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Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 16 January 1957, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. BELAUNDE

(Peru)

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces  
and all armaments: conclusion of an international convention (treaty)  
on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen  
and other weapons of mass destruction: report of the Disarmament  
Commission [22] (continued)

Statements were made in the general debate on the item by:

Mr. Brucan	(Romania)
Mr. Brilej	(Yugoslavia)
Mr. Sawada	(Japan)
Mr. Bioy	(Argentina)

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REGULATION, LIMITATION AND BALANCED REDUCTION OF ALL ARMED FORCES AND ALL ARMAMENTS: CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TREATY) ON THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS AND THE PROHIBITION OF ATOMIC, HYDROGEN AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION: REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION [Agenda item 22] (continued)

Mr. BRUCAN (Romania): The Romanian delegation is participating for the first time in the disarmament debate within the United Nations; therefore, it desires to define its position accordingly.

The Romanian Government considers that disarmament is one of the key problems of international life today. In our view, the achievement of an agreement on disarmament must not be made dependent on the settlement of other outstanding international issues. On the contrary, the international situation is of such a nature that an agreement on disarmament may open avenues for the settlement of other pending issues, thus contributing substantially to the lessening of tensions between States. Nations would be relieved of the unbearable burden of military expenditures and of the loaded atmosphere created in order to justify them.

The very fact that the Romanian People's Republic is engaged in the building up of a new economy and culture requiring the mobilization of all its resources and energies demonstrates the vital aim of our Government towards the urgent settlement of the disarmament question. We therefore welcome any practical proposal that would pave the way for disarmament, and we are willing to participate in any international endeavour towards that goal.

We have before us the proposals of the Soviet Union Government on disarmament and the lessening of international tensions, as well as the recent memorandum submitted by the representative of the United States on the same question (A/C.1/783). It is obvious that real possibilities have been created for progress towards disarmament.

It has become axiomatic in international political life that what is uppermost as far as the disarmament question is concerned is an agreement between the United States, the Soviet Union and the other big Powers. This does not mean, however, that the other countries, medium and small, cannot and must not play a paramount role in the settlement of this question. This is confirmed even by the lack of speakers on behalf of some of the big Powers.

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

The Romanian Government carefully considered the proposals of the Soviet Union on disarmament and the lessening of international tension. In its statement of 29 November the Romanian Government pronounced itself in favour of those proposals and expressed its readiness to give full support to their implementation in the interest of international peace and security. There can be no doubt that through their constructive and concrete nature, and because of the sincere desire to meet the other parties' position half-way, the Soviet proposals constitute a sound basis for fruitful negotiations and agreement. As far as the United States memorandum is concerned, it will be given careful examination and due attention by my Government.

At the present stage I want to restrict myself to some remarks concerning disarmament. First of all, a question of principle. There undoubtedly exists a close correlation between a nation's position on disarmament and its other actions in relation to foreign policy. It may even be said that there must be a consonance between them which is required not only for the sake of good logic but -- and this is even more important -- for the sake of public opinion. In good logic, actions of foreign policy which inevitably involve new incitements to an armaments race and new efforts to set up naval and air bases on foreign territories are incompatible with the cause of disarmament.

Passing to the concrete aspects of disarmament, what compels our attention first of all is its complexity. We have there the question of the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons; the question of banning nuclear weapons tests; the question of the reduction of the armed forces of the big Powers and of the corresponding reduction of the armed forces of the other Powers; the question of the liquidation of air and naval bases on foreign territories; and the question of international control. To all this has been added the problem of controlling earth satellites and intercontinental missiles insisted upon recently by the United States.

