and advocates enhancing the prestige of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, one of the oldest - yet still one of the most valid - multilateral arms-control agreements. On the basis of our position of principle, we have stated our positive attitude to the proposal for convening a conference of parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and we believe such a conference would promote early completion of work on a convention prohibiting chemical weapons. We also like the British ideas for measures to discourage the use of chemical weapons and to enhance the existing machinery for automatic United Nations investigation of cases of their use.

An international convention prohibiting chemical weapons, once concluded, will not only rid mankind of the chemical threat, but will also prove forcefully that multilateral disarmament efforts can also be effective.

With nearing prospects for eliminating chemical weapons and their industrial production base, the question of developing international co-operation for the peaceful uses of scientific and technological achievements comes to the forefront. Specifically, the Soviet Union proposes the effective implementation of special programmes of international co-operation in basic and applied chemistry and chemical technology.

The international nature of the disarmament process can manifest itself fully in the reduction of conventional arms and forces. Today, the scene for concrete activities in that sphere is Europe. During the July meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, held in Warsaw, the member States of the Warsaw Treaty set out a detailed programme for negotiations on a drastic reduction of armed forces

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

and conventional weapons in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urais. If implemented, this would create a situation in the continent where both sides would have only forces and systems necessary for defence, and insufficient for a surprise attack or for offensive action. At the same time, we propose that reductions in armed forces and conventional weapons should be accompanied by an appropriate decrease in military expenditures.

We are convinced that a solid basis exists today for the early completion in Vienna of work on a mandate for negotiations on the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons in Europe and for launching those negotiations by the end of this year.

A separate major subject for productive dialogue is the proposal to establish a European centre to reduce the risk of war and prevent surprise attack, which would be a centre for co-operation between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Operating on a continuous basis, the centre could become a useful mechanism for enhancing the reliability of peace in Europe. This idea may seem useful also to the countries of other regions, since multilateralism is the key to arranging all regional efforts to move to non-military security guarantees and to the adoption by all States of a defensive strategy and the appropriate readjustment of military structures to an exclusively non-offensive defence. In that context, the implementation of the Secretary-General's proposal on the establishment of an international centre for military-risk reduction takes on new urgency; we believe all the conditions exist for commencing practical work on the establishment of such a centre in the framework of the Secretariat.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

It is urgently necessary that we jointly consider the whole range of these issues. In that context, we view with interest India's proposal on multilateral consideration of the military doctrines of States, either at the United Nations or at the Conference on Disarmament.

Promoting the idea that security can be ensured through a reasonable sufficiency of military potential could mark the beginning of a gradual extension of the momentum which has grown in Europe with respect to the conventional-arms reduction process to other regions of the world. Practical steps to implement this idea could be undertaken on a multilateral basis, taking into account the specific conditions of each region and in conformity with the development of the overall process of radical cuts in conventional arms and armed forces.

A point of intersection for global and regional conventional-disarmament efforts is the urgent and by no means easy problem of limiting sales and supplies of conventional weapons, and of preventing the proliferation of the most destructive types and systems of such weapons. Solving that problem is closely linked with the question of the peaceful settlement of conflicts. By taking joint measures to stem the flow of weapons, the international community would contribute to halting bloodshed and destruction in conflict areas.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament clearly demonstrated the growing understanding of the international significance of this problem. In our view the international community has already developed a measure of agreement, which now only needs to be reinforced and translated into concrete agreements.

One of the first steps in this area could be the establishment of an arms sales and supplies register at the United Nations. The Soviet Union is prepared to participate in work on producing parameters for such a mechanism. Another option, proposed by Italy, is to develop a code of conduct for suppliers and purchasers of arms. States should also combine their efforts to combat energetically the illegal supply of conventional arms on the international black market, an extremely dangerous phenomenon.

Another problem is the limitation of military missile technology proliferation. We believe that we could produce a relevant multilateral agreement within the framework of the United Nations. The problem here, however, is that while blocking off the channels for the proliferation of military missile technology, we should be careful not to block access to scientific and technological progress for a great number of States. This requires a very careful balancing act. We have to steer between Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand, agreements on the subject should leave no loopholes for circumvention, while on the other hand they should not obstruct the peaceful exploration of outer space or scientific and technological co-operation.

