

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1696th
MEETING**

Friday, 21 November 1969,
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda items 29, 104, 30 and 31:	
Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (<i>continued</i>)	
Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons (<i>continued</i>):	
(a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament;	
(b) Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons;	
(c) Report of the Secretary-General	
Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (<i>continued</i>)	
Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States (<i>continued</i>):	
(a) Implementation of the results of the Conference: report of the Secretary-General;	
(b) Establishment, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of an international service for nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes under appropriate international control; report of the Secretary-General;	
(c) Contributions of nuclear technology to the economic and scientific advancement of the developing countries: report of the Secretary-General	1

Chairman: Mr. Agha SHAHI (Pakistan).

AGENDA ITEMS 29, 104, 30 AND 31

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (*continued*) (A/7639, A/7681 and A/7741-DC/232; A/C.1/989)

Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons (*continued*) (A/C.1/988, A/C.1/989, A/C.1/991):

(a) Report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (A/7741-DC/232);

(b) Conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons (A/7655);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General (A/7575)

Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (*continued*) (A/7741-DC/232; A/C.1/L.485 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.1/L.486)

Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States (*continued*):

(a) Implementation of the results of the Conference: report of the Secretary-General (A/7677 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2);

(b) Establishment, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, of an international service for nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes under appropriate international control: report of the Secretary-General (A/7678 and Add.1-3);

(c) Contributions of nuclear technology to the economic and scientific advancement of the developing countries: report of the Secretary-General (A/7568 and A/7743)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. RONAN (Ireland): For decades now the goal of arms control and disarmament has been actively pursued while at the same time nations have continued to build up their military strength to colossal proportions. The emphasis has been on rearmament rather than on disarmament. This century has seen two world wars which brought incalculable devastation, death and suffering to mankind. Man's destructive capacity reached a new and an incredible pitch with the arrival of the nuclear age. The advances of science and technology which made that possible also offered the hope of an era of rapid progress and prosperity. The appalling prospect of a nuclear holocaust led to renewed efforts to contain the newest threat—the nuclear arms race—to endeavour to eliminate causes of tension and instability in international relations and to establish the rule of law among nations so that people could live in conditions of peace and freedom, and resources and skills could be diverted from military purposes to the economic and social betterment of mankind. Those efforts resulted in a number of important treaties aimed at curtailing the nuclear danger and set in motion a process which, if sustained and intensified, might lead in due course to the establishment of an effective world-wide security system.

2. Yet, at the same time, military expenditure continues to escalate at an alarming rate, as was indicated in the survey *World Military Expenditures 1966-1967* published by the United States Army Control and Disarmament Agency. Further detailed information has been given in the *SIPRI Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament 1968-1969*¹ which has just been published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. According to the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency survey, world military expenditure in 1967 totalled \$182,000 million, an increase of \$50,000 million in a period of just four years, or allowing for price inflation, an increase of 24 per cent. In the same period, the world population increased by 7 per cent and gross world product in constant prices by just 16 per cent. The world is now spending 40 per cent more on military programmes than on

¹ Stockholm, Almqvist and Wiksell; New York, Humanities Press; London, Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd.

public education and about three times more than on public health. While developed countries account for the greater part of world military expenditure, that of the developing countries cuts deeply into their living standards. The two super-Powers between them account for about three quarters of the total world military expenditure. Their military burdens are becoming so heavy that they risk compromising their capacity to meet important economic and social needs and at the same time their security gains from these enormous outlays are marginal to the cost. The development of new offensive and defensive strategic missile systems would, unless checked, lead to a further astronomical rise in military expenditure over the next decade, with an increasing threat of destruction to all mankind. The strategic arms limitation talks which have been initiated at Helsinki between the Soviet Union and the United States are therefore greatly to be welcomed.

3. These preliminary talks probably represent the most significant single initiative of recent times for peace and disarmament and we join with you, Mr. Chairman, and other delegations in wishing the parties success and we fervently hope that a limitation of strategic arms and general lessening of tension will result. What is happening is that progress in technology has made it both possible and necessary for the super-Powers seriously to consider placing restraints on the nuclear arms race. In other words the balance of terror is being threatened by technological advances. At the same time there has been a trend towards decentralization and multiplication of political power centres. The gap between the super-Powers and other nations in military strength has continued to widen, but the gap measured in terms of practical political weight in the world community as a whole has tended to narrow. The respective military strengths of the super-Powers now largely cancel each other out and much of their armaments would be useful only in the unthinkable event of a nuclear confrontation. Therefore their usable power, and in particular their very costly surplus power, tends to have a proportionately lesser effect on the broad course of international events.

4. The timing of SALT is important as it is vitally necessary now to negotiate a halt in the strategic arms race before the task becomes much more difficult. There are good grounds for believing that this can be achieved in the present circumstances without adversely affecting the national security of either super-Power. In fact agreements to limit strategic arms could well enhance their security, lead to improved East-West relations, promote the prospects of the adoption of further arms control measures and release resources for economic and social purposes.

5. The issues involved in the talks are difficult and complex and early results are hardly to be expected. Between the promise and the risk in this initiative there are grounds for cautious optimism based on the fact that the production of more sophisticated and more expensive nuclear weapons systems will not lead to more security for anyone. Technical and economic factors would appear not only to argue strongly in favour of the negotiations but also to augur well for their success. There are, however, serious political considerations and pressures which have to be taken into account. In this connexion, and while the need for secrecy in the talks should be respected, it is to be

hoped that suitable progress reports—and reports recording progress—will be issued from time to time. For it need hardly be emphasized that the parties to the talks bear a heavy responsibility not only to their own people but also to the rest of humanity to avert the race for the production of new strategic weapon systems. My delegation would hope that the talks might pave the way for a *détente* which might create an atmosphere conducive to the negotiation of further measures of arms control and disarmament leading to a prospect of world peace for the rest of the century and, indeed, beyond it. It is also to be welcomed that some of the energy and talents which have been channelled into military policies may now be diverted to more preoccupation with the issues of arms control and disarmament.

6. The Secretary-General in the recent introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization² suggested that pending progress in these talks, it would be helpful if the parties stopped all further work on the development of new offensive and defensive strategic systems, whether by agreement or by unilateral moratorium by each side, a suggestion which was supported by you, Mr. Chairman, in your opening statement in this debate on 17 November [1691st meeting]. The representative of Mexico in his statement in this Committee on 18 November [1693rd meeting] also suggested that the most constructive measures which the General Assembly might adopt on this question would be an appeal to the two nuclear Powers to put in force, say, a two-year moratorium on all tests or uses of strategic nuclear systems, whether offensive or defensive, that are not as yet of an operational nature. My delegation regards these views as constructive and worthy of serious consideration and would hope that the two super-Powers might find the suggestion very helpful for the atmosphere and progress of their talks on the analogy of the moratorium preceding the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water.

7. The Secretary-General has also stated in the introduction to his annual report that some of the momentum and promise of previous years in the field of disarmament seems to have been lost and that it is most disquieting to see that the solution of the problems of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, both horizontally and vertically, is still pending. My Government is deeply worried by this lack of progress in the various proposals for nuclear disarmament and collateral measures and particularly by the failure decisively to prevent once and for all the dangers of the further spread of nuclear weapons. There were high hopes when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commended by the General Assembly in resolution 2373 (XXII) by an overwhelming majority after a long and detailed discussion, was opened for signature on 1 July 1968. We consider that the Treaty is a focal instrument for attaining an acceptable balance of the mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers and as an instrument which offers the best attainable framework we are likely to have for some time to come for preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons and giving an impetus to a cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1A.*

8. From the technological point of view, the production of plutonium, one of the basic ingredients of nuclear weapons stockpiles, will become a common industrial product in the decade ahead as a by-product of burning nuclear fuel in nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes. The presence of vast amounts of fissionable material in many countries will, if uncontrolled, create a serious potential threat to international security and the diversion of small amounts, if undetected, would defeat the whole purpose of the non-proliferation effort. The safeguards system provided in article III of the non-proliferation Treaty is therefore a timely and a necessary provision for preventing the risk of a serious drift to nuclear anarchy in the next decade which, if allowed to proceed, could be very difficult, if not impossible, to control at a later stage.

9. At the same time we have never considered the Treaty as perfect or, for that matter, as an end in itself. We have considered, however, that the first essential is to obtain the widest possible accession to the Treaty, both because of the immediate effect it would have in halting the spread of nuclear weapons and because this in itself would help to create a climate for the negotiation of other desirable agreements. While the Treaty has been signed to date by 91 States, as yet only 22 signatories have ratified it, including but one of the nuclear Powers. Nevertheless, it is gratifying to know that a number of key States intend to sign or ratify the Treaty soon and that many others have put in hand the necessary constitutional steps for ratification. Hopes have been expressed that the Treaty may enter into force before too long by the deposit of the further 21 necessary instruments of ratification, including those of the other two nuclear signatories. My delegation would again express the hope that all States, nuclear and non-nuclear, will see their way to becoming parties to this important arms-control measure, which we believe to be one of the most important and urgent disarmament measures which can be effectively implemented at this time.

10. There is a school of thought which maintains that the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is an inherently discriminatory concept in that it might perpetuate a *status quo* in which there are five nuclear Powers in the world and the rest are non-nuclear Powers. Some are reluctant to renounce what they consider to be the ultimate ingredient of sovereignty in the nuclear age and others think of the relevance of nuclear options to their security problems. Several States have therefore viewed the non-proliferation Treaty with mixed feelings and have fears of being placed in a permanently inferior status, especially as far as their civil nuclear power industries are concerned. My delegation believes that the nuclear Powers must be fully responsive to these feelings if the Treaty is to achieve its full potential.

11. Emphasis is therefore placed once again on resolution 255 (1968) adopted by the Security Council on security guarantees for non-nuclear States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. The solemn intentions of the nuclear Powers expressed in the resolution should act as a strong deterrent to those who would threaten a nuclear State with nuclear weapons and should persuade a nuclear belligerent to keep nuclear weapons out of a dispute with a non-nuclear State. Article III of the non-proliferation Treaty on safeguards, article IV on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy without discrimination, article VI on the undertak-

ing to pursue negotiations relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, article VII on nuclear-free regional arrangements and article VIII on a review conference five years after the Treaty enters into force, should all go far to reassure States which have genuine problems on the non-proliferation concept. In this matter the nuclear Powers are in a key position and the success of the Treaty may largely depend on their carrying out their responsibilities under the Treaty scrupulously and diligently, with co-operation and restraint.