Taking into consideration all the intricacies of these problems, what ought to be the practical and efficient method to get out of the present deadlock, avoiding the complications and the delays which led to it? In my opinion, this method would be not to link the settlement of one aspect of the disarmament question with an over-all settlement, lest we become drawn once more into a vicious circle. From this complexity of questions we ought to choose the one that is

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

nearer to settlement and less complicated. Then we could reach an agreement on that particular question. That would undoubtedly exert a positive influence on the settlement of other questions. In the view of the Romanian delegation all the aspects of the disarmament problem should not be considered as one entity which must be settled simultaneously but, rather, as a chain of problems out of which we have to seize that link which is most accessible just now. Having that link firmly in hand, we may also be able to settle other related questions. We are led to this conclusion by past experience of negotiations on disarmament. That experience has taught us that any progress in relation to one of the aspects of the problem -- any rapprochement affecting respective positions -- was always brought to naught as the result of making the settlement of one question dependent on other questions or on an over-all settlement.

Which link is today likely to be seized more easily as being less complicated? The Romanian delegation believes that that link is the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapon tests, because the implementation of such a ban would not involve any form of inspection or control. In brief, there is nothing that might hinder or even delay an agreement on this question.

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

Moreover, there already exists a quasi-unanimity of views on this question. There is no reason why this prohibition should be linked to the settlement of any complex question such as the production and use of atomic and hydrogen weapons. If that were to be done, we should once again be drawn into a deliberately-created vicious circle. At present, when the intention of all mankind is focused on the work of this Committee, when all mankind is hoping that we shall pass from mere statements to deeds, the stand taken as regards the immediate prohibition of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons will constitute for people throughout the world a certain criterion of judgement.

The Romanian delegation gives its firm support to the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union delegation on the tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons, and hopes, indeed, that the Committee will live up to the expectations of public opinion by adopting that draft resolution. Such a step would signify that the First Committee was not only a debating body, but also a body which could take decisions. Under our concept, the decision immediately to stop the tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons would be but the first step towards the banning of nuclear weapons, including the prohibition of their production and the complete destruction of existing stockpiles of such weapons.

I realize that such an agreement should include the establishment of a strict and effective system of international control. What puzzles us, however, is the fact that the United States memorandum does not mention -- even as a distant target -- the banning of nuclear weapons, which is imperiously called for by all nations and by the humanitarian objectives of the United Nations, in order to protect mankind and civilization against the unthinkable disaster of an atomic war.

The Romanian delegation considers that there is a certain vista of hope with regard to the reduction of the armed forces of the great Powers. It is, of course, understood that armaments should be reduced accordingly. There can be no doubt that the effectives of armed forces do not retain the same specific weight under modern military techniques. It is, none the less, a common truth that wars are waged first of all by armed forces. By the same token, the effectives of armed forces may influence the heavy burden weighing on the national economies of various countries. We have had the occasion to prove the truth of this thesis by our own experience. In 1955 and in 1956, the Romanian Government

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

proceeded to a reduction of its armed forces by 60,000 soldiers and officers, directing the manpower and money thus made available to the building of living quarters and other socio-economic activities. Of course, it would be desirable if other countries would try to prove the truth of our thesis in this way. I therefore insist that it is necessary to establish a limit on the armed forces not only of the great Powers, but also of other Powers. If these Powers were allowed to build up large armies, the equilibrium which, in good logic, the limitation of the armed forces of the large Powers ought to ensure would be upset. The Romanian delegation therefore supports the principle of the limitation of the armed forces of all countries.

Some representatives here have raised the question of earth satellites and outer-space weapons. It is not my intention to deal with this question. I should like, however, to point out that the Romanian people, like many other people, feel that a much more immediate and direct threat to their international security is posed by the existence on earth -- and not in inter-planetary space -- of military bases, established on foreign territory, in the immediate neighbourhood of our country. The Romanian delegation therefore deems it necessary that due importance should be attached to the liquidation of military bases established on foreign territory.

The Romanian People's Republic is particularly interested in the achievement of a European collective security system. While it is obvious that European security would be considerably strengthened by the conclusion of an international agreement regarding the reduction of armaments, the reverse is also obvious -- namely, that the creation of a European collective security system would constitute tremendous progress towards a successful solution of the disarmament problem.

