



President: Mr. Lazar MOJSOV (Yugoslavia).

AGENDA ITEM 8

General debate (continued)

1. Mr. HAMEED (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, it is an honour and a privilege for me once again to have the opportunity of addressing this Assembly under your wise and able chairmanship. Please accept my delegation's good wishes, and my own, for the successful conduct of this historic special session on disarmament. It is indeed auspicious to find you, the representative of Yugoslavia, guiding these deliberations.

2. It will be remembered that the initial call for a special session on disarmament was made at Belgrade in 1961 at the first Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries. At meetings of the non-aligned held subsequently at Cairo and Lusaka the proposal was repeated. Since Bandung, the concern of the non-aligned countries with the question of disarmament has been unswerving, and this concern culminated at the Colombo Conference in 1976 in the non-aligned movement's unanimous decision that universal peace and security could be ensured only by general and complete disarmament.

3. In 1976 the General Assembly adopted resolution 31/189 B, sponsored by about 80 countries on the initiative of the non-aligned countries, calling for this special session. We are meeting here in this hour of history to address and apply ourselves to the most dangerous question that faces mankind today. I am confident, Mr. President, that with your commitment to the cause of disarmament our deliberations will not only be constructive but will also lead to effective decisions.

4. In this context we should like to make a special appeal to all those here not to allow the differences in their approach to this problem to cloud the discussions and focus attention elsewhere. We are not here sitting in judgement. The international community and posterity will judge every one of us by how we measure up to their expectations. They will not apply any other criterion in their assessment.

5. Disarmament is not a recent quest of mankind in its search for peace and security. This question has exercised the minds of statesmen and politicians many a time, until it received a new impetus and a new dimension after 1945. It is worth recalling that the first resolution adopted at the first session of the General Assembly of the United Na-

tions on 24 January 1946 dealt with the subject of the control of arms. The resolution stressed the need to exert real efforts to ensure genuine stability, peace and security in the world. Since then—that is, since 1946—the General Assembly has met in regular session 32 times, nearly 300 resolutions on disarmament have been adopted and the records of debates, proposals and recommendations on disarmament have reached Himalayan proportions; they are indeed very extensive and exhaustive. Despite all these efforts the situation that we face today is one of alarm and intense concern. Never has mankind faced such a critical threat to its own existence. Peace hangs today on a slender thread.

6. It is our hope that this special session will be a turning-point in mankind's endeavour to free the world from the threat of destruction, be it through nuclear or through conventional weapons. The situation is so frightening in all its aspects, and its cost to mankind in material and human terms is so colossal, that one wonders for how long it could continue without disastrous consequences for the world. This session, we feel, must not be limited only to discussing this issue at great length and then merely proceeding to adopt resolutions and expressing pious hopes. On the contrary, we feel that this session should be one in which all Member States contribute to working out effective and realistic measures to meet the challenge which the international community faces today.

7. Since 1945 we have witnessed vast and important changes in the international political system. These changes continue to take place. The elimination of colonialism, the fight to eradicate neo-colonialism, the efforts to strengthen the political independence and sovereignty of newly independent States and the efforts to ensure their economic development and growth have been a concern of all of us.

8. Against this background we are made to believe that national and international security are to be equated with military superiority. This has given new proportions to the arms race between the super-Powers, which has been a dominant and disturbing feature of international relations for over 30 years. The increasing transfer of arms to smaller nations, or the establishment of armaments industries in regions where there were none before, have gathered momentum. This development not only aggravates tension but also creates instability and insecurity, leading to increasing arming and to armed confrontation. The forces of destruction stand before us, challenging the very foundations, fortunes and future of mankind.

9. Up to now, disarmament negotiations have been char-

acterized by the lack of universality in participation. They have been conducted by a few big Powers or a group of countries. On this occasion the entire membership of the United Nations is involved, reflecting the view that disarmament is an issue which not only is vital to all Member countries, but also calls for their active involvement in resolving the problem. This means, in the first instance, an international commitment to the approach to the problem. This has been the consistent view of the non-aligned movement. We have stood for the widest possible broadening of participation. It is the submission of the non-aligned movement that this new approach should be safeguarded in the future and that universal concern over the problem of disarmament should be accompanied by the active and effective participation of all Member countries.