Moral precepts are universal. This is borne out by the fact that the world community has unanimously condemned the most barbaric means of conventional warfare by signing in 1981 the Convention on the Prohibition or Restriction on the Use of "inhumane weapons". The mandatory force of this should be strengthened through the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General to investigate possible violations

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

of the Convention. This would be analogous to the machinery for investigating instances of chemical and bacteriological weapons use.

The scope of this concept could be extended to cover a ban on battlefield laser weapons used against troops to inflict blindness. Another option would be to draft - if this is what people want - a separate agreement on that subject.

Developing the concept of a comprehensive disarmament process at the United Nations, over and over again we come back to the basic underlying premise: disarmament should not be separated into the categories of security for oneself and security for others. Rather, while ensuring greater security for oneself, it should secure enhanced security for all. Partners should be prepared to accommodate each other's concerns and to build confidence in all areas simultaneously. They should also be ready to open up closed areas of the arms race and work to dispel suspicion.

The beginning of nuclear disarmament has brought into sharp focus the problem of conventional armaments and armed forces, including naval armaments. It is clear that reliable security for States cannot be guaranteed through a selective approach to specific components determining the ratio of the forces of the various sides. The naval component of military power of States should not be singled out from the overall disarmament effort. Otherwise an inexplicable blank spot would appear in the ongoing multilateral process of ensuring security through disarmament.

The logical first step would be confidence-building measures in the naval area. The ideas of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic on that subject are contained in a working document submitted to the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Today we must take a new step promoting the implementation of these ideas, and we are officially providing the United Nations and the First Committee with data on the composition of the Soviet Navy as of 1 July 1988. It is as follows:

Aircraft carriers	4
Submarines	376
Cruisers, destroyers, missile frigates	96
Escort (frigates) and small anti-submarine ships	174
Small craft and minesweepers	613
Landing ships and craft	107
Total number of warships	1,380
Combat aircraft and helicopters	1,142
Marines	12.6 thousand troops

We believe this to be an important confidence-building measure and a precondition for the beginning of serious talks on the question of naval armaments. We are entirely in solidarity here with the very cogent arguments in favour of this adduced yesterday by the representative of Sweden. We are prepared to listen carefully to all counterproposals on ways and means of building confidence at sea, guarantees of safety for maritime communications and freedom of navigation. The important thing is to exchange information, to compare the concerns of the sides and gradually to embark on a negotiating process. To this end we propose - and I should like to stress this - an immediate multilateral meeting at the United Nations with the participation of military experts of major Powers and other interested States.

The General Assembly could also address such a serious matter, relating to the confidence and security of States, as an appeal to nuclear Powers to notify the

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

presence or absence of nuclear arms on board their military vehicles calling on foreign ports. We are ready to do this, on a reciprocal basis.

Special mention should be made of the question of confidence, verification, glasnost and openness in the military field. By now I think it should be clear to everyone that without these genuine disarmament and strengthened security for nations are simply impossible. Openness and verification promote confidence, and in its turn confidence serves as a catalyst for further progress in the area of disarmament.

We agree that disclosing data on military potentials at the international level and discussing them publicly at the national level should be viewed as a major prerequisite for preventing new spirals of the arms race and releasing existing material and intellectual resources for the purposes of social and economic development.

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 has marked an unprecedented breakthrough in the area of verification and openness. It provides for the disclosure on a mutual basis of the most sensitive military information. Only a short while ago even the most unconventional thinkers could hardly have imagined that visits by Soviet and United States inspectors to what had formerly been top secret military facilities of the other side would become, as they have, commonplace and routine. Therefore, the elimination of secrecy is now becoming a factor of security.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

We must now build on that breakthrough with multilateral efforts. Then we shall be able to say that genuine international standards of confidence and openness have been established, bolstered by a broad and ramified verification infrastructure.

It is important to institutionalize verification, so that all States may not only be equally confident that disarmament agreements affecting their vital interests are rigorously observed but also involved directly in verifying compliance. That is precisely why we have proposed the establishment within the framework of the United Nations of an international monitoring and verification agency. We invite all States to consider together the best ways of implementing the idea of international verification. It is clear that it is advisable to address this major challenge gradually, after careful analysis of all suggestions and considerations that are put forward. For its part, the Soviet Union is prepared to participate in such a discussion and to support constructive ideas. For example, I repeat that we support the constructive French idea regarding a phased approach to the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency.