It has often been emphasized that the Warsaw Treaty is a conditional treaty, which would be liquidated as soon as NATO had been liquidated. Considering, however, that the Western Powers do not have this aim, I feel that a very practical step towards the goal would be to start with a non-aggression pact between the NATO countries and the countries of the Warsaw Treaty, one of which is Romania.

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

It results from the preceding remarks and from the multiplicity and complexity of the disarmament problem that it is necessary to create an appropriate framework for the pending negotiations. It is far from our intention to indulge in recriminations about the past activities of the special bodies of the United Nations in this field -- especially since all agree as to their inefficiency. I feel that one of the causes of the past failures has been the restricted membership of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, which do not reflect even the main positions and interests in this matter. In view of the fact that the settlement of this problem cannot be achieved without the co-operation of all, the widening of the membership of the two special organs of the United Nations in this field becomes a "must".

Inspired by the Romanian people's keen interest in peace, the Romanian delegation is prepared to give its full support to any efforts aimed at promoting the cause of disarmament.

Mr. BRILEJ (Yugoslavia): There is hardly need, I think, to emphasize the importance of the disarmament problem at the present juncture in world affairs. One could, if one wished, quote numerous statements from which an increasing sense of urgency, coupled with obvious concern at the lack of achievement recorded so far, clearly emerges. I shall not, of course, take the time of the Committee by any extensive quotations in this regard. I would, however, like to recall the words of the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Nutting, at the tenth session of the General Assembly:

"Every day that we delay, the problems of disarmament pile up. They have been piling up for ten years. We cannot afford to let them go on compounding themselves for another ten or more years whilst we seek for ways and means to break down the political and scientific barriers which stand in the way of a comprehensive disarmament agreement. I do not believe that it is either safe or wise any longer to delay all action whilst we search for these elusive answers. The more I study this problem, and the more I see and hear of scientific developments, the more I am convinced that we must make a start now." (A/C.1/PV.801, page 21)

How justified these words were at the time they were spoken. How even more true they are today. It has almost become a truism -- indeed, a tragic truism -- to say that the present scale of armaments, the armament race and the constant introduction of new and more formidable means of mass destruction not only reflect and arise from world tensions, but are the major contributing factor to these tensions. The international crisis which we have just lived through lends, if anything, an added sense of urgency to the disarmament problem. Two aspects of the matter have, in particular, been brought out with a disturbing clarity. It has become evident that a world divided into heavily armed camps is a world which constantly stands on the brink of a general conflagration. It has also been demonstrated that local military actions, which some are still apparently inclined to view as a method for "continuing policy by other means", can only too easily touch off a conflict of unforeseeable proportions. If to this we add the economic burden involved as well as the obvious fact that the emergence of new weapons with more and more lethal and complex features renders the disarmament problem itself more complicated and more difficult of solution every day, we shall, I think, have said enough of the truly dramatic need of practical steps in this vitally important field.



(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

That such practical steps have not so far been made is, of course, one of the more distressing aspects of the world situation.

It is true that some interesting ideas and valuable suggestions were put forth last year in the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee. It is also true that a significant rapprochement of views on some aspects of the disarmament problem had taken place. However, the hope that this rather encouraging trend would lead to practical achievements has not been fulfilled.

This naturally leads us to ponder once again upon the causes of this lack of progress in so vital a field. These causes cannot be sought solely in the fact that the general international climate in which our efforts towards disarmament have been taking place has been an unpropitious one -- although this fact cannot, of course, be denied, nor should it be underrated. My delegation, and I am sure most of us here, cannot rest content with the explanation that nothing much can be achieved in the field of disarmament until the necessary atmosphere of confidence has been brought about through the previous settlement of other outstanding international issues. This point of view has been reflected in certain disarmament plans wherein the different stages of the disarmament process have been made dependent upon the solution of other problems. This kind of approach would now appear to be waging a losing battle against more realistic and better balanced views. In other words, it has been increasingly recognized that some measure of progress in the field of disarmament is essential if there is to be a decrease in world tension and a solution of the other major problems upon which this tension is feeding. We for our part feel very strongly that efforts should be made in both directions and that both sets of problems should be tackled as they present themselves.