10. Sri Lanka has always associated itself with all moves on the question of disarmament. Its faith and belief in the non-aligned movement has stood firm and fast since 1955. In 1970, with the other non-aligned countries, Sri Lanka called for the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace [*resolution 2832(XXVI)*] free of military presence and big-Power rivalry. The General Assembly adopted this Declaration, and since then it has been reiterated annually, though we must confess our serious disappointment at the slow progress in making the Indian Ocean a true zone of peace.

11. Since the Second World War the international community has been compelled to work towards the creation of a new international order—one that will be just and fair to every member of the international community, be it developed or developing. Our search for this new international order has clearly shown and established that a new international order must necessarily include a new international economic order based on equity and justice, and functioning for the benefit of all nations.

12. We hold that disarmament is not only a political question, but also an integral element in the new international order, and its co-relationship with development is an extremely close and critical one. We are firmly convinced that the pursuit of disarmament is at the same time the pursuit of development by all nations. This is an aspect of disarmament that should not be minimized, misinterpreted or misunderstood. It is an integral part of the process of creating a new international order. The interaction between disarmament and development will be to the benefit of all nations.

13. The non-aligned countries' position has been collectively and clearly defined in a document which has been presented to this Assembly. The document consists of a preamble, a draft declaration, a programme of action and machinery for disarmament negotiations [*A/S-10/1, vol. IV, document A/AC.187/55/Add.1 and Corr.2*]. This initiative of the non-aligned movement reflects its intense concern over the problem of disarmament and its desire to act constructively towards a resolution of the problem. The movement is firm in its conviction that the greatest possible effort should be exerted towards ensuring that the special session achieves something tangible and practical. We do not for a moment fail to recognize how complex the question is, but the dangers of the arms race and the perils

that surround its continuation have made us chalk out our approach within the realm of reality. The aim of the non-aligned countries has not been to weaken or undermine the security of any country—far from it. On the contrary, it has been to consolidate peace, which alone will give confidence to all countries to effect substantial reduction in national expenditure for military purposes.

14. The non-aligned countries have established a clear order of priorities in disarmament negotiations, which they feel need to be observed if realistic steps are to be taken, on a rational basis, towards general and complete disarmament. It covers a series of confidence-building measures without which the whole exercise could not be maintained. In the declaration on disarmament—the non-aligned working document—the danger with which mankind is faced, first, from nuclear weapons has been spelt out. It speaks of the need for the international peace and security of all nations and of how this can be ensured through the Charter of the United Nations. It draws the attention of the international community to the current state of armaments in the world and to the price that mankind has to pay to keep up in the arms race. It sets out the objective and how it needs to be pursued resolutely. It establishes an integral link between disarmament and development, highlighting the fact that the arms race is incompatible with the need for accelerated progress towards the new international economic order.

15. The document enunciates the principles that should guide negotiations in the future and sets out a programme of action. The programme of action also calls for the elaboration of a system to keep the United Nations informed of resources being released through disarmament and for a set of principles for channelling such resources for developmental purposes, taking into special account the needs of developing countries. This programme of action, in our view, is moderate and we feel it could command the broadest possible acceptance of this Assembly.

16. Finally, the non-aligned countries have suggested machinery for disarmament negotiations which they feel needs to be introduced at this time to ensure the observance of the principles embodied in the declaration and the full implementation of the programme of action. These suggestions call for a strengthening of the link between the General Assembly and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the composition of which, in our opinion, should be reviewed to make it more representative of Member States and more receptive to recommendations and proposals from Member States.

17. Speaking at Sydney, my President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, expressed his concern about the arms race and emphasized the necessity of acting positively on this question. My President is of the view that the establishment of a world disarmament authority which would function as a permanent institution of the United Nations system could contribute towards the realization of the objective of general and complete disarmament.