An atmosphere of trust based on both openness and effective, and intrusive verification can also create the best possible conditions for solving on a multilateral basis another difficult problem - that of limiting the use of scientific and technological achievements for military purposes. Concerted efforts by all States in scientific and technological exchanges as well as in curbing the arms race could make it possible not only to control the development of military technology, but also to stimulate broad international scientific co-operation.

In our view, a number of recent forward-looking proposals attest to the growing interest by the international community in these issues. For example, the

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

proposal by India and some other countries to set up a group under the United Nations Secretary-General on assessments and forecasts in the area of new technology appears to be realistic. The group would be charged with the task of defining and monitoring research and developments that might have a military application, and it would assess the potential consequences of their use for international security. If the group were created at the United Nations we would be prepared to support its work. Moreover, on the basis of reciprocity with other developed industrial countries, the Soviet Union would set up a similar group at the national level and would submit the group's annual reports to the Secretary-General.

Such measures would not impede scientific and technological progress. On the contrary, they would promote it. Democratic and peaceful co-operation in areas that are at the cutting edge of science and technology would be established through openness and mutual trust. Mankind's creative intelligence would prove its supremacy over the inertia of the arms race.

Last year's International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development made it possible to develop a broad and creative dialogue on this cardinal problem of the world of today. There is a need to implement fully the Action Programme adopted at the Conference and to make reversing the arms race a factor for social progress and overcoming backwardness. One way of proceeding is for countries to draw up national and local plans for the conversion of military industries to meeting civilian needs.

The Soviet Union would be prepared to participate in an international disarmament for development fund, channelling through it to developing countries part of the resources that would be released as a result of disarmament measures.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

A direct way to rechannel resources for peaceful purposes would be to freeze and reduce the military budgets of States on the basis of appropriate negotiations. The Soviet Union is considering the necessary measures of openness in this field, and it will announce when it will begin using the United Nations standardized military expenditure accounting system. Of course, agreement on methods for comparing military expenditures symmetrically will be required in various countries. We would be prepared to begin work on that within the framework of the United Nation immediately.

The international community, therefore, is faced with many challenges that it will have to address squarely and carefully. In this regard, there is an urgent need to mobilize the intellectual potential of all, so as to infuse into world politics all possible ideas and suggestions.

United Nations disarmament research can be very helpful in determining the subject matter, objectives and parameters of future negotiations, as well as in identifying agreed solutions to complex issues arising in the course of ongoing negotiations. It is important to lay greater emphasis on practical results and to establish closer links between the subject matter of research and specific talks.

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has a broad potential for studying promising directions in disarmament and for improving the exchange of information about the development of national scientific thought on ensuring security. We regard United Nations research and UNIDIR's scientific activities as important factors in internationalizing disarmament efforts.

The United Nations undoubtedly has a key role to play in directing all steps - unilateral, bilateral, regional or multilateral - along the one road leading the community of united States and peoples towards a secure and non-violent world. The current rebirth of our Organization, which can be seen primarily in the effective utilization of its peace-making functions for resolving regional conflicts, cannot

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

fail to have a bearing on disarmament. That in turn raises the practical question of improving the style of operation and methods of work of our Organization in this central area.

What is important is actively to promote at the United Nations a process whereby States would move from confronting one another to a search for agreed approaches and solutions, on the basis of a balance of interests. We believe that we must work to rid the United Nations of the practice of empty declarations, double standards and the inertia of confrontation, and to replace mutual recrimination and futile polemics with the business-like consideration of problems.

In our view, we should together devise new approaches to assessing United Nations activities. In so doing, we should not be guided by quantitative indicators, such as the number of resolutions adopted.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Rather, we should evaluate the quality of our work, namely, whether and to what extent it has been possible to identify issues requiring multilateral agreement, to engage in a dialogue on them, and to work out decisions on the basis of which States are prepared to undertake collective efforts. Therefore, working out and adopting General Assembly resolutions on the basis of general agreements is one of the most effective methods of ensuring a balance of the interests of States.

In our opinion, it would be important to incorporate these considerations, which are shared by all delegations, in the work of the First Committee from the outset and in full. The present Chairman is one of our most experienced diplomats and a specialist in the multilateral field, Mr. Roche. The prestige and authority of United Nations General Assembly recommendations on disarmament issues could be significantly enhanced by gradually reducing the excessive number of resolutions, many of which are repeated year after year without any tangible practical results.