I may add here that we understand the caution which the Powers display with regard to a problem which has so direct a bearing on their security. This fully justified caution does not, however, in our opinion, warrant a tendency to view international issues, including the disarmament problem, in the light of considerations from which the possibility of war has not been excluded. We cannot but feel that such an approach obscures the vistas of progress not only in the field of disarmament, but as regards other international problems as well.

(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

Another obstacle to practical achievement in the sphere of disarmament has been the tendency to consider this problem solely in terms of general, comprehensive and all-embracing plans. Now, of course, my delegation -- as I tried to make abundantly clear in the Disarmament Commission -- does not deny the value of these plans as such. On the contrary, my delegation considers that further efforts toward agreement on a general disarmament plan should be pursued. They have, in the past, made it easier for us to envisage the various aspects of the disarmament problem. They also, in a sense, permit us to visualize the goal towards which we hope to move. However, by seeking to provide over-ambitious blueprints and to give sweeping answers, they have tended to make the whole problem even more complex than it already was, to raise a number of sometimes unnecessary or even artificial issues, to blur our thinking and to overwhelm us, as it were, with the magnitude of our task. They have thus not only impeded such more modest progress as might have been possible, but have imparted a kind of unreality to many of our debates on the disarmament problem.

These comprehensive plans were in a way a reflection of the time when this whole problem was dealt with more on the plane of the struggle for world public opinion than on that of practical realization. These times, we hope, have now been left behind, although the atmosphere that attended the opening of our deliberations on this item cannot be described as altogether encouraging in this respect. Nor is there any need for me to elaborate the point that a basic precondition for any advances towards disarmament is to do away, once and for all, with the propaganda paraphernalia with which our discussions on this subject have for too long been attended.

These, in our view, are some of the main reasons why no practical measures have so far been agreed upon in the field of disarmament. My purpose, however, here is not to dig up the past, but to look to the future.

Where, indeed, do we go from here? There seems to be general agreement that further and determined efforts are called for. There also seems to be substantial agreement that such efforts should lead to certain tangible results provided they are directed along the right line. Only the other day the representatives of the two leading powers, the United States and the USSR, appeared to have agreed on this point.

(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

Mr. Lodge said:

"I wish to emphasize that the United States is ready and willing to take sound steps towards arms reductions, whether they are very small or ... large and extensive, provided, however, that any such steps must be subject to effective inspection." (A/C.1/PV.821, p. 2)

Mr. Kuznetsov, for his part, expressed the conviction:

"that there exist real possibilities for a satisfactory solution of this problem and that all the necessary conditions exist for taking the first step ..." (A/C.1/PV.821, p. 28)

I could, of course, quote many such statements which point to the possibility of practical measures in the field of disarmament.

But that is not all, however. Efforts have been made to seek a line of approach which would enable the existing opportunities to materialize. What I have particularly in mind is the method of partial initial agreement. Such agreements have, in our opinion, been made possible by the rapprochement already achieved with regard to certain aspects of the disarmament problem. Such measures could be agreed upon and put into effect without being made dependent upon subsequent agreements in this field. While they would, of course, contribute very substantially to the growth of international confidence, they would be more than "confidence-building measures" in the usually accepted sense of the term; they would be expected gradually to grow into something broader and more comprehensive and lead, in due course, to general disarmament.

I may perhaps be permitted to recall, in this connexion the proposal made by the Yugoslav delegation in the Disarmament Commission in July of last year. The operative part of the proposed resolution states:

"Urges the members of the Sub-Committee:

1. To continue their endeavours to reach agreement on general disarmament;
2. To seek an early agreement on and implementation of such initial disarmament measures as are now feasible and such forms and degrees of control as are required for these measures, more particularly with regard to:

- (a) a reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces,
- (b) the cessation of experimental explosions of nuclear weapons, as well as other practicable measures in the field of nuclear armaments,
- (c) a reduction of military expenditure." (DC/92)