18. The world disarmament authority could be given a broad mandate, beginning with the collection and study of data relating to the armaments industry and the distribution

of arms throughout the world. It could serve as a centralized body, collecting such information from sources that are already engaged in this task and it could also make its own studies or undertake such studies as required by the United Nations. The world disarmament authority could also be the agency for monitoring the implementation of disarmament measures already agreed upon and those to be adopted in the future. Further, the world disarmament authority could be an agency for the development of realistic proposals and programmes on disarmament and it would also be the source of information on disarmament for Member States and non-governmental organizations. When the world community has moved towards general and complete disarmament, in the view of my President the world disarmament authority could play the role of controlling and regulating the production and distribution of any necessary armaments. He also visualizes that this authority would be finally vested with power to use arms to defend the decisions of the United Nations where there are international conflicts and the use of arms is necessary.

19. Those, in very broad outline, are the views of my President on the setting up of a world disarmament authority. He wishes that the leaders of the Member countries would share their thoughts on this subject with him and, should this proposal gain broad acceptance in principle, there is no doubt that details relating to every aspect of the proposal could be worked out.

20. Until now, I have spoken of the role of Member States and of Governments regarding the problem of disarmament, but the problem is not the exclusive concern of statesmen and of Governments alone. The people at large, men, women and children of all nations, are also deeply concerned and though they may not be involved directly in negotiations or the implementation of agreements, the impact of these actions is felt keenly by them. It is imperative, therefore, that the United Nations take steps to stimulate the broadest possible participation by non-governmental organizations and individuals in pursuing disarmament. The building and strengthening of opinion in favour of disarmament, support for disarmament proposals and education on questions of disarmament must be actively pursued. In this area, I feel that the United Nations and the world disarmament authority proposed by my President can play a vital and productive role.

21. On behalf of Sri Lanka, I wish to submit to the Assembly two simple suggestions which may help to emphasize the importance of disarmament in the world. They are: first, to designate 1980 as World Disarmament Year; and secondly, to designate 23 May each year as World Disarmament Day.

22. In conclusion, may I reiterate that we are not neglectful of the complexities of the problem before us, nor are we of the view that general and complete disarmament can be instantly attained. The path will turn out to be a long and complicated one. It has to be followed with a clear knowledge and precise idea of what can be real and effective. It must not be ill-balanced or directed against any one country or group of countries. What is proposed must be based on equity and justice; it should be relevant

to our objectives and must safeguard the legitimate rights of all countries to develop and grow in conditions of peace and stability. Progress will depend on the political will of States and their commitment to act in collaboration with the international community. We have tried old methods and old approaches, but progress has been slow and limited. The time is opportune for us to break through what has been a thick crust of suspicion and distrust and to be ready to adjust ourselves to new visions in the cause of peace and security as we move from this century to the twenty-first century.

23. It was the privilege of Sri Lanka to have moved resolution 31/189 B calling for this special session. In doing so we acted on behalf of the non-aligned community—a community that is firmly committed to disarmament; a community that yearns to see a world where the war drums throb no longer, and where every man and woman on this earth is able to live without fear of the horrors of war being repeated. It is a well-known fact that international opinion from the four corners of the world is focused on our deliberations. The world community asks: where do we go from here? That is not a question. It is a challenge that the political elite of our time must meet. Let us act wisely, remembering that all of us have “one future or no future at all”.

24. Mrs. OSTERGAARD (Denmark): Mr. President, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on your election to the presidency of this special session of the General Assembly. Your accomplishments as President of the thirty-second session of the General Assembly have amply proved your eminent qualifications for this high office to which you have been unanimously elected.

25. On behalf of the nine countries of the European Community, I wish to make the following statement.

26. This special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament takes place against the sombre background of a continuing arms race. The present high level of armaments and the continuing build-up of nuclear and conventional weapon capabilities could pose a threat to international peace and security. And, faced with the pressing need for economic and social progress for all countries, who could fail then to be concerned at a world-wide diversion to military purposes of resources badly needed for more constructive goals?

27. Twice in this century Europe has been ravaged by war. The decision to create the European Community was itself in part a response to that grim experience. It reflected a will to move away from old rivalries towards reconciliation and constructive co-operation. Our wish to promote détente in our own part of the world has, *inter alia*, found expression in our joint contribution to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Irrespective of differences in the political, economic and social systems of participating States, the Final Act of that Conference represents a unique endeavour to deepen the process of détente and to develop concrete programmes of action.