12. Closely linked with strategic arms limitation talks and non-proliferation is the question of the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. The promise to seek the ending of underground nuclear weapons tests contained in the Moscow partial test ban Treaty of 1963 remains as yet unfulfilled, but my delegation is glad to note from the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/7741-DC/232]³ that the Committee devoted considerable attention to this question. In particular the Swedish working paper with possible provisions for a treaty banning underground tests [ibid., annex C, sect. 6], and the Japanese proposal to prohibit underground tests above magnitude 4.75 on the seismic scale, as a provisional measure which would be progressively lowered according as detection methods improve [ibid., sect. 25], deserve the closest attention. Most important, universal international acceptance of the principle of a total test ban is urgently required and should be actively pursued. It is a step which could be greatly facilitated by measures for the elimination of international tension and improvement of the spirit of *détente* could greatly help to achieve that end; but it must be recognized that it is one which in turn could promote those measures.

13. Meanwhile, the Canadian proposals for the effective international exchange of seismic data contained in draft resolution A/C.1/L.485 and Add.1 and 2 deserve the widest possible support in the hope that progress in seismology detection and identification may reach the point where confidence would be established that the faithful observance of a comprehensive test ban treaty could be verifiable. My delegation hopes that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will devote further urgent attention to the proposals before it on this question and that it will reach the point of recommending positive measures of progress to the next session of the General Assembly, on the lines called for in the 10-Power draft resolution A/C.1/L.486.

14. Also relevant to the non-proliferation concept and nuclear arms control is the question of the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. Over the years many such proposals have been made for different areas, but only one has become a practical reality and that is the nuclear-free zone in Latin America. My delegation wishes again to congratulate the delegations of the Latin American States and, in particular, the delegation of Mexico, on this achievement. We were particularly gratified to learn that on 2 September 1969 the General Conference of the new Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

³ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232.*

in Latin America (OPANAL) was inaugurated at Mexico City and we are grateful to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico for all the information he has made available on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and on OPANAL.

15. The entry into force of the Treaty for 14 of the signatory States and the establishment of the Agency represent an achievement of considerable significance in the long campaign to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and should inaugurate a system which will permit the maximum utilization of the resources of the region for the economic and social benefit of the peoples of Latin America. The Treaty contains some original provisions which will have relevance to other arms-control measures; for instance, the “verification by challenge” procedure. It also sets a guideline on how adequate control measures can be applied and how the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in non-nuclear States can be made compatible with the prohibition of nuclear weapons. It could have a far-reaching effect on the rest of the world if the whole or most of Latin America could through the Treaty formally renounce nuclear weapons and operate the control system to enforce the ban. The establishment of OPANAL is an inducement to other Latin American States to offer the needed waivers in their ratifications so that they are bound by the Treaty. It is to be hoped that the other nuclear States will, before long, follow the example of the United Kingdom and deposit their instruments of ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty. While other regions have their own particular problems and solutions are not always common, the example and experience of Latin America in promoting a nuclear-free zone is an important guideline and a beacon for all in the field of nuclear weapons control.

16. The revised draft treaty dated 30 October 1969, submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the Soviet Union and the United States of America prohibiting the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor [*ibid.*, *annex A*] represents a further measure of some progress which is also to be welcomed. The more environments which can be insulated from nuclear weapons the better and this measure would have the effect of sealing off a very large part of the earth’s surface, even though it is the sea-bed and ocean floor, from emplacement of nuclear weapons. My delegation strongly believes that the sea-bed and ocean floor should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. We therefore consider that it is necessary to develop without delay an international commitment that the area should not be used for military purposes. At the same time, consideration of such questions as the military balance have to be taken into account. The basic concept of the revised draft treaty is probably the most that can reasonably be put into effect for the time being. In so far as the draft treaty represents the beginnings of arms control measures in relation to the sea-bed and ocean floor, it can be supported in principle by my delegation.

17. At the same time, the first draft of the treaty dated 7 October [*ibid.*, *annex C, sect. 34*] was considered at short notice by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and with little time for a thorough examination by Governments. Many delegations, both in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and in this Committee,

have drawn attention to gaps in the draft and to aspects of it which are unclear. The amendments offered by the Co-Chairmen did not go quite far enough to meet all the points made. A number of important suggestions have been put forward on the geographical scope of application of the draft treaty, the meaning of the term “other weapons of mass destruction”, effects on the rights of coastal States over their continental shelves, the whole question of verification, the functions of the review conference, continuing negotiations on further measures, peaceful settlement of disputes and so on. My delegation would favour the adoption of most, if not all, of the modifications on these points before the draft treaty is recommended for signature. If improvements in the revised draft cannot be made at this session, then the text may have to be referred back to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament for further consideration to make it more acceptable internationally.

18. As regards non-nuclear measures, there has been growing concern in recent years on the question of chemical and biological means of warfare, the use of which could have catastrophic consequences for all mankind. In its resolution 2162 B (XXI), the General Assembly called for strict observance of the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol of 1925⁴ and invited all States to accede to it. We have before us the excellent report of the Secretary-General, prepared with the assistance of consultant experts pursuant to General Assembly resolution 2454 A (XXIII), entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*.⁵ The Secretary-General and the experts are to be congratulated on producing such a concise and authoritative study on this complex question. Noteworthy features of the document are the conclusions reached by the experts and the excellent foreword contributed by the Secretary-General.

19. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has also devoted its attention to this problem and has discussed the Secretary-General’s report and the draft convention and Security Council draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom on the prohibition of biological methods of warfare, a revised version of which was submitted on 26 August [*ibid.*, *sect. 20*]. In addition, our agenda includes the nine-Power proposal on the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons [*A/7655*].

20. It is clear that any new measures on this question should not detract from the prohibition on use in the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The Protocol has been a valuable and widely recognized instrument to which some 50 or more States have acceded, some of them in recent years. The development of biological weapons has, however, raised doubts as to whether their use has been covered by the prohibition in the Geneva Protocol. As in the case of the United Kingdom and the nine-Power draft conventions, more thought is now being given to the problem of

⁴ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925.

⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

prohibiting the research, development, production and stockpiling of those weapons as distinct from their use. These ideas are in line with the thinking of the consultant experts, as shown in the last two paragraphs of their report. What is needed is comprehensive and unequivocal proposals to achieve those ends. As regards the two draft conventions, the United Kingdom draft in our opinion reflects the general conclusions of the consultant experts fairly well, whereas the other draft is not quite so satisfactory as it would seem to permit too widely varying interpretations.

21. Because of the many difficult aspects of the whole question and the fact that the Committee has before it two draft conventions on the subject, my delegation agrees with the suggestions that have been made in this Committee that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, taking into account the debate here, should resume detailed consideration of the subject including the two draft conventions. A possible course of action open to the General Assembly at this session would be the adoption of a draft resolution embodying the three points on this question suggested by the Secretary-General in the forward to his report.⁶ In particular, the second point is a new idea which would have an immediate interpretative effect on the terms of the Geneva Protocol and could remove the ambiguity at once. This point reads as follows:

“To make a clear affirmation that the prohibition contained in the Geneva Protocol applies to the use in war of all chemical, bacteriological and biological agents (including tear gas and other harassing agents) which now exist or which may be developed in the future.”

22. The three reports submitted by the Secretary-General on matters arising from the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States were of considerable interest to my delegation. We agree with the concluding remarks of the report on the implementation of the results of the Conference [A/7677 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2]. We regard the report on the contributions of nuclear technology to the economic and scientific advancement of the developing countries [A/7568] as a most valuable document. Our views on the third report [A/7678 and Add.1-3] are that IAEA is the appropriate body to take on the role of the international service for nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes provided for under article V of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As the technology involved is at an early stage of development, we agree that the specific functions of the service should evolve gradually after further international discussion.

23. With regard to IAEA in general, my Government recognizes the primacy of the role of the Agency in the promotion and development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It also believes that IAEA's continuing efforts to ensure that peaceful nuclear activities are not diverted to military purposes are of paramount importance in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and it would urge that all Governments should undertake to accept IAEA or similar international safeguards in all their peaceful nuclear activities.

⁶ *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24).

24. Finally, my delegation declares its full support for the proposal of the Secretary-General that the decade of the 1970s—already designated as the Second United Nations Development Decade—should likewise be entitled a Disarmament Decade,⁷ a proposal which has already been endorsed in General Assembly resolution 2499 (XXIV). That the same decade should be dedicated simultaneously to these two purposes will serve to stress the link between them in terms of the best use of economic and human resources. The proposal would call for the establishment of a specific programme and a time-table in which the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament would have a major role to play. There would be no more fitting way to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year than to rededicate ourselves to the principles of the Charter, Articles 11 and 26 of which deal respectively with disarmament and limiting the use of the world's human and economic resources for armaments.

25. The opening of the strategic missile talks has given renewed hope for prospects of a breakthrough in nuclear arms control and disarmament. If the opportunities are grasped and the right priorities are established both by the nuclear and the non-nuclear States, this shrinking world could be on the point of establishing a system of international peace and security in our time in which nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are eliminated, the goal of general and complete disarmament is pursued and human energies and resources are devoted to the betterment of mankind.

26. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) (*translated from Spanish*): On beginning our consideration of the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [A/7741-DC/232],⁸ we were surprised to see that the Committee has changed and that henceforth it will have 26 members instead of 18.