Such an approach would, we felt, and still feel, have certain obvious advantages. Its first and foremost advantage is, I think, its practicability. In other words, it seeks to do no more than is feasible in existing circumstances and does not make the attainment of what is now feasible dependent upon future contingencies. By feasible, I mean two things here. I mean feasible in the sense that they would rest upon a substantial measure of agreement on certain aspects of the disarmament problem and also in the sense of not going beyond what present-day international conditions permit. Such measures would, in their turn, be bound to have a favourable impact on the general international atmosphere and facilitate the solution of other problems; this would then create more propitious conditions for further steps in the field of disarmament. In other words, the approach we suggest would make the perennial issue of what comes first - disarmament or the settlement of other important international questions -- largely an artificial one. At the same time, the application of such initial measures would make it possible to acquire valuable technical experience on various aspects of the disarmament problem and thus make further advances easier.

An important feature of the type of initial measures we propose is that they can be so devised as not to alter the existing balance of forces and would thus avoid one of the major hurdles with which the more comprehensive plans were usually confronted.

Finally -- and this is, I think, a point of major significance -- such an approach would have substantial advantages as regards the problem of control and inspection also. It should be less difficult to find acceptable forms and degrees of control to the implementation of the initial disarmament measures than to elaborate and to achieve agreement on the type of over-all control that a general disarmament programme would require. Mr. Jules Moch's now famous dictum of "No control without disarmament, no disarmament without control, but -- progressively -- all the disarmament that it is possible to control" would thus become an immediate practical proposition.

(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

The advantages of such a line of approach were pointed out by several members of the Disarmament Commission. As the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Noble, said yesterday:

"It appears that ... there was a definite shift of opinion in favour of seeking some limited approach which would enable disarmament to get under way." (A/C.1/PV.822, p. 9-10)

It might perhaps be of interest to quote some of the opinions expressed in this regard by the members of the Disarmament Commission. The United Kingdom representative said that he agreed:

"... wholeheartedly with the representative of Yugoslavia that all this constitutes both an opportunity and a need to agree upon an international disarmament programme." (DC/PV.56, p. 8)

He also expressed his Government's readiness:

"... to operate a partial disarmament agreement which could be concluded and carried out without delay and without awaiting any other agreements, and which would include a provision for regulating and limiting nuclear test explosions." (DC/PV.59, p. 23-25)

The representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, for his part, voiced the belief that:

"... the solution of the disarmament problem by instalments could facilitate the reaching of an agreement between the corresponding Powers and lead the disarmament talks out of its present deadlock." (DC/PV.57, p.28)

The representative of the United States, Mr. Lodge, also concurred in the view that:

"initial agreements should provide both for an effective reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces and for certain measures relating to nuclear weapons as well as for an adequate system of control".

(DC/PV.61, p. 7)

The basic concepts underlying this approach have not only been fully borne out, I think, by subsequent developments, but have acquired an added sense of urgency. The statements we have heard here so far seem to confirm the importance of directing our efforts towards initial steps in those areas where the existing measure of agreement is the most substantial.

(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

One such area is clearly that of conventional armaments and armed forces, where there no longer appears to be any real disagreement with regard to the question of levels, or initial levels. The same would apply to the closely related question of the reduction of military expenditure. As concerns certain initial extremely important measures in the field of nuclear weapons, armaments, one can, in our opinion, perceive the possibility of agreement with regard to the question of the cessation, or at least the limitation and regulation, of experimental explosions of nuclear weapons. We strongly feel that greater efforts should be made in order to secure that all production of fissionable materials be used for non-military purposes only.

There is, of course, the question of inspection and control where there are many issues still to be resolved. However, as I said a moment ago, it should not prove too difficult within the context of partial initial measures to achieve agreement on such degrees and forms of control as are required for such measures.

(Mr. Brilej, Yugoslavia)

I have no desire of appearing unduly optimistic or of over-simplifying the issues involved. Nor do I wish to give the impression that the approach we are advocating is something essentially new and hitherto unknown. All my delegation desires is that the possibilities of initial steps in the field of disarmament be fully explored and utilized and it considers that the method of partial agreements is at this stage a practical and realistic one.