28. The European Community is composed of countries located in an area of the world of the highest importance in

an East-West context. It is therefore obvious that the interest of the nine member countries in the disarmament field is bound to focus particularly on the strengthening of security in Europe by establishing a more stable relationship at a lower level of military potential.

29. Beyond our particular European concerns, the nine countries share a common interest with the international community as a whole in seeing détente translated into an indivisible and increasingly universal process. In our relations with other parts of the world our policies are, in the same way, directed towards developing closer ties and new links of international co-operation. In line with that outward-looking character of the European Community, the nine member countries have actively worked to contribute to peaceful solutions of problems in other areas of the world.

30. It is against that background that today I wish to affirm the common will of our countries to contribute actively towards attaining the objectives of the special session in the field of arms control and disarmament.

31. Our peoples are tired of rhetoric and propaganda. They expect the special session to lead to tangible results by stimulating further efforts and speedier progress in international disarmament negotiations. The nine countries regard it as essential that the growing international consensus on the pressing need for joint efforts now by all States to halt and reverse the spiralling world-wide arms race should be reflected in a consensus document which would carry weight as a basic text to stimulate future disarmament efforts and to be seen as such by world opinion. We have made a major effort to promote consensus. We do hope that others will display similar realism.

32. Among the principles that should be recorded in the declaration on disarmament, the Nine attach special importance to the direct interrelationship between disarmament and national security, including the inherent and balanced right of States to individual and collective self-defence. Properly verified disarmament, by enhancing stability, itself contributes to the security of all nations. Measures of arms control and disarmament should satisfy the need for balance to ensure that the security of all States involved is enhanced and that no State or group of States can gain unilateral military advantages at any stage of the disarmament process. For this purpose it is imperative that disarmament agreements should provide for adequate and effective measures of verification. The goal is greater security at a lower level of armaments and military forces.

33. On the programme of action, I wish to make the following points.

34. The main emphasis in the programme should be on concrete, realistic measures which have a reasonable chance of being completed over the next few years. In addition, the programme could prepare for more far-reaching action at a later stage.

35. Measures to curb and reverse the nuclear-arms race in its qualitative and quantitative dimensions are of fundamental importance, together with measures designed to

prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, while facilitating access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In parallel, action should be taken on a regional and multilateral basis with a view to limiting and reducing the world-wide build-up of conventional weapons and armed forces.

36. Implementation of disarmament measures can result in the release of resources to be devoted to the economic and social development of all peoples and to narrowing the economic gap between developed and developing countries. Let me recall that the nine countries of the community account for more than 40 per cent of the total development assistance provided by the industrialized countries in the East and West. Accordingly, they support, among other things, the proposal for an in-depth study on the relationship between disarmament and development and the recommendations put forward by the *ad hoc* group of experts concerning the terms of reference for the said study [see A/S-10/9].

37. Also the general concept of confidence-building measures contained in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, signed on 1 August 1975, such as prior notification of military manoeuvres and the invitation of observers, might—if applied in other parts of the world and adapted to regional conditions—contribute to a climate of greater international confidence.

38. Finally, consideration should be given to the possibility of making further use of modern technology, including observation satellites, in the process of international verification of disarmament agreements.

39. In the field of machinery, the problem seems to be to reconcile considerations of efficiency with the desire to draw all States Members of the United Nations into deliberations on disarmament matters. There seems to be an emerging view in favour of having both a negotiating body of limited size, operating by consensus, and a deliberative body open to the whole membership of the United Nations. At all events, the Nine feel that the role of the United Nations should be strengthened in the disarmament field. This should include intensified efforts within the field of disarmament research.

40. Assuming that agreement is reached on a realistic and generally acceptable programme of action, arrangements should be made to ensure effective follow-up so that the special session would be the starting-point of a process in which agreed objectives in the disarmament field are reviewed and updated in the light of progress achieved. This could take the form of a second special session devoted to disarmament at an appropriate time. It is to be hoped that this would generate continuing pressure for productive negotiations on substance.