United Nations General Assembly resolutions represent a kind of vector of the political will of States in the system of co-ordinates of comprehensive security. The effectiveness of those decisions is of course one of the key problems.

What is also necessary is to ensure that consensus manifests itself at the stage of the implementation of resolutions and truly reflects the readiness of States to proceed with disarmament measures. In our view, the question of the implementation by States of decisions of the General Assembly deserves thorough and comprehensive scrutiny.

In the nuclear and space age, when the price of mistakes in world politics may be catastrophic, it is extremely important that the world public be represented in and exert influence upon it. If you like, this is a sign of our times, which is increasingly characterized by the real involvement of nations themselves, peoples themselves, in international affairs.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

A striking example of this was the holding, in parallel with the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament, of what essentially amounted to a different kind of assembly, a gathering of public forces and movements, which revealed a whole wealth of constructive ideas and suggestions quite suitable for use by Governments.

Involving broad segments of the public in addressing global challenges, including disarmament, adds substance to the process of internationalization and guarantees that it will not be reversed. Close interaction between the United Nations and the world public is an imperative of our times and a prerequisite for true democratization and multilateralism.

Parliamentarians are direct representatives of their peoples, elected by democratic processes. They must be able to protect the interests of peoples, the interests entrusted to them on the basis of exhaustive information and with full knowledge of what is being done in the United Nations to ensure international security, and how. In our view, it would be only reasonable for the Secretary-General to transmit to legislative bodies of United Nations Member States every year, after the regular General Assembly session, a complete file of United Nations resolutions on disarmament issues, with the request that their contents be conveyed to the members of their Parliaments.

The World Disarmament Campaign is an important link between the United Nations and the world public. The Soviet Union has repeatedly pledged its practical support of the United Nations World Disarmament Campaign, in order to inform public opinion and mobilize it in favour of reducing war arsenals. Today we are proposing two new events within the framework of the Campaign: an international seminar on making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, to be held in Moscow in 1989, and an international conference on the implications of disarmament for employment and conversion, to be convened in 1990.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

By developing multilateralism at all levels and in all areas, by establishing the principles of democracy and openness in international relations, by involving public opinion in the process of producing mutually acceptable approaches to the problem of security, United Nations Member States will be allowing a multitude of actors on the stage of modern history and will be promoting internationalization and the establishment of international relations in the truest sense of that word, that is, relations among States and peoples.

Mr. YAMADA (Japan): We meet here today with fresh memories of the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was convened from 31 May to 25 June this year amidst the aspirations of the peoples of the world for lasting peace. In the course of the general debate of the special session, there were valuable expositions by high-level representatives of various Governments of their basic ideas on peace and disarmament. For Japan's part, Prime Minister Takeshita expressed his thoughts on the main current issues of arms control and disarmament and enunciated Japan's readiness to promote actively "co-operation to achieve peace".

The special session did not lead, as hoped, to a consensus adoption of a concluding document, and my delegation shares with others the sense of regret in this regard. However, it would not be appropriate to deem the special session a failure simply because there was no consensus final document. We should not underestimate the very valuable process in which many representatives continued until the very last moment their intensive search for areas of convergence and shared directions for our future disarmament endeavours. In the drafting process, notably in the paper presented by Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of Pakistan, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, on the very last day of the special session and subsequent discussions based upon the paper, we were able to discern important convergences on a number of disarmament issues. This fact, in

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

itself, could make a meaningful contribution to the disarmament process which we are pursuing. What is incumbent upon us in this forty-third session of the General Assembly is to continue to build our consensus steadily on the basis of these emerging convergences.

Arms control and disarmament are priority tasks requiring the concerted efforts of all the States Members of the United Nations. At the same time, the reality is such that East-West relations, in particular the United States-Soviet relations, or the progress of arms control negotiations between the two super-Powers, have an important impact on the trends towards peace and disarmament. There has been remarkable progress in this regard; within less than a year after their agreement in principle in September last year to conclude a treaty on the global elimination of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles, the United States and the Soviet Union ratified and brought into force the Treaty in accordance with which both sides are proceeding with the actual elimination of these weapons. What is encouraging beyond all this is that, since the summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in November 1985, the exchange of visits in their respective capitals has taken place, and the practice of constant dialogue seems to have firmly taken root between the two leaders and the two countries. We value this highly as a development which will not only help to further stabilize East-West relations but also facilitate the trend towards peaceful settlement of conflicts on a global scale.