27. I do not know who drafted the report informing us of this skilful metamorphosis. I do not know whether it was the Co-Chairmen or some international official who specializes in this kind of service. At all events, the report is a minor masterpiece; a masterpiece of ambiguity, in which an attempt has been made to blur ideas by using the conditional tense and impersonal constructions such as “it was decided”—without saying who decided—and “it was discussed”—without saying who did the discussing. It is a kind of challenge to the intelligence, particularly paragraphs 8 to 12. However, it is clear from paragraph 10, which states that “Members of the Committee expressed their views concerning the enlargement and the procedure adopted for its implementation” that no decision could be taken at the informal plenary meetings, and that no decision was taken at the only formal meeting (the 424th meeting) held on 31 July last. One can only conclude that the decision concerning enlargement was taken by the Co-Chairman alone, which does not seem a very democratic procedure and is clearly incompatible with the principle of sovereign equality of States on which the United Nations is based.

⁷ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, paras. 42-46.

⁸ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232.

28. I now turn to the legal foundation of my delegation's views on this matter. I should like to recall that it was the desire to free mankind from the scourge of war that prompted the first resolution of the General Assembly, designed to eliminate atomic weapons, which was adopted on 24 January 1946, in London. At the same session the limitation and regulation of conventional weapons were dealt with in General Assembly resolution 41 (I) of 14 December 1946. However, in 1959, after the bloody war in Korea and a dangerous cold war, the nuclear arms race had reached the level of tens of megatons. That year two disarmament proposals were put forward: one by Prime Minister Nikita S. Khrushchev, on behalf of the Soviet Union, and the other by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd for the United Kingdom. These declarations were transmitted to the United Nations Disarmament Commission, made up of all its Members, by General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV), of 20 November 1959. But neither that Commission nor the Ten-Power Disarmament Committee, which functioned independently of the United Nations in 1960, was able to achieve anything concrete. The separate but coinciding proposals submitted in 1960 by the United States and the Soviet Union led some Members to propose the establishment of a negotiating body, related to the United Nations, to replace the unsuccessful Ten-Power Committee. This was the origin of General Assembly resolution 1550 (XVI), of 28 November 1961, which urged the two nuclear super-Powers to reach agreement on "the composition of a negotiating body".

29. I have had to mention this information in order to provide a background for my examination of General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI), which set up the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. That resolution, adopted on 20 December 1961, endorsed the agreement called for in General Assembly resolution 1660 (XVI) and, on its own authority, set up the Disarmament Committee made up of the 18 nations on which the two super-Powers had agreed. It is clear that they reached agreement on the composition of the negotiating body, as stated in part II, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI), that is, on the States which would make up the negotiating body, but that the power to establish it lay with the General Assembly, which did so in part II of resolution 1722 (XVI).

30. That resolution, which set up the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament as a negotiating body, entrusted it with the task of reaching agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

31. It could be agreed that General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI) endorsed an agreement reached by the super-Powers and that, consequently, this agreement could be modified by them. This reasoning would be incorrect, since the agreement related to the composition of a negotiating body and the countries that would make up that body, whereas it was the General Assembly itself which actually set up the body through a resolution which can only be amended by another resolution; neither the Committee on Disarmament nor, with all the more reason, its Co-Chairmen, were given any authority to change the Committee's structure or terms of reference.

32. The objective of the Co-Chairmen was apparently to include "a group of countries that would give the enlarge-

ment geographic and political balance and at the same time preserve the Committee as a small and effective negotiating body" [A/7741-DC/232, para. 10].

33. I should like to point out that achieving a geographic balance would mean arranging for greater participation by those States which have joined the United Nations since the Committee was established. However, this is not what happened. Since December 1961, 14 African States have become Members, but Africa only received one seat in the enlarged Committee. Latin America, with four new States, received only one additional seat, and Asia, with four new Members, received three seats. Western Europe, with only one new Member—Malta, which joined in 1964—received one seat. The socialist countries, which did not increase, received one new seat and the non-aligned countries another.

34. It is therefore not true to say that the Co-Chairmen's objective was to achieve geographical balance in the Committee. Europe, not counting the United States, will have 13 out of 26 seats, seven of which will be held by socialist countries of the Warsaw Pact or independent socialist countries. The Asian countries will have five seats and the African countries four (two held by countries north of the Sahara and two by countries south of the Sahara) and Latin America will have three. Clearly, that is not what is usually called equitable geographical distribution—which is what we understand by geographic balance—but purely a political balance.

35. I should like to point out that my delegation has no objection whatsoever to the Committee's being enlarged to 26 members, nor to the countries jointly proposed by the Co-Chairmen. My delegation would be very pleased and honoured to have the opportunity to vote on a resolution similar to General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI) which set up the Committee in 1961, adding the new States on which the Co-Chairmen have agreed. What my delegation—which represents a small State—finds unacceptable, is the growing tendency of the two super-Powers to assume power, thus reducing the role of the General Assembly and the functions assigned to it by the Charter.

36. My delegation would not only be pleased to vote for a resolution adding the proposed States to the Committee on Disarmament; it considers that such a resolution is necessary. Perhaps the enlargement will give new life to the Committee on Disarmament in an area in which so few results have been achieved at the cost of such great expenditure. Neither the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, drafted two years before the Committee was set up, nor the Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, signed on 5 August 1963, were negotiated by the Geneva Committee on Disarmament. That is true also of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which was negotiated and drafted by the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space under the chairmanship of the eminent Professor Manfred Lachs, and later discussed in this Committee at the twenty-first session when I had the honour of being its Chairman, and adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in resolution 2222 (XXI) of

19 December 1966. The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America was drafted in Mexico and signed at the Foreign Ministry at Tlatelolco on 14 February 1967. Here I should like to pay a tribute to the United Kingdom delegation for having announced, at the 1694th meeting, that the United Kingdom had ratified the protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Today, fearful yet hopeful, we await the results of the Helsinki negotiations which are being conducted outside the ambit of the United Nations, and which some consider to be the most important negotiations that have taken place so far in the field of disarmament. The only treaty which can be directly related to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

37. This is not something which happened so long ago that it has been forgotten. This Treaty, which was the outcome of an agreement between the Co-Chairmen submitted on 24 August 1967, was discussed and opposed in the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. Serious objections to it were raised that same year in the General Assembly, and it was adopted after being amended to take account of some of those objections. At all events, it was an incomplete treaty which left unsolved the problem of so-called vertical proliferation and banned only outward or horizontal proliferation which, in effect, is an affirmation of the privilege of the "nuclear club" and, particularly, of the two super-Powers.

38. If we examine what has been done in the field of disarmament since 1961, the year of the establishment of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament on which today we are rightly trying to enlarge, there is not much ground for optimism. Parallel with the concentration of power in the hands of the two super-Powers there has been a retreat as regards the goals of disarmament. I recalled just a moment ago that, in the early stages, the goal was only the limitation and regulation of armaments and that later this idea was extended to include general and complete disarmament and that it was for precisely this reason that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament was established as a negotiating body. Now we seem to be retreating more and more towards the idea of arms limitation instead of progressing towards general and complete disarmament.

39. Consideration of the document before us shows that positive steps have been taken towards supplementing the Moscow Treaty by the banning of underground tests. These tests are not only physically dangerous, because of the possibility that geological layers might slip, which might have tremendously dangerous seismic consequences, but they are the means for testing ever more powerful thermonuclear weapons. My delegation appreciates the valuable contribution made in this field, particularly by Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom, in presenting very important scientific studies on seismology and a draft treaty on the banning of nuclear tests underground. Nevertheless, it seems that the super-Powers are still far from ready to accept legal norms in the form of a treaty to prohibit the testing of nuclear weapons underground.

40. However, we have received a new agreement between the super-Powers which has apparently been achieved within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament—the draft treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of

nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof [*ibid.*, *annex A*]. I have referred to this in another statement and will therefore merely summarize my observations.

41. Firstly, in the preambular paragraphs it reverses the ideas which have been supported and approved by the General Assembly. It recognizes the common interest of mankind in the progress of the exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for peaceful purposes instead of recognizing that the exploration and exploitation of that environment exclusively for peaceful purposes should be in the common interest of mankind. The idea that exploitation should be for the benefit of all mankind does not appear anywhere in the draft.

42. Naturally, the preambular paragraphs contain the inevitable affirmation that the treaty would constitute a step towards a treaty on general and complete disarmament. In fact, however, it is not a treaty on disarmament proper but a first step to prevent the placing of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in an area which has so far been weapon-free and does not cover certain types of conventional weapons.

43. I pointed out in another statement that the reference to the contiguous zone in article I has no legal basis whatsoever. The contiguous zone is a part of the high seas over which the coastal State merely exercises a jurisdiction which may be considered the extension of its jurisdiction over its territorial waters. In the contiguous zone, which is a criterion of surface area, the coastal State exercises rights which stem from those that it is entitled to exercise in police, health or fiscal matters over punishable offences committed in its territory or its territorial waters. Since it is a criterion of surface area which does not refer to the sea-bed, it is strange that it should have been used to delimit the zone of the sea-bed and ocean floor which are to be kept free from weapons of mass destruction.

44. It is interesting to note that, in the original draft submitted by the Soviet Union as a basis for negotiation [*ibid.*, *annex C, sect. 4*], the outer limit of the zone within which States may place weapons is set at 12 miles and that article 3 states: "The outer limit of the 12-mile maritime zone established for the purposes of this Treaty shall be measured from the same baselines as are used in defining the limits of the territorial waters of coastal States". Up till then the Soviet position had been coherent and consistent, since it had maintained that the only zone which could be excluded was that situated beneath its territorial waters.

45. The United States did not mention the contiguous zone in its original proposal [*ibid.*, *sect. 12*] nor did it refer to the Geneva conventions on the sea adopted at the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea held at Geneva from 24 February to 27 April 1958. The United States draft, dated 22 May 1969, refers to a three-mile limit [*art. II, para. 1*].

46. Consequently, it is strange that the joint United States-Soviet draft should suddenly introduce a delimitation based on the contiguous zone, which is a criterion of surface area, instead of defining the limits of the new zone

by means of a conventional distance measured from the baseline of the territorial waters. I must confess that that reference appears to be a surreptitious attempt to set a limit to the territorial waters of other States. The sea-bed and ocean floor which are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, in other words which are not to be used for warlike purposes, have been defined in General Assembly resolution 2467 (XXIII), of 21 December 1968, as being those which lie beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Obviously a State's jurisdiction extends over the surface area of the territorial sea, the sea-bed, the subsoil thereof, the water between the surface and the sea-bed and the air above it. The limits of this jurisdiction have not been defined in any convention. However, since, according to the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, signed at Geneva in 1958, the contiguous zone has a maximum breadth of 12 miles measured from the baseline of the territorial sea, it could be interpreted as meaning that the contiguous zone—which is part of the high seas—automatically limits the territorial sea to a breadth of 12 miles.