41. Disarmament, world security and détente are closely interrelated. The issues we are dealing with raise complex and far-reaching problems. I wish to record the common conviction of the nine member countries of the community that there is an alternative to an unrestrained, costly and potentially destabilizing world-wide arms race. The nine countries feel strongly that a disarmament process should

go hand in hand with a sustained effort to eliminate the sources of tension and injustice in the world. Individually and collectively, they have contributed actively to the preparatory discussions in advance of the special session. They will continue to do so during the special session itself. The views which I have just expressed are those of the nine countries of the European Community, including Denmark. Let me add a few supplementary Danish views.

42. The continuing international arms race and the current high level of armaments represent an enormous overconsumption for destructive purposes. In absolute terms and in a global context, the arms race has reached absurd and scandalous proportions. One would have wished that this evolution had never taken place and that the fruits of human intelligence and resourcefulness had been used for more constructive purposes such as the protection of life and the improvement of the quality of life, rather than for destructive purposes such as the eradication of life and the destruction of nature and civilization. We cannot change history but we must influence the future.

43. While it is certainly true that the immediate outlook for concrete progress in international disarmament negotiations depends primarily on developments in East-West relations, so it is equally true that the long-term prospects relating to economy and resources have a North-South dimension. From a Danish point of view we see a connexion between international efforts to reduce world-wide consumption for military purposes and our commitment to a new international economic order, the latter having in the long run a direct impact on world security. The Nordic proposal for an in-depth study of the relationship between disarmament and development relates directly to this problem.

44. We also find that a strategy of nuclear non-proliferation should be given a very high priority. We appeal to all Governments to support efforts to halt the dangerous process of nuclear proliferation. It has to be recognized, however, that successful efforts to create a fool-proof non-proliferation régime presuppose a will on the part of the nuclear Powers to check the nuclear-arms race. We appeal to the developed countries, which possess the sophisticated technology in the civilian nuclear field, to share it with the rest of the world in ways and under forms of international control which will ensure that the risk of further weapons proliferation is eliminated. And we appeal to all Governments to keep military technological developments under close observation and political control in order that scientific research will serve the cause of an environment which is favourable to man and nature rather than an incessant refinement and further development of destructive forces.

45. With regard to conventional disarmament, Denmark endorses the objective of limiting production and limiting procurement of conventional weapons, as well as limiting international arms transfers. Current international developments emphasize the desirability of arriving at some form of control of such arms transfers, including those of the leading States, which have a particular responsibility in

this field. Such transfers may carry the risk of creating more violence, more oppression and more war. In particular, they carry the risk of creating conditions for conflicts by proxy.

46. Let me add also that I see no valid reason whatsoever why it should not be possible to reach agreement on banning those particularly inhumane weapons which inflict unnecessary pain or which have indiscriminate effects.

47. We all agree, I think, that the road to disarmament passes through political détente. Efforts to achieve détente and disarmament should therefore go hand in hand. To this end the confidence-building measures which are applied in Europe might also be applied in other parts of the world, adapted to regional conditions. Denmark, together with a number of other countries, has introduced a draft proposal to this effect [A/S-10/I, vol. VI document A/AC.187/96]. In general, better communication and more openness, better verification and more transparency regarding military matters may help to increase confidence and to promote further understanding among States.

48. Across all national and ideological barriers, all nations share a deep common interest in preserving peace and in strengthening the prospects of peace. It is up to this special session to impress the dangers of the continuing arms race on the consciousness of world opinion and to translate this common interest into concrete action.

49. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker in the general debate is the Prime Minister of Ireland. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Jack Lynch and in inviting him to address the General Assembly.

50. Mr. LYNCH (Ireland): Mr. President, it is indeed appropriate that you, a representative of Yugoslavia, should preside over this special session. President Tito first proposed such a meeting as far back as 1961; and since then Yugoslavia, together with the other non-aligned countries, has worked to promote the idea and gain acceptance for it. I hope that now that the General Assembly is meeting for its first special session ever on disarmament the results we achieve over the next few weeks will make their efforts worth while.

51. I speak here as the Prime Minister of a small and relatively unarmed country. Since the establishment of an independent Irish State we have never been part of any military alliance. We have never, except during the period of the Second World War, maintained large armed forces. Our forces today are no greater than those we need to maintain internal security and sovereignty and to contribute to international peace-keeping.