As we gradually, and I hope successfully, endeavour to transpose the disarmament problem to the level of practical achievement, we shall of course be confronted with certain new questions or, rather, certain old questions will force themselves upon us with accrued insistence. One such question, which is of the greatest importance, is that arising from the fact that we are actually dealing with the disarmament problem, which is in the first instance the problem of the armaments of the great Powers, in the absence of one of these great Powers. I am of course referring to the fact that the People's Republic of China has not so far been in a position to participate in the consideration of a problem to which it clearly has a vital contribution to make and in which its interests are directly affected. The question of Chinese participation is of course a question of simple realism in disarmament discussions.

Certain important proposals have been made here by the representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom. We shall of course, give these important proposals, as well as any other proposals which may be submitted, the most careful consideration and we reserve the right to comment upon them at a later stage.

My delegation has always emphasized the responsibility of the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission to advance from the stage of discussion to that of practical achievement. This responsibility is greater today than it has ever been before. No less vital, however, is the concern of the other smaller nations, whose survival is also at stake. The United Nations as a whole must move forward towards the solution of this vital world problem and make a determined effort to free mankind from the nightmare of an atomic holocaust.

Mr. SAWADA (Japan): The problem of disarmament is undoubtedly one of the most important general problems lying in the path of the attainment of enduring peace in the world. It is no wonder that a great deal of time and energy has been spent in the United Nations during the past ten years in the deliberations on this subject. The results achieved so far, however, are in curious contrast to the interest shown by various delegations in this problem. The dissatisfaction at the lack of progress towards bringing ideals into reality has been expressed by many of us in various ways and I do not wish to repeat these remarks. I wish to emphasize that my Government is convinced that we should not be discouraged by the lack of success in the past, but that the United Nations should do its best to pursue this important subject.

If I express disappointment on the part of my Government at the lack of success in the work of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, I have no intention of obscuring the merit of the work done in those bodies. On the contrary, I wish to pay high tribute to the members of the Commission and the Sub-Committee for their wisdom and untiring efforts with which they have pursued their tasks. If progress has been slow, it is nothing but a proof of the difficulties involved in this important problem. My Government has carefully studied the records of proceedings of previous deliberations, and I have listened with great interest to the speakers who preceded me. I wish now to make some observation on a few points which have been raised in the discussion.

One of these is the inseparable relation between conventional armaments and nuclear weapons. It has been firmly recognized by the General Assembly, I understand, that the two kinds of armaments constitute an inseparable whole. The Government and people of Japan, being the first and only victims of atomic bombing, are aware, probably more realistically than any other nation, of the calamitous disasters which nuclear weapons could bring upon mankind. It is their ardent hope that the world can altogether prohibit forthwith the production and use of nuclear weapons.

It has unfortunately been recognized that the absence of a scientific method of detection of nuclear weapons renders the immediate prohibition impracticable in the present situation, in which mutual confidence among nations is not yet mature. Moreover, the prohibition of nuclear weapons will have to be preceded by



(Mr. Sawada, Japan)

the acceptance by all parties concerned of an effective system of inspection which, it is regretted, has proved to be one of the major points at issue in the discussions hitherto.

As long as the use of nuclear weapons is permitted, conventional armaments will naturally play a secondary role. Conventional armaments are not, however, in our view, by any means entirely obsolete in the modern science of war. It is therefore important that all nations pursue ways and means to control and reduce their conventional armaments. On the other hand, it is difficult to see how any nation could proceed to reduce conventional weapons, which are not entirely obsolete, while the more powerful weapons possessed by a certain number of nations are left unfettered. It is not even logical, in our opinion, to attempt to regulate weapons of lesser importance while leaving nuclear armaments free. My Government therefore believes that the regulation of conventional armaments and that of nuclear weapons are an inseparable whole and that any scheme for disarmament should cover the two types of armaments simultaneously.