47. The reference to the Geneva Convention, which has been ratified by very few States, seems intended to give its provisions binding force or *jus cogens* which will make it possible to invoke the Convention against third States which are not parties to it. In part IV of the Secretariat's study, which appears as annex II to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction,⁹ reference is made to article 38 of the Convention on the Law of Treaties signed at Vienna in May last and which has not yet entered into force. However, in this connexion mention is made of the opinions of Sir Humphrey Waldock, who was the Rapporteur of the International Law Commission on this topic, and this might give rise to confusion as to whether the Geneva Conventions on the sea might have the value of binding customary norms of international law comparable to those of the Briand-Kellogg Pact, as suggested in the report.

48. Without entering into a legal debate on the matter, I wish to point out that this parallel is unjustified, since the Geneva Conventions on the sea have so far not received substantial support from the international community but, on the contrary, have given rise to doubts, reservations and objections, unlike the principle of banning war as a means of settling disputes which is recognized to have universal value and which has been included as a norm of *jus cogens* in the United Nations Charter and in most regional agreements.

49. It has been said that the exception mentioned in article II, paragraph 2, of the draft treaty removes any ambiguity since it means that the rights of States over their territorial sea will be respected and does not prejudice their extension. In the opinion of my delegation, the paragraph is not clear. It can be interpreted in the broad sense I have just mentioned, but it can also be interpreted in the more limited sense as referring to claims or rights within the zone mentioned therein, among States whose territorial sea is between 3 and 12 miles wide. In any case, an article

similar to that proposed by the Soviet Union in its first draft would be more logical and more acceptable.

50. I should like to express my delegation's complete agreement with the suggestion made at the 1694th meeting by the distinguished British representative, Lord Chalfont, that it would be more useful to delete the reference to the contiguous zone from the draft treaty and establish by conventional means the zone of the sea beyond which the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would be banned. That would be compatible with the original position of both the Soviet Union and the United States in the documents I have already referred to.

51. I have already said, in another statement, that I consider the expression "and other weapons of mass destruction" ambiguous. As other speakers have already discussed that phrase and underwater installations, I will refrain from further comment.

52. Before concluding, I should like to refer very briefly to the problem of chemical and biological weapons, although my delegation reserves its right to make a further statement on this point in due course. My delegation feels that this is the most interesting item under discussion because it is the most recent.

53. Only once in history has the enormous crime of using nuclear weapons been committed: when at Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs of 20 kilotons were dropped, killing 78,000 and wounding 84,000 at Hiroshima, and killing 27,000 and wounding 41,000 at Nagasaki. The use of chemical weapons dates back somewhat further. I will not go back into the distant past, but will simply recall that when chlorine gas was released into the French lines at Ypres on 22 April 1915, the immediate toll was 5,000 dead and 10,000 incapacitated. These figures are quoted from *Chemical Warfare*¹⁰ and can be seen in *The Great War: 1914 to 1918*.¹¹ In *Chemical and Biological Warfare*¹² the author states that in the First World War 1,300,000 casualties, including 91,000 dead, were caused by chlorine, phosgene and mustard gases. Nevertheless, chemical elements were again used, unfortunately, prior to the Second World War and defoliants and non-lethal gases which are also chemical weapons are currently in use. This year *The New York Times* made public the controversy over the storing of nerve gases in Okinawa.

54. The worst thing is that the technical and economic level needed to produce chemical and biological weapons is much lower than that needed to manufacture nuclear weapons. That is the great danger of such weapons and that is what gives the item its extreme urgency.

55. With regard to biological weapons I have heard it said that we can wait until a second phase or put this question in second place. I am afraid I disagree.

56. Biological weapons are not a possibility, they are a reality. I referred in another statement to the serious

⁹ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 22.

¹⁰ Frederick Brown, *Chemical Warfare*, Princeton University Press, 1968.

¹¹ C. Falls, *The Great War: 1914-1918*, Putnam, New York, 1959.

¹² Seymour Hersh, *Chemical and Biological Warfare*, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1968.

aspects of the problem. Today, by way of an example, I should merely like to point out that in an article published in *The New York Times* on 31 October this year, when the Assembly was already in session, Robert M. Smith pointed out that the Pine Bluff Arsenal contains stockpiles of thousands of poisoned missiles containing botulinum toxin which, although it is produced by anaerobes and gives rise to physiological effects, is considered a chemical substance. The article also speaks of storage centres for lethal germs refrigerated in "igloos"; apparently there are 273 such depots. The article also mentions that, according to Senator Richard D. McCarthy, tests are being carried out with anthrax and tularemia bacteria, Q-fever Rickettsia and the Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus. The secrecy of the Soviet system prevents one knowing what advances are being made there in that field.

57. At all events, I do not intend now to speak on the substance of this matter. I should, however, like to point out that I am in complete agreement with the criticism expressed at the 1692nd meeting by the representative of Brazil, Ambassador de Araújo Castro, on the report entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*¹³ submitted by the group of consultant experts, scientists of world renown, which met under the chairmanship of a distinguished official of the Secretariat who in fact submitted the report. It is possible that the representative of Brazil's criticism—which I consider very sound—on what might be called the political aspects of the report might stem from the irregular practice of having Secretariat officials presiding over and consequently guiding the work of the scientific experts. Academic freedom is not always compatible with political bureaucracy, nor is it always compatible, generally speaking, with international bureaucracy, regardless of the officials' worth and qualities, which I am happy to recognize.

58. In conclusion, I should like to associate my delegation with those who have expressed support for the proposal that the Disarmament Decade should start with a meeting of the Committee on Disarmament in order to give States an opportunity to assess what the United Nations has accomplished and what it has failed to accomplish in 25 years and make suggestions with regard to improvements and other matters. Above all, it would have the great advantage of providing a forum in which the conscience of the world could speak out on the dangers of the arms race and would bring those problems out of the increasingly narrow framework within which they are being confined.

59. Mr. CERNIK (Czechoslovakia): This year the discussion of disarmament problems in the United Nations has started under circumstances which underline the necessity of reaching accord on effective measures, particularly in the field of nuclear disarmament. We have arrived at an important crossroads. On the one hand, we have witnessed pressure from some circles to continue and intensify the nuclear arms race and to develop new nuclear missile systems. On the other hand, we have the possibility of reversing this unfavourable trend and putting an end to that race, which would greatly enhance the chance of attaining general and complete disarmament, thereby strengthening international security.

¹³ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

60. Similarly, as the partial results in the field of collateral measures create a favourable atmosphere and prepare the ground for specific action in the field of disarmament, the negotiations of the two decisive nuclear Powers, which established the first contact at Helsinki several days ago, could significantly influence further deliberations on the whole programme of disarmament. This meeting has rightly been considered one of the most important events in the field of disarmament negotiations since the Second World War. We hope that these preliminary talks will constitute the beginning of a round of serious negotiations.

61. We are aware that the task confronting the two great Powers is not an easy one which could be accomplished within a short span of time. However, we are convinced that it is both possible and imperative to reach agreement on measures which would respect the valid interests of the two negotiating parties, as well as those of all other States as far as their security is concerned. A successful outcome of these negotiations could constitute a significant step towards the limitation of the nuclear strategic arms race and, at the same time, enable businesslike negotiations concerning a subsequent decrease in the existing stockpile of nuclear weapons, as well as the promulgation of other disarmament measures. The Czechoslovak delegation wishes the two nuclear Powers much success in the negotiations which have just begun at Helsinki.

62. When speaking about positive factors influencing our deliberations, I cannot fail to mention the debate held at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva and its achievements which are in the comprehensive report submitted to the current session of the General Assembly [A/7741-DC/232].¹⁴ This year a greater number of States than in the past took part in the discussions of the Committee on Disarmament, and, consequently, in the elaboration of the report. As is well known, in July and August this year, on the proposal of the two Co-Chairmen, the Committee was enlarged by eight new members; namely, Argentina, Hungary, Japan, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Pakistan and Yugoslavia.

63. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic supported the Co-Chairmen's proposal to enlarge the Committee, which resulted from long consultations and careful consideration of its many aspects. We proceeded from the fact that the selection of new members, as well as their number, fulfils not only the criteria for maintaining the ability of the Committee to consider the disarmament problem in an effective and businesslike manner, but also the criteria for a political balance in its composition and a fair geographic representation. The wisdom of this procedure was justified in our opinion by the fact that the new members took an active part in the deliberations of the Committee and presented evidence of their willingness and preparedness to discuss questions of disarmament in a businesslike manner.

64. As is evident from the report of the Disarmament Committee, the Committee based its activities on the preliminary agenda adopted in August 1968—which included nuclear disarmament, conventional disarmament, as well as other collateral measures, and general and complete

¹⁴ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232.

disarmament—and on resolutions adopted at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly. This year the Committee proceeded from the assumption that it would be useful to concentrate its attention on questions which in the present circumstances might yield positive results. For this reason, we consider it natural that an overwhelming part of the discussion was devoted primarily to such questions as the demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the question of the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. The Czechoslovak delegation to the Geneva Committee supported the tendency to deal with those problems in such a way that it would be possible after their solution to tackle other, much more demanding and complicated tasks.

65. Those proceedings, in our opinion, proved to be correct. They yielded concrete results in the joint proposal of the two Co-Chairmen pertaining to the denuclearization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor [*ibid.*, *annex A*], as well as in a fruitful debate on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, which made it possible to submit to our Committee the respective proposals as to how to solve this problem. In other words, we consider that the discussion in the Geneva Committee this year was a positive one, and, after a businesslike debate at the current session of the General Assembly, the Committee should continue even more intensively the consideration of questions which have, until now, remained unresolved.