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

The total elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces represents the elimination of only a small portion of the vast United States and Soviet nuclear arsenals, and we strongly hope that this real and concrete step of arms reduction would provide the impetus for the United States and the Soviet Union to make the substantial reduction of their strategic nuclear weapons a reality as soon as possible. We also hope that the two countries will be able to reach agreement on what future courses should be followed in the area of defence and space, which has an important bearing on the strategic stability of the world.

It is equally urgent for us to promote the multilateral disarmament process in parallel and in concert with the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The progress in United States-Soviet negotiations and the improvement of United States-Soviet relations in general can act as catalysts which will open up vistas for multilateral negotiations. For arms control and disarmament to contribute truly to global peace and security, it is strongly desired that all nuclear-weapon States, not just the two super-Powers, and other States of the world, should also strive through bilateral efforts, regional efforts and multilateral efforts, for example through the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations, to reduce their levels of armaments steadily, step by step. It is clear that the progress in the United States-Soviet bilateral process does not automatically ensure progress in the multilateral process. Creativity and resourcefulness are called for to transiate the improvement in climate due to bilateral progress into concrete progress in multilateral disarmament negotiations. The third special session was a meaningful exercise in exploring these possibilities.

With these thoughts in mind, I should like to outline Japan's views on the main disarmament tasks to be addressed in the multilateral forums, taking into account the valuable experience we gained in the third special session.

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has formed a very important basis for pursuing in parallel the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of atomic energy. The Fourth Review Conference on the NPT, which is to be held in 1990, can be an important watershed for the fifth review conference, which will determine the future of this Treaty of vital importance. The work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fourth Review Conference, which will begin its work next year, will thus be a process of far-reaching long-term implications for world peace and security. In this process we shall need to address the interrelated issues of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the negotiations to be pursued in good faith by nuclear-weapon States towards nuclear disarmament under article VI and the determination, reiterated in the preamble, to seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and to continue negotiations to this end. Japan, for its part, will continue to hope strongly for further nuclear disarmament efforts by nuclear-weapon States, while maintaining deterrence and taking into account the overall balance among all weapon systems. We also pledge our best efforts to strengthen the NPT régime and to bring about steady progress towards a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, a high priority in multilateral disarmament.

It is already well known that Japan has consistently attached importance to the early realization of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban. A quarter of a century has elapsed since the partial test-ban Treaty was signed by the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom in 1963. We cannot but regret that a number of underground nuclear tests have been conducted every year over this period. At the same time, we continue to see a glimmer of hope towards a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, including a ban on underground tests. Since their agreement in September last year to start full-scale, stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

testing, the United States and the Soviet Union have been conducting intensive negotiations towards the early ratification of the threshold test-ban Treaty of 1974 and the Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes of 1976. Following the signing by the Secretary of State of the United States and the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the Moscow summit meeting of 29 May to 2 June 1988, of the agreement on the conduct of a joint verification experiment, the experiment has already been carried out successfully. Japan welcomes these developments, which seem to be in motion along an irreversible path, and strongly hopes that the ratification of the two treaties will become a reality without delay, so that the two countries may be able to proceed promptly to the second phase, namely, negotiating further intermediate limitations on nuclear testing.

It was encouraging to note the emerging consensus in the deliberations of the third special session to focus on the need for the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its consideration of a nuclear-test ban and, at the same time, to invite the United States and the Soviet Union to take into account in their negotiations the views of the Member States of the United Nations, including the high priority they attach to the cessation of nuclear testing within the framework of an effective disarmament process. We see this as a welcome sign, which might help us establish an organic link between the bilateral and multilateral processes and enable us to move further along both paths.

Our immediate task is to start, as soon as possible, the substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament on item 1 of its agenda, a nuclear-test ban. In working towards this, we can take into account the progress of the nuclear-testing negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and make use of the fruits of these negotiations as appropriate. The long-standing debate on the mandate of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban seems to have worked itself to

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

a point where it can be resolved with one more show of flexibility by the countries concerned. I should like to voice my strong hope and appeal that the deliberations of the First Committee at this session will provide the impetus for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test ban at next year's session of the Conference on Disarmament.