I wish to refer in this connexion to the problem of the method of detection of nuclear materials and weapons. I have to agree, with regret, that in the absence of a scientific method of detection and of an effective system of inspection, an immediate prohibition of production and use of nuclear weapons may not be practicable. However, we cannot wait forever for the discovery of the method, because the risk and the stake of mankind are too great. Human beings ought to be the masters of science and not vice versa. I submit, therefore, that the United Nations should make every effort to encourage and promote scientific study and research in this field, so that at least one of various difficulties confronting the eventual prohibition of nuclear weapons can be promptly removed.

(Mr. Sawada, Japan)

Another point which I wish to mention relates to the importance of political climate, from which, in any case, the problem of disarmament has no escape. Opinion may differ as to whether a constructive effort toward disarmament has to wait until political conditions have improved, or whether political climate will not be improved without first having an agreement on disarmament. If we spend time in arguing about it, we shall never be able to get out of a vicious circle. Rather, what we should do is not to waste time in this argument, but to proceed with whatever measure of disarmament is deemed to be permissible under the existing political climate and conducive to the securing of world peace, which is the purpose of disarmament. I say so because basically no agreement on disarmament can have any foundation if the existing political situation does not substantiate it. Any agreement on disarmament without a sufficient guarantee for compliance would betray rather than promote the cause of peace among nations.

Furthermore, any progress on disarmament at the present stage depends essentially and ultimately on full agreement and mutual confidence among a very small number of major Powers. Unless an agreement at that level is secured, any agreement on paper, however perfect, is liable to be thrown into a waste basket, and smaller nations are helpless to prevent it. I, therefore, urge that the leaders of major Powers -- Powers possessing nuclear weapons, in particular -- should talk frankly, more frankly and constructively than ever, so that all the world may follow their leadership in an effort to bring about a world in which all of us may live without being constantly exposed to the fear of war and misery. My delegation welcomes, in this sense, the idea that the heads of major Powers meet, at an appropriate stage, to discuss basic questions. If a measure of agreement is secured at such a level, the rest could very well be left to the relevant organs of the United Nations. We are of the opinion, therefore, that no useful purpose could be served by convening a special international meeting on disarmament in addition to the already-established organs within the United Nations.

(Mr. Sawada, Japan)

Recent events in the international picture, I regret to say, are not such as to facilitate our efforts toward disarmament. However, I am encouraged to note that the latest proposal of the USSR in November last seems to indicate an additional step toward the possible meeting of minds, and that President Eisenhower reaffirmed in the recent State of the Union message the readiness for an agreement "which would reverse the trend toward even more devastating nuclear weapons". In these circumstances, my delegation is strongly in favour of having the Disarmament Commission continue its tasks, in the light of the discussions in this Committee, in search for a reasonable and reliable formula which could be accepted by all parties concerned.

I wish to turn now to the problem of nuclear explosions tests. I understand that at the Disarmament Commission a proposal for immediate prohibition of tests of nuclear explosions was not supported on the ground, inter alia, that the prohibition of tests alone does not make sense unless the prohibition of production or use of nuclear bombs is simultaneously instituted, and that the existing scale of testing does not produce any harm to human beings. Nevertheless, I must emphasize that this problem is of serious concern to the Government and the people of Japan for well-known reasons. They are particularly concerned that test explosions are currently executed by unilateral decision of a country, with or without prior notification, and with or without precautionary measures taken. To say the least, if an agreement is reached to impose international control over test explosions for military purposes, its psychological effect alone will be tremendous. It is true that there has not been any known damage upon human health from test explosions since the tragic event which occurred in connexion with the test at Bikini in the spring of 1954, because the countries concerned have not failed to take sufficient precautionary measures. However, our medical experts and scientists are not quite satisfied with the assertion that the current scale of test explosions would not cause damage to human bodies. Aside from the danger to human health, we cannot lose sight of possible economic losses suffered by the fishing and other industries, which no precautionary measure could prevent. Moreover, as long as nuclear tests are permitted, the march of inventions of vicious weapons will never be halted. I feel it my duty toward the people of Japan to renew now the appeal for the cessation at the earliest possible date of test explosions of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Sawada, Japan)