66. As I have already mentioned, the Disarmament Committee devoted most of its attention to the question of the sea-bed and the ocean floor. Almost all the delegations expressed their positions and views concerning the solution of this problem. These were based on General Assembly resolution 2467 (XXIII) and on the joint Soviet-United States draft treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof.

67. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is a land-locked country but it is greatly interested in an exclusively peaceful exploitation of the riches lying in the seas and oceans which cover approximately five-sevenths of the surface of the earth. We cannot be indifferent to the way in which this area will be utilized: whether it will become a source of further economic development of States and of peaceful international co-operation, or an area included in the arms race and military plans. The latter is not a case from a work of science fiction but a highly topical matter, in view of the political and military attractiveness of the area.

68. We agree with the views already expressed here to the effect that it is simpler to attain agreement on the demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor at a time when this area is not directly utilized for military purposes than at a later stage when it would be necessary to negotiate the elimination of military installations. For that reason, we consider a speedy solution of this question as a very urgent task. Therefore, since the very beginning of the debate on these problems in the Disarmament Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation has proposed the adoption of effective measures aimed at a full demilitarization of that area.

69. In the interests of attaining progress and creating a good basis for the achievement of this objective, the Czechoslovak delegation supported the efforts of the two Co-Chairmen which resulted in the submission of the joint text of the draft treaty. In this respect, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic proceeds from the principle that this treaty should be only the first step on the road towards complete demilitarization of that area. The eventual objective of our endeavours in this respect should be a complete prohibition of any military activities on the sea-bed and the ocean floor, irrespective of the type of weapons and of the character of the military installations. We understand the respective provisions in the preamble to the draft treaty and the meaning of the individual operative articles of that document to be based on this premise.

70. When expressing our support of the draft treaty, we believe that its adoption would considerably limit the arms race and thereby improve the prospect of constructive negotiations concerning other disarmament measures, particularly in the sphere of nuclear disarmament. We hope that the draft treaty will be supported in our Committee by an overwhelming majority, which would make it possible to open the treaty for signature by all States in the very near future and to achieve its early entry into force.

71. I now wish to raise another question which, from the point of view of disarmament, is of special importance at the present time. I have in mind the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. Previous discussions in the Committee on Disarmament, as well as in our Committee, have shown that the need to prohibit this kind of weapon of mass destruction becomes ever more topical. This is stressed by General Assembly resolutions 2162 B (XXI) and 2454 A (XXIII), adopted by an overwhelming majority of Member States, reaffirming the continuing importance of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, as well as by the Secretary-General's report entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*.¹⁵

72. Taking into consideration the fact that an overwhelming majority of States requires that this kind of weapon of mass destruction should be excluded from military arsenals, the socialist States have elaborated and submitted to the current session of the General Assembly a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons [*A/7655*], which was so convincingly introduced in our Committee by the representative of the Polish People's Republic, Ambassador Kulaga. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as one of the authors of the draft convention, is convinced that a speedy consideration and conclusion of this convention is in the interest of all States and that it would greatly contribute to ensuring the security and protection of mankind against the eventual use of such weapons.

73. We are confident that the draft convention will be favourably considered and adopted by the Committee. In

¹⁵ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

view of the significance of this question the Czechoslovak delegation intends to make another statement concerning the draft convention during this debate.

74. The question of the prohibition of nuclear weapons has been carefully followed for many years by the world public. This is the logical consequence of the fact that the problems of nuclear weapons constitute the crux of the whole question of disarmament. We consider the problems relating to a prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests as one of the important questions in this field. Six years have elapsed since the signing of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water and it is now time to put an end to tests in the last remaining environment, namely, underground.

75. Discussions in the Disarmament Committee as well as in this Committee confirm that a majority of countries have devoted their attention to this question. It also proves that mankind is aware that if it wishes to eliminate the substance of the dangers jeopardizing all life on the earth, it must try to prevent not only the expansion and stockpiling of nuclear weapons but also their further testing and perfection.

76. We are conscious of the fact that before there is an effective solution to those problems there are obstacles and difficulties to be overcome, especially with regard to the question of the verification of the obligations assumed by the contracting parties. As is generally known, these obstacles result from the unwillingness of some nuclear Powers to give up their nuclear arms. That is the real reason for their refusal to take political decisions which would prevent the further perfecting of their nuclear arms.

77. The present standard of science and technology in detection and seismic instruments proves that there are no technical problems barring an immediate and at the same time effective solution of the problem. Even if we emphasize particularly the political aspect of the question under consideration, it does not mean that we underestimate its technical aspects. However, the latter, in our opinion, are supporting elements which only have a subsidiary function and meaning.

78. The Czechoslovak delegation believes that an accelerated and effective solution to the question of banning underground nuclear weapon tests is possible on the basis of the utilization of national means of control, but this could also be complemented by an international exchange of seismic information.

79. I should like to state that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is ready to take part in such an international exchange, in the belief that it would help the attainment of an agreement on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapon tests based on the utilization of national means of control. We feel that such an international exchange of seismic information would not be conducive to the establishment of a special international evaluation centre, but that the evaluation of such data should be undertaken by the individual States themselves. An eventual international exchange of seismic information should therefore be carried out on a voluntary basis and should be accessible to all States wishing to participate without discrimination.

80. At this stage of our deliberations I should like to say a few words about the problems relating to the peaceful uses of atomic energy and in particular to the question of creating an international service within the framework of IAEA for the carrying out of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

81. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is fully aware of the increasing role and importance of human activities in the field of the peaceful uses of atomic energy for the acceleration of the economic progress of mankind. It takes every opportunity of contributing to the creation of optimum conditions for the development of research, production and utilization in this field, as well as to the creation of realistic conditions for all States to take a full part in these activities, including wide international co-operation.

82. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic also envisages wide utilization of atomic energy for the development of its economy. We are therefore interested in ensuring that no obstacles should be placed on the road leading towards this objective. We have also evaluated the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons from this angle; it opens new perspectives in this field and creates better conditions for the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy including the utilization of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. This aim can only be realized however, if the Treaty enters into force in the immediate future. Recent development seems to give some hope that the non-proliferation Treaty will be signed and ratified by other important countries. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was among the first to sign the Treaty and has also ratified it.

83. The provision of article V of this Treaty stipulates that the all-round utilization of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes should be possible on the basis of international co-operation which excludes any discrimination against non-nuclear countries. At the same time the Treaty guarantees that the prices paid by non-nuclear countries for using nuclear facilities should be as low as possible and should not include costs connected with their development and research.

84. On this occasion the Czechoslovak delegation would like to observe that the role of an international organ through which all the advantages resulting from peaceful nuclear explosions would be made accessible to a great number of States in conformity with the non-proliferation Treaty could be successfully played by IAEA. That international organization was created precisely for the peaceful uses of atomic energy and within its present structure meets all the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of the tasks connected with the carrying out of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. Therefore we believe that, under these circumstances, there is no need to create a new international service for this purpose.

85. In spite of the fact that the Disarmament Committee accorded considerable attention in its discussions to collateral measures, we should not fail to take account of the ultimate objective of our efforts, namely the attainment of general and complete disarmament, which would significantly strengthen international peace and security. At the

same time, we realize that discussions on general and complete disarmament are not held, and cannot be held, in a vacuum independent of the real political situation in the world. To fail to take this important factor into account in the approach to disarmament would be tantamount to moving on the basis of purely theoretical and idealistic wishes.

86. The Czechoslovak delegation believes that collateral measures may contribute greatly to the creation of favourable conditions for the fulfilment of as complicated a task as the attainment of general and complete disarmament. We believe that the most important, and at the same time the most complicated, aspect of general and complete disarmament is nuclear disarmament, upon the successful solution of which depends the speed with which we shall succeed in reaching the ultimate objective.

87. Taking this indisputable fact into account, we consider that the beginning of the talks between the two nuclear Powers concerning their strategic nuclear missile systems is an important moment. The success or failure of those talks will have a direct impact upon the further negotiations on general and complete disarmament. We wish to believe that successful talks between the two main nuclear Powers may lead the question of general and complete disarmament out of a blind alley and again give it the priority that it rightly deserves.

88. Mr. MOE (Norway): The talks recently initiated at Helsinki between United States and Soviet representatives on strategic arms limitation may, in the view of the Norwegian Government, prove to be of historic importance. My Government strongly welcomes the decisions taken by the two States to embark upon arms control negotiations in this central area. It would like to associate itself with the President of the United States when he recently expressed his profound hope that what had been started at Helsinki would "be a sustained effort not only to limit the build-up of strategic forces but to reverse it".

89. My Government would also like to associate itself with the statement made by the chief Soviet delegate to the Helsinki meeting to the effect that the curbing of the strategic arms race and the limitation and subsequent reduction of such armaments is an important goal, the achievement of which would meet the vital interests not only of the peoples of the Soviet Union and United States but also of the other nations of the world.

90. One is certainly not overstating the case in saying that both sides are facing an extremely delicate and intricate task. Substantial negotiations on the limitation of offensive and defensive strategic weapons systems are obviously among the most ambitious and difficult undertakings of the post-war period.

91. Although our insight in these matters is rather modest, we have a feeling that we are at an important threshold. New weapons systems are being tested or are looming over the horizon and decisions may soon have to be taken carrying fateful implications for the situation in the 1970s. Many experts seem to fear that extensive development and deployment of some of the new weapons systems cannot but have a disturbing effect on the strategic balance.

92. I will not attempt to suggest a timetable for the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT), but certainly patience will be called for. It is only natural that both the United States and the Soviet Union will encounter great difficulty when attempting to construct some kind of a model which limits further deployment of weapons systems as well as fulfilling the security requirements of both sides.

93. One does not have to be an expert in order to realize that time is running out. Weapon technology is advancing rapidly and qualitative improvements of the various weapons systems are constantly occurring. Should SALT develop into indeterminate discussions one runs the risk that technological development will bypass even the best of arms control proposals.