Some countries have called for an amendment conference to convert the partial test-ban Treaty into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. I do understand the frustration felt by many over the lack of progress on a comprehensive test ban in the multi-forum for many years, and how such frustration might have led some to resort to the amendment procedure. However, Japan is firmly convinced that the Conference on Disarmament provides the best avenue for reaching our shared goal of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, and cannot but have serious reservations over a course of action which may impair or side-track the work of the Conference on Disarmament on the subject.

At the third special session, Prime Minister Takeshita announced the plan for the convening of a United Nations conference in Japan on international nuclear-test verification, and discussions are now under way with the United Nations and others with a view to holding this United Nations conference as early as next spring. I earnestly hope that such an initiative will give positive momentum to the work in the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

A comprehensive ban on chemical weapons is also an issue of vital importance confronting the world today. On 28 September, in Ambassador Kagami's statement at the 9th meeting of the General Assembly, Japan welcomed the United States initiative expressed by President Reagan for the holding of a conference to strengthen the effectiveness of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Chemical weapons are relatively easy to produce and acquire. There have been a number of reports on the use of those weapons in violation of the Geneva Protocol, and the danger of their proliferation seems to be ever heightening. My country believes the United States proposal is very timely and pertinent to such circumstances. Japan sincerely hopes that that international conference will produce a strong political appeal to the world in support of a total ban on the use of chemical weapons and also provide an impetus to the negotiations on a convention on chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament so that it may be concluded at an early date.

As we find in the cases of use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq conflict, those weapons indiscriminately kill and wound not only combatants but civilians, including children. Japan firmly believes that all States should strictly refrain from using such heinous weapons, whether or not they are parties to the relevant international agreements. The fundamental and the only way to ban the use of those weapons totally, in the final analysis, is to conclude a comprehensive, effectively verifiable and universal convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction and to have as many countries as possible, including those possessing chemical weapons, become parties to the convention. In recent years the negotiations on a convention on chemical weapons have progressed considerably in the Conference on Disarmament. This year there have been such new developments as submission of data relevant to the convention and preparatory work for trial inspections, which will contribute to promoting the negotiations. While national

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

trial inspections are to be implemented voluntarily, my country is hopeful that a large number of countries will conduct their respective trial inspections, which will shed further light on how the convention might work in practice.

Since the negotiations on a convention on chemical weapons involve a variety of technical complexities, we still have to address many detailed issues before the completion of the drafting of a text. My country, however, intends to continue its steady efforts, together with other negotiating countries, to achieve an early conclusion of the convention.

On the prevention of an arms race in outer space, efforts are continuing, in parallel with the United States-Soviet negotiations, in the multilateral forums such as the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament.

In this field of disarmament, however, no clear picture is emerging yet as to how the two "space super-Powers", the United States and the Soviet Union, would seek to ensure future stability with regard to arms control in outer space. This has made it difficult for us to plunge into negotiations on the subject in the multilateral forums. However, an arms race in outer space would directly affect the security not only of the two Powers but of all other countries in the world as well. We should intensify our efforts to grasp the realities of the uses of outer space in various fields, assess objectively the dangers to international peace and security which may be posed by the various activities, and consider measures that will be mutually acceptable, effective and realizable on a multilateral basis. I hope that these efforts, coupled with concrete progress in the United States-Soviet bilateral negotiations, will open the way for us to approach this important problem.

The United Nations has recently played a remarkably active part in the international efforts to solve various problems in different parts of the world. The countries and peoples of the world now pay a tribute to and place their earnest

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

hope in the United Nations. The great news, announced the other day, of the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations peace-keeping forces provides an eloquent testimony to all this. It is difficult to expect remarkably successful results overnight in the field of arms control and disarmament, where delicate security interests of respective countries are intertwined. It is, nevertheless, possible to build up steady efforts wherever possible, on the basis of mutual understanding obtained through serious and full discussions.

The United Nations is the only universal international organization where peoples from every part of the world get together, regardless of differences in mores, languages and ideologies. My country believes that this irreplaceable Organization will enable its Member States to have further extensive discussions on peace and disarmament, thus contributing greatly to the maintenance of international peace and security, which is a lofty goal of mankind. In concluding my remarks, I wish to assure the Assembly that Japan will spare no efforts in supporting the United Nations in such a noble endeavour.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to remind representatives that, in accordance with the decision of the Committee, as reflected in its programme of work and timetable, the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.