My delegation is encouraged to have heard, since the opening of the debate in this Committee, various delegations emphasizing the importance of this problem and the role it could play in the general progress toward disarmament. We believe that the time has come for the United Nations to take some practical steps in this direction. This is a matter which is currently affecting, not only the health and welfare of human beings, but also the economic and industrial life of nations. It is, therefore, fit that the General Assembly itself should take up this matter now and seek an agreement in general outline, rather than transfer it to the Disarmament Commission or the Sub-Committee, which are primarily concerned with the problem of disarmament itself.

As I have stated, it is the strong hope of the Government and people of Japan that all kinds of test explosions, large or small, be ceased forthwith. However, we are not here merely to express our wishes. We are seeking a practical and solid arrangement by which every Member of this Organization will abide, on which we may safely rely, and from which we can proceed forward step by step. Prompted by the hope for the eventual prohibition of nuclear weapons and giving due consideration to the existing circumstances, I urge this Committee to agree, as a minimum, to establish procedures for prior notification of all kinds of test explosions to a competent organ of the United Nations, to provide absolute safety for human health under international supervision and to assure that no economic losses be inflicted upon other parties. It is believed that such a step should not only be practicable and promise full compliance, but would also pave the way for the eventual elimination of nuclear warfare, an objective which is upheld by everybody everywhere.

Mr. BIOY (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The Argentine Republic has a rather lengthy history and an extremely well-defined one in so far as war and peace are concerned. Wars ended for us almost a century ago, and even those earlier wars, except the war of independence that we waged because of our own desires for freedom, were imposed upon us. My country never provoked a war, and, although we always emerged the victors in the treaties that concluded the wars, we were magnanimous and generous to those we had vanquished. It was a man of my country who, on the day when our weapons were victorious, proclaimed the formula that victory gives no rights. In international disputes, my country has always endeavoured to avoid the danger of conflict by proposing arbitration or other ways of understanding.

I am stressing this background because I want to set forth before the United Nations what might be called our line of behaviour, so as to justify the fact that the voice of the representative of Argentina is being raised in an Assembly where the question of disarmament is being discussed. This item can touch my country only by reflection. There is something much greater than obligations, and I feel that in this Committee it should be understood that Argentina is ready to support any measures which, through disarmament, can lead us to peace. We do not want measures that will lead us to war. Certain recommendations in favour of disarmament, if carried out, might expose certain nations to attack by an aggressor. We must undoubtedly make the greatest possible effort to assure disarmament that will ensure peace. We do not want to be discouraging. However, I cannot hide my feeling that the most efficient thing would be to disarm certain persons of their desire for conquest and conflict.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I have no other speakers on my list for this afternoon's meeting. I have very seriously considered the question of the closing of the list of speakers and, as I said in my previous statement to the Committee on this subject, my desire is to follow the wishes of the Committee in this as in all other matters. An announcement that the list of speakers is to be closed does not, of course, mean that the debate is about to be closed. Very often, an announcement that the list of speakers is about to be closed is merely an encouragement to representatives to prepare themselves to speak.

May I suggest -- and I want to stress the word "suggest" -- that we might close the list of speakers after our Friday meetings, that is, at 6 p.m. on Friday. Representatives will have until Friday to decide whether or not they wish to speak in this debate. Naturally, this does not mean that they immediately have to take part in the debate. Unless, of course, some representatives wish to speak on Saturday and the Committee decides to hold a meeting on Saturday, the representatives who put their names on the list on Friday will, of course, be called upon to speak on Monday.

If I hear no objection to this suggestion by the Chair, I take the liberty of putting before the Committee the idea that we close the speakers' list on Friday.

I hear no objection on the part of the Committee, and I invite representatives to place their names on the speakers' list. They will have time to do so until Friday afternoon.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.