94. I have stressed the intricacies of the task facing the representatives of the two major Powers at Helsinki. Our hopes for rapid results should perhaps be tempered by this fact. Nevertheless, negotiations as such do have a significant political value of their own and should, furthermore, prove valuable in providing each side with a clearer picture of the other's capabilities and intentions. Maybe the best one can hope for during the first phases of the negotiations is an agreement to cease the testing and deployment of new weapons while the talks are proceeding and that this understanding as time goes on will take the form of a tacit and lasting moratorium on the testing and deployment of new systems.

95. My Government consequently hopes that the preliminary talks at Helsinki will develop as soon as possible into substantial negotiations aimed at the cessation of the strategic arms race, an increase in global strategic stability and a reduction of the pressure for a continued and expensive strategic arms production.

96. Successful results in bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union would not only have a positive influence on the general political climate of the international scene, they would also have a beneficial effect on the various other multilateral arms control negotiations at the Disarmament Conference at Geneva. If the two main Powers can agree to place limits on certain weapons systems, the requirements for nuclear testing would thus seem to be circumscribed and it would appear possible to negotiate a comprehensive test ban treaty.

97. In this connexion we welcome the Canadian initiative in introducing draft resolution A/L.485 and Add.1 and 2 on international exchange of seismic data, a resolution that we are very happy to co-sponsor. In co-operation with the United States my country is currently constructing a seismic monitoring station in southern Norway. This station—which is called NORSAR for short—will be fully operational next summer. NORSAR is an entirely open research project which will provide advanced research facilities in the area of detection seismology as well as serve as a future—we hope—monitoring station for a comprehensive test ban treaty.

98. To some extent SALT is a logical sequel to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is in fact an obligation imposed by article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty, which contains an undertaking to pursue

negotiations towards ending the nuclear arms race. The initiation of SALT should consequently help towards securing the necessary additional ratifications needed for the non-proliferation Treaty to come into effect. My Government has noted with satisfaction that some important countries are expected to sign the Treaty fairly soon. This significant development would help to accelerate the ratification process and produce a better atmosphere for other important political initiatives. Ratification of the Treaty by the two main Powers would also greatly strengthen the momentum of this process.

99. I do not intend to deal with all the matters under discussion at Geneva, which are reflected in the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. I should like, however, to express the gratification of my Government that the General Assembly has been presented with a draft treaty¹⁶ to prevent the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed [A/7741-DC/232, *annex A*]. Like others we consider the draft treaty a significant arms control measure, an important step towards helping to preserve strategic stability and to secure peaceful economic exploitation of the oceans for the benefit of all mankind. We welcome the invitations by the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union to other member States to suggest improvements to the present draft and we hope that various important suggested amendments can be accommodated. We had hoped for a more extensive scope of prohibitions, but we have at the same time noted that the provision for a review conference has been reinserted in the draft. Technological developments over the next five years should increase verification possibilities and, we hope, permit more ambitious arms control measures on the sea-bed and ocean floor.

100. We do not share the opinions of those critics who maintain that the actions the treaty would prohibit are actions that hardly any State would consider taking. I think it would suffice to refer to the statement by the United States representative who said that "it is already within our capability to emplace nuclear weapons on the sea-bed and such action would not be without some military advantages" [1691st meeting, *para. 60*]. We believe that the present draft sea-bed arms control treaty closes off an area which will become increasingly attractive militarily and therefore we sincerely hope that an agreement can be reached on an arms control sea-bed treaty during the current session of the General Assembly.

101. Finally I have a few comments on the problems posed by the vast existing arsenals of biological and chemical weapons. A number of significant contributions has been made to the important current discussions on how to ban the production, stockpiling and use of these weapons. One of the most valuable contributions is the report of the consultant experts to the Secretary-General on chemical and biological weapons¹⁷ which was submitted this summer. We believe that this report clearly demonstrates the urgent need for arms control initiatives in the

chemical-biological field and we feel certain that the Disarmament Conference will find its future work greatly facilitated by the existence of the report.

102. My Government accords high priority to the problem of reaching an agreement which effectively reduces or eliminates the possibility of chemical and biological methods of warfare and which incorporates adequate provisions for verification to ensure compliance. We feel, however, that it is too early to discuss in detail the various proposals presented and that decisions on the significant substantive issues involved should await further consideration of the Disarmament Conference. While the work goes on at Geneva next year towards meaningful and reliable arms control measures in the field of biological and chemical weapons, we hope that, as a first step, as many Governments as possible—and, in particular, the major Powers—will ratify the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

103. Finally, I should not like to conclude this statement without paying tribute to the very real contributions made by our Secretary-General in this important field. We trust that his views will be carefully studied and pondered.

104. Mr. HARMON (Liberia): We have delayed intervening in this debate for two principal reasons: first, we were interested in watching the events of Apollo 12, hoping that it would be successful; and secondly, we wanted to await the start of discussions at Helsinki between the two super-Powers on the question of disarmament and the halting of the nuclear arms race.

105. The results of the Apollo 12 mission deserve the congratulations, esteem and respect of peoples everywhere: first, for the United States Government's far-sighted policy in being willing to invest an enormous amount of money in its space programme, and secondly, for the courage of the astronauts who, by their dedication and selflessness, were prepared to lay their lives on the line to accomplish what we now consider as man's greatest feat.

106. My delegation would therefore be pleased if the delegation of the United States would convey to its Government the profound admiration and respect of the Government and people of Liberia.

107. A great deal has been said, and a great deal of time and concerted efforts have gone into the preparation of the various statements which we have heard during the debates in this First Committee. My delegation has nevertheless been perplexed in many areas, though we do not wish to underrate the genuine statements of the real issues which have now emerged from the technical studies and time which various Governments and their experts have put into the consideration of some of their conclusions.

108. However, we have read with great care and interest the documents being discussed in the general debate on disarmament, particularly the report of the Disarmament Committee [A/7741-DC/232] and also documentation concerning the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and the conclusion of a convention on the production of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons, including

¹⁶ *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969, document DC/232.*

¹⁷ *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24).

the report of the Secretary-General; and on the urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests, as well as on the Conference on Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, calling for the implementation of the results of that Conference, etc.

109. Nothing, in the opinion of my delegation, is of greater priority than the items which are now under debate.

110. While we are apparently all in complete agreement on the idea and in our desire to see the eventual implementation of these objectives, we of the Liberian delegation feel strongly that as long as there are and continue to be fundamental differences between the two super-Powers—who hold the controlling stockpile of nuclear weapons, and who we wish could come to realize the urgency of reaching some accord as the basis for negotiating a treaty for the limitation, destruction and/or control of such deadly weapons—no debate in this Committee or in the General Assembly will be effective. The problem which currently exists seems to centre around the fact that neither side would wish the other to gain a significant military advantage.

111. It is for this reason that my delegation would not seek specific and detailed references to each item now under debate, but will seek to make a general statement which we feel is an attempt to lay the emphasis where it really belongs.

112. My country is a small and developing nation and therefore has a great stake in this whole issue. Within the whole concept of promoting international peace and understanding among all peoples, we continue to adhere to the principle that all mankind has a high stake in the peace of the world, and that any threat to that peace and security which would deny God's people everywhere the right to enjoy the wonders of God's creation as fully as possible immediately raises serious problems.

113. In 1967 my delegation asked to speak on the draft resolutions which are again before this Committee. We spent a considerable amount of time listening to and reading through the various statements which have been made by representatives on behalf of their Governments since the disarmament debate was taken up in the First Committee after a lapse of three years. We are therefore most fortunate that in an attempt to express ourselves on the question of general and complete disarmament we find the situation much more promising; it presents a ray of hope that something will be achieved, and that the two super-Powers—the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—realizing the danger to mankind, are now prepared to sit down and reason together in what we all hope will be an atmosphere of friendship and a desire to work together.

114. We do not wish to take the disarmament items singly because we are all in agreement that in this nuclear age war is no longer an instrument of national policy, nor is it a means of solving international problems. The experience of the First and Second World Wars proves this point, and therefore we all hope that the interest of bringing about greater international understanding and the strengthening of international peace and security will permeate the negotiations which are now taking place at Helsinki.

115. We were interested in what the Ambassadors of Brazil and Mexico had to say about disarmament and the results of serious efforts and intensive consultations by members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament over a long period of time. We have read both of these statements very thoroughly and congratulate them and the efforts that their regions have made, and we were further encouraged by Lord Chalfont's statement before this Committee on 19 November, when he said: "I should like to begin by saying how pleased I am to be back in New York taking part again in the disarmament debate in the First Committee after an interval of three years" [1694th meeting, para. 22].

116. Like Lord Chalfont, my Government welcomes the positive decision on the part of the United States and the Soviet Union to meet after a long and extended period of time for the strategic arms limitation talks which are now going on at Helsinki. While not wishing to underestimate the discussions which are now taking place in the First Committee, in my opinion these discussions hold the key to any reasonable approach and conclusions on the questions now before this Committee. We should therefore pray that, realizing the dangers, the misgivings and the fear which the possible use of nuclear warfare might have on the peoples of the world, aid and support will be given and the possibility of any criticism avoided.

117. My delegation feels that until the removal of this threat to man's survival, the avoidance of nuclear catastrophe will enable not only the United Nations, but all the regional groups and small nations to begin to plan for the future. I therefore wish to refer again to a statement which was made by the late President Kennedy in addressing the sixteenth session of the General Assembly on 25 September 1961, when he said:

"Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest thread, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness" [1013th plenary meeting, para. 50].

118. Subsequently, the then Premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, said on 11 July 1962:

"The accumulation of weapons is reaching the critical point where first we used to say the guns start speaking of their own volition, as we now say, whose rockets with thermonuclear warheads will start flying."

119. Despite these profound utterances by leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union, the world continues to be treated to a false peace festival and what has emerged in the nature of preliminary agreement following these discussions and debates has been the joint statement of agreed principles of 20 September 1961,¹⁸ endorsed by General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI) of 20 December 1961, which, aside from providing a somewhat favourable climate for further negotiations, failed to outline an optimistic approach to the problem. The Liberian delegation has always maintained that the crux of the fundamental

¹⁸ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 19, document A/4879.

difference between the United States and the Soviet programmes of disarmament must be negotiated and a reasonable solution found as the only basis for an eventual limitation of armaments. No continual debate and/or statements, either in this Committee or before the General Assembly, will give us the guarantee which we all seek unless this is achieved. Most of the nuclear Powers are subject to some degree of limitation except the Soviet Union and the United States. This is a matter of fact and no debate or expression of disappointment challenging whatever decisions are made, will, as I have already said, bring about the desired results until these two super Powers agree to coexist. They hold the balance of power in their hands and we as small countries can only continue to take note of the Soviet draft and that of the United States, hoping that these, together with the United Kingdom draft, will be referred to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament for urgent and careful study, adjustment and the hope of reaching an acceptable and workable agreement.

120. The Liberian delegation wishes again to call upon the eight non-aligned members of the Disarmament Committee, in the light of present events, to continue to increase their efforts in a spirit of constructive compromise, mutual trust and confidence, so that by the time we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations we hope we shall all have moved more closely towards reaching agreement on the limitation, control and, to some extent, the destruction of those deadly weapons that ever and anon threaten the peace and security of our world.

121. A word of congratulation is also due to the members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament which has recently been strengthened by the addition of eight new members. We all salute them and express our continuing confidence and thanks. We appreciate sharing their valuable ideas and also their efforts in the attainment of our hopes for mankind.

122. My delegation, without reservations, strongly supports the consideration given to the matter in the Secretary-General's recommendation and in his report regarding the renewal of an appeal to all States to accede to the Geneva Protocol. We also strongly recommend for adoption the revised resolution along the lines of the Canadian draft resolution contained in document ENDC/266 of 26 August 1969 [A/7741-DC/232, annex C, sect. 31] taking into consideration, of course, the Soviet Union's initiative [A/7655], which was received after the Canadian delegation had presented its proposals.

123. To come up eventually with a treaty that would prohibit the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, from the sea-bed would, in our opinion, be a step in the right direction. We must therefore, in passing, recommend the Canadian delegation for its excellent summary of the entire situation. While we continue to make efforts to improve on the present draft treaty [A/7741-DC/232, annex A], the Sea-Bed Committee should take advantage of the opportunity to study the implications of the draft treaty in so far as it relates to its mandate.

124. I have, in my brief remarks, endeavoured to generalize because we feel that—regardless of the mass of reports, statements and negotiations which continue to flood this

Committee and the United Nations General Assembly—unless an understanding can be reached by the super-Powers to bring about some effective control of nuclear and other weapons as a first and overriding necessity, our choice may well be that brilliantly brought out in Ambassador Yost's statement of 17 November 1969 [1691st meeting], quoting the late Bernard Baruch: "We are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead."¹⁹

125. Let us therefore prepare ourselves in an atmosphere of great optimism for a successful negotiation in the future and an eventual draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons, and on the distribution of such weapons referred to in document A/7655. Further, let me join my other colleagues in extending warm and sincere congratulations to our indefatigable Secretary-General, U Thant, who has given and is still prepared to give of his life, his energies and his abilities in seeking a reasonable and just solution to this problem and thereby removing the threat under which we constantly live in this nuclear age.

126. In conclusion, having said what I have in a sincere effort to call attention to the crux of this debate. I wish to reaffirm a statement which was made by my delegation some time ago that it is this struggle for peace in a distrustful world that has deepened the division of our world making peace in our time an uneasy one and that if peace is to be maintained then this distrust, hopefully, must be removed. I can therefore under the circumstances think of no other reassuring expression of concern as evidenced by one of the great super-Powers when Ambassador Yost said in his closing remarks:

"Let us all then, great Powers and small Powers, nuclear armed or conventionally armed, take a solemn and a common resolve to mark our twenty-fifth anniversary by substantial agreements to control, limit and reduce the armaments of all of us. By doing so we may indeed . . . 'live together in peace with one another as good neighbours' and 'save succeeding generations from the scourge of war'." [Ibid., para. 68.]

127. Before closing I wish also, though belatedly, to join my other colleagues in extending to you our sincere congratulations and esteem for the very able, painstaking and efficient manner with which you continue to conduct and preside over these debates. May God continue to bless us all richly and give us courage further to explore the universe; and in exploring the universe let us do so with the idea of a peaceful coexistence which, we hope, in the not too distant future, will serve not only as the basis but the turning point in an effort to strengthen and guarantee peace in our world.

128. The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Liberia for the kind words he has said about me personally.

129. Mr. DEJARDIN (Belgium) (*translated from French*): Speaking on behalf of the Belgian delegation, I should like to say that I do not share the scepticism of my colleague who, at an earlier meeting, stated that no one heeds a small

¹⁹ See *Official Records of the Atomic Energy Commission*, No. 1, first meeting.

nation in this Organization no matter what it may say. I would be more inclined to accept the opinion of the representative of Liberia, who said that if some of the questions considered were entrusted from time to time to small nations, ways of solving them might be found.

130. Whether aligned or not—and those who have joined alliances have decided to do so only to protect themselves better—small countries, if they do not possess a great deal of persuasive military power, nevertheless enjoy the moral advantage of being, in the eyes of an outside observer, beyond all suspicion of wishing to wage war or to expand by force. Such is the case with Belgium. All it wants is to see the dissolution of military blocs and a cessation of the threat of confrontation, provided that the security of all peoples is ensured, their integrity safeguarded and everyone is given an opportunity to prosper in freedom.

131. We all know that the military appropriations of too many countries and of the world have reached an unduly high level. For many years, it has often been said that these expenses could be put to a noble and more humane purpose if they were used for the benefit of all peoples and for improving the lot of the developing countries.

132. However, it seems to us that our exchanges of views in the United Nations and also the present and future work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament should be directed more resolutely towards the achievement of definite and effective results.

133. We began to read the voluminous report of this Conference [A/7744-DC/232]²⁰ in a favourably disposed frame of mind and with a good deal of expectancy. Having studied it our feelings are now divided between gratification at certain useful developments and a somewhat low-key satisfaction at the results obtained. The interest in the report lies undoubtedly in its review of the work done over the past year and of the documents relating to it, but except in a few rare cases this interest is not sustained or quickened by any evidence, desirable though it might be, of any community of views or of the results we should like to have expected.

134. Certainly we do not want to seem to be systematically critical and negative in our attitude; it is certainly not our intention to deny the value of what has been done in recent years and I wish in all sincerity to welcome, on behalf of the Belgian delegation, the forces of optimism that brought about, in particular, the Antarctic Treaty, the Moscow Treaty—whereby the great Powers practised what they preached by renouncing further nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water—the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

135. In so far as the building of a lasting peace and the success of the disarmament enterprise require from the outset the presence of a favourable international climate, these treaties can undoubtedly be regarded as happy omens.

However, we must be objective enough to recognize that these initiatives, far from setting in motion any processes of disarmament, are intended solely to arrest the extension of the race in the most destructive forms of weapons.

136. In his introduction to the annual report on the work of the Organization, the Secretary-General makes no secret of his pessimism in the face of the present situation. He writes:

“In the field of armament the past year has seen little progress. Indeed, some of the momentum and promise of previous years seems to have been lost.”²¹

137. In sharing this regret, I would express the hope that from the very beginning of 1970 the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will see to it that its work on the principal points in the report presented to us will lead to rapid results. With this in mind we would like to set out a few considerations forthwith.

138. As we know—and people have been good enough to recognize the fact—the Belgian delegation has played an active role in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction and we have been appreciative of the tributes paid to our representative. It will therefore be realized that my country and its representatives attach special importance to the examination of the question of the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof.

139. There is no doubt that the signing and coming into force—and we hope this will be soon—of a treaty on this subject will have a twofold importance. On the one hand, mankind will find in it an invaluable guarantee against the extension of the arms race in the most destructive weapons to a geographical area where the emplacement of nuclear devices would be particularly dangerous. Secondly, the renunciation of nuclear weapons on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof would promote the future utilization of that part of the globe exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the exploitation of its resources in the interest of mankind.

140. We cannot refrain, however, from expressing our regret that the ban provided for by the draft Treaty before us, submitted by the United States and Soviet Co-Chairmen of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [*ibid.*, annex A], deals only with the installation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which we consider insufficient.

141. Bearing in mind the realities and military dangers, it had seemed possible to us—and if so highly desirable—to agree, while there was still time, to ban from the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction the emplacement of any nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction, as well as any other weapons or military installations that, because of their nature or location, would constitute a threat to an emerged territory or its air space,

²⁰ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232.

²¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, para.26.

142. Throughout the deliberations on this draft in the Disarmament Committee at Geneva, Belgium had nurtured the hope that an agreement would finally be reached on this basis. This hope proved vain, and the arguments advanced against our thesis, citing the difficulties that would be caused by less limited undertakings particularly as regards verification, did not entirely convince us.

143. Of course, this draft Treaty has been submitted to us by its authors as a first step. In its preamble we can read of the determination to continue negotiations with a view to further measures leading to the more general exclusion of the sea-bed and the ocean floor from the arms race. We note with satisfaction that a reviewing conference will be convened five years after the entry into force of this Treaty to ensure, particularly in the light of technological progress, that the objectives set forth in its preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being duly observed.

144. We consider, however, that it would be too long to wait six or seven years for a possible opportunity to make progress in the negotiation of a less limited treaty.

145. We are well aware that a procedure for amendment is provided, even before the first reviewing conference is convened. But since it is highly desirable that the Treaty's scope should be extended, we would express the hope that negotiations along these lines will be undertaken before the time envisaged.

146. In a desire to co-operate in an effort to improve the text itself of the draft Treaty, we should like to make some suggestions as to its form and definitions.

147. With regard to the delimitation of that area of the sea-bed adjacent to the coast, where the prohibitions of the treaty do not apply in respect of the coastal State, we note that use is made of a distance to be measured horizontally on the surface of the water; whereas we are dealing with a portion of the subsoil which is, by definition, sloping. It would therefore be more logical and more in keeping with reality, we think, to stipulate that the limit in question on the sea-bed should be located at the vertical of the outer edge of the contiguous zone as laid down in the 1958 Geneva Convention.²²

148. Another point is that the verification clause has been—and, no doubt, will continue to be—the subject of comments which will engage all our attention. We consider, with reference to article III concerning the consultation and co-operation procedure, that each of the parties to the Treaty, whatever their level of technological advancement and whether or not they possess nuclear arms, should be able, in the interest of legitimate national security, to take part in the verification procedure.

149. A wider internationalization of the verification procedures should, therefore, be provided for, in particular with reference to the early verification, where necessary, of any given suspect activity and the identification of the State responsible, as well as in connexion with the granting of technical assistance upon request to any country party

to the Treaty which wishes to exercise its right of verification.

150. The verification procedures laid down should also be appropriately linked with the rights formerly recognized as belonging to coastal States over the resources of their continental shelf. Allaying the fears of these States would, without a doubt, contribute to increasing the number of accessions to the Treaty.

151. With regard to the safeguard clause, a remark on form seems necessary. To a meticulous reader, the present text might appear to mean that, whatever the content of the Treaty, the parties reserve the right to continue to act as they think fit in all respects on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. Such an interpretation would, obviously, be absurd; but a legal text stands to gain if it does not even lend itself to such possible misinterpretations. Also it would seem desirable to make an explicit reservation in the safeguard clause on the validity of other stipulations of the Treaty with reference to the sea-bed and ocean floor and the subsoil thereof.

152. In article I, paragraph 3, which might be called the non-dissemination clause, the draft Treaty refers to "actions prohibited" under paragraph 1 of article I. In fact, however, the provision referred to does not lay down any prohibition, since it confines itself simply to noting commitments. It would seem appropriate to us, therefore, to change the wording of the non-dissemination clause, so as to bring it into conformity with that of paragraph 2 of article I.

153. We should also like to suggest to the sponsors of the draft Treaty that they adopt, in the original versions, the alphabetical order in the enumeration of the languages concerned, in accordance with customary procedure. It has not escaped our notice that the actual order in which the languages are listed in these two versions corresponds to the one used in the space Treaty. But, we think we might note, at the same time, that this precedent remained unique and, for example, was not followed in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We also note that the Spanish and French translations do appropriately comply with the traditional alphabetical order.

154. The Belgian delegation is of course ready to take part in any drafting work required to carry out the suggestions we have just made.

155. I now come to the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons.

156. On the eve of this session of the General Assembly, the arsenal—if I may use this expression—of means of condemning war has undeniably been enriched by the preparation and publication, under the diligent direction of the Secretary-General assisted by a group of experts, of the report *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*.²³ We should most sincerely like to congratulate the Secretary-General and thank the experts for having acted so promptly and with such impressive results, after the adoption by the General

²² Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 516 (1964), No. 7477).

²³ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

Assembly at its twenty-third session of resolution 2454 A, of which Belgium, incidentally, was a sponsor.

157. Of course, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva considered this problem and we have before us today four proposals: the draft convention introduced by the United Kingdom [*ibid.*, *annex C, sect. 20*], the draft resolution submitted by Sweden and other non-aligned countries [*ibid.*, *sect. 35*], the draft resolution submitted by Canada [*ibid.*, *sect. 31*] and the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union and its allies [*Con. A/7655*]. The different technical aspects of the problem undoubtedly require very detailed examination and discussion. But the drawing up of effective international conventions is an urgent matter.

158. We would, consequently, like to stress three measures which seem to us to be of great importance.

159. Firstly, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament must take up again, without delay, the study and preparation of a formula for general agreement, prohibiting the use, production and stockpiling for military purposes of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and offering, through proper control procedures, guarantees for respect of the clauses and the maintenance of confidence among States.

160. Secondly, we should in the meantime associate ourselves with the appeals made to all those States that have not yet done so to accede to the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous and other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva, 17 June 1925. Thirdly, the widest possible dissemination in all countries of the Secretary-General's valuable report on this subject should be ensured.

161. By taking prompt action along these lines, the United Nations would not only lay down moral principles for those capable of producing such means of destruction, but also be setting up a legal edifice which could defend those moral principles with the proper means.

162. Moreover, public opinion would fail to understand why this problem facing us could not, once it was presented, be solved rapidly and effectively, with the unanimous agreement of States.

163. Another subject of concern is the search for specific non-armament and nuclear disarmament measures, which constituted one of the principal efforts of the Committee on Disarmament in 1969. No single member of the community of Nations, and particularly none of the countries which does not possess nuclear arms, could object to that.

164. The results so far, however, have been too modest. Was it not the Secretary-General himself who, with the authority which belongs to his office and his person, uttered a warning cry in his introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization, when he wrote:

“Far from making progress towards limiting and reducing the threat of nuclear weapons, the world seems poised

on the verge of a massive new escalation in the field of nuclear weaponry.”²⁴

165. Consequently, in embarking on this part of its statement, the Belgian delegation welcomes the opening at Helsinki, on 17 November last, of bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, with a view to strategic arms limitation. The importance of these talks could hardly be overestimated.

166. The representative of the United States most appropriately quoted [*1691st meeting*] this extract from the message addressed by President Nixon to the United States delegation in Helsinki:

“You are embarking upon one of the most momentous negotiations ever entrusted to an American delegation . . . You will begin what all of your fellow citizens in the United States, and I believe, all people throughout the world, hope will be a sustained effort not only to limit the build-up of strategic forces, but to reverse it.”

167. For his part, the representative of the Soviet Union declared, in particular:

“. . . the favourable issue of our negotiations will promote, without any doubt, the consolidation and the maintenance of peace throughout the world and contribute to the cessation of the nuclear arms race. The Soviet Union, as its leaders have publicly stated recently, will attempt precisely to achieve these results in the course of the Helsinki talks” [*ibid.*, *para. 84*].

168. For us, who are witnesses and for our countries, these words will be remembered. They help us to believe that the two principal nuclear Powers realize how the eyes of all peoples are turned on them today.

169. During his statement to the General Assembly on 25 September last, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Harmel, speaking of the permanent members of the Security Council, stated: “At San Francisco we recognized their power, but we also asked them to put that power at the service of peace” [*1765th plenary meeting, para. 122*]. In the present circumstance, where two of its permanent members bear the lion's share of the responsibility, we would express the sincere hope that their will to achieve results will be commensurate with the hopes which their meeting has aroused.

170. Belgium considers, in particular, that among the “collateral measures” on disarmament, the question of concluding a treaty banning underground nuclear tests will remain an urgent issue.

171. But it does note with some bitterness that: first, American and Soviet tests alternate almost regularly and have continued in the southern desert region of the United States and the Aleutian Islands on the one hand, and in central Asia and the Arctic islands on the other; secondly, that the attitudes of the Powers which carry out underground tests have not changed. While the United States

²⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, para. 28.

considers that, in the present technical circumstances on-site inspections are essential to determine the true nature of a suspect seismic movement, the Soviet Union, for its part, rejects the idea of on-site inspections and asserts that such inspections are superfluous and that detection can be carried out at a distance by the parties by means of their national recording systems; and thirdly, that neither France nor China seems to show any readiness to sign an agreement on nuclear disarmament.

172. The Belgian delegation remains convinced that a real freezing of the qualitative level of nuclear weapons can be attained only if the ban already agreed upon with regard to tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water are complemented by the halting of underground testing.

173. We regret that the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which this year was devoted to this area, has not yet given rise to any serious hope of a favourable result, despite the interesting proposals made.

174. That is why, while waiting for substantial progress to be made, the Belgian delegation would like to associate itself with the efforts of other Member States to set up an effective international system of exchange of seismic data which would serve as an initial step to the achievement of a complete ban on nuclear tests. It has therefore decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution just submitted to that end [A/C.1/L.485 and Add.1 and 2].

175. There is also the problem of arresting the increase in stockpiles of nuclear arms, which entails the halting of the production of fissile material for military use and the disposal of excess supplies of arms. In that respect it is to be hoped that other producing countries will follow the example of the United States, which has agreed to entrust the verification of such measures to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

176. I should not like to leave the subject of nuclear energy without welcoming two facts which are worthy of our consideration: first, the success already attained in the ratification and application of the Tlatelolco Treaty,²⁵ which provides the world with an example of an agreement creating a nuclear-free zone for a whole continent; secondly, the reports which have been submitted to us by the Secretary-General, in keeping with the recommendations of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, which concern certain peaceful uses of atomic energy and the promotion of their use for the benefit of the whole international community. Those studies without any doubt constitute a valuable contribution to the dissemination of

²⁵ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, signed on 14 February 1954.

peaceful nuclear technology and its economic advantages along the lines hoped for by the non-nuclear-weapon States.

177. The fact that those limited and well-defined aspects have been dealt with in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and in the First Committee does not and must not mean that we are departing from our main preoccupation, which remains that of general and complete disarmament. Quite the contrary.

178. We must, however, be far-sighted.

179. General and complete disarmament, under present circumstances, takes on the characteristics of an ideal—some might go so far as to call it Utopian. Of course, it is ideals which inspire men; but it may happen that too much exclusive insistence on the ideal serves as an alibi for inertia where realistic and progressive action should be undertaken.

180. Even if general and complete disarmament remains a long-term objective—and, incidentally, for that reason—it is both possible and essential that a coherent and realistic plan should be studied with a view to putting into effect successive and progressive measures of disarmament.

181. The United Nations should, in the view of the Belgian delegation, with the assistance of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, try to work out a similar programme of action, and to determine its necessary stages and how it should be applied. In advocating such a method of work, the Belgian delegation whole-heartedly supports the welcome proposal of the Secretary-General to proclaim the 1970s as a disarmament decade.

182. It is true that the world is now at a critical turning-point. The notion of military balance of power is a vain one—so grave is the danger engendered by the existence of overloaded military arsenals that are constantly being improved and ever on the increase. Neither security nor confidence can be based on terror, particularly when there is a growing tendency in the world towards a curious revival of nationalism and when the concern and reaction among young people is driving them more and more towards the performance of negative rather than constructive acts.

183. As the Organization will be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary next year, I should on behalf of my delegation like to express the hope that our great community of Member countries, and particularly the two greatest Powers, would present, to the United Nations and through it to the people of the world, the beneficent gift of the implementation of the first effective step on the road towards true disarmament.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.