52. Ireland, of course, is also a member of the European Community and, in consequence, we subscribe to the general approach to the issues before us which has just been outlined on behalf of the nine member countries by the representative of Denmark.

53. The world spends today about \$400 thousand million per year for military purposes. That is more than the total

spent on education, and about 20 times the total aid given by the industrialized countries to the third world. Yet 1 thousand million people lack adequate housing; 2,800 million people are without safe water; and 25,000 people die every day from water-borne diseases.

54. The industrialized countries account for over 70 per cent of this total of \$400 thousand million. But the proportion of the national budgets of the developing countries spent for military purposes is also growing steadily.

55. The figures I have quoted come from the valuable research work done by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. It is easy to add other figures—equally compelling—from the painstaking and thorough studies of that Institute. Many of these figures have been quoted here and others no doubt will be quoted in speeches here over the next few weeks.

56. These figures are frightening. But this is not the whole story. It is bad enough that there is a vast and increasing diversion of resources from what could be productive purposes to the stockpiling of weapons designed to destroy. What compounds the problem is that the countries of the world do this in competition with each other—a competition made sharper because each nation believes that its own security and, indeed, its very existence may be at stake.

57. One further aspect makes this competition not only wasteful and dangerous but potentially disastrous, that is the growth in the destructive power of weapons held by the major Powers to the point where they could now, for the first time in the history of the human race, destroy human life on this planet.

58. That has come about because the competition in armaments has been pursued for years now with all the scientific skill and technical resources which the most developed countries in the world can muster. This effort has produced weapons of mass destruction of immense sophistication, and theories about their use and deployment which make a virtue of uncertainty. It often seems that when a new weapon becomes possible it simply must be built, because the country which discovered it fears that otherwise an opponent will make it and gain the advantage.

59. The crowning paradox is that the nations of the world which build up these destructive armaments are each trying to secure their own national security. But the increased security which they seek is illusory because the effort to add to the security of each adds instead to the insecurity of all.

60. Each of us who comes here to the rostrum of the General Assembly during this special session on disarmament is well aware of these realities. But it is necessary for each of us to state and repeat them for ourselves and for our people because these frightening facts now pass as normal—indeed as acceptable.

61. Humanity in our time seems to have a strange ca-

capacity to live with the unthinkable. It is unthinkable in one sense that because of a competition between nations, each concerned about its national security, the world should now be poised to destroy itself at the touch of a button. It is unthinkable that a policy of "mutual assured destruction"—and the phrase "mutual assured destruction" is actually used—should seem desirable because it may help to deter world war. It is unthinkable that countries whose people live in poverty should buy arms, be encouraged to buy arms, of great sophistication and on a large scale, and that they should be trained to use them against their neighbours whose people, though just as poor, have been similarly armed and trained.

62. Yet all of this is happening in our time and we do need desperately to think about it. We need to remind ourselves and then to assert as strongly, as publicly and as frequently as we can that this is not an inevitable part of human life. It is we who have made it so, it is we in this generation who have given this new destructive capacity to the human aggressive instinct which has always existed among us.

63. The result is now that we face not just one problem among others, but a danger which could, in the most literal sense, threaten the survival of mankind on this planet. Some of us carry more responsibility than others, but all of us carry some. We must accept that this is not a problem which can be left to the big Powers only, or to those countries large or small which have built up a high level of armaments. Because it threatens all of us we all have a right—and indeed a duty—to speak about it.

64. It is that which justifies the holding of this, the first special session of the General Assembly ever devoted to disarmament; and it is that which justifies the heads of Governments of small countries like my own in coming here to raise their voices about the dangers.

65. But it is clear that the holding of the special session of the General Assembly in itself will not be enough. Indeed, if it does no more than contribute to the rhetoric on disarmament recorded over the years in the General Assembly and now preserved in the documents in the basement of this building, the outcome of these few weeks could be a disappointment and, indeed, a set-back.

66. It is salutary to remember, as we cite statistics in our statements here, that we are not the first to address ourselves to these topics. The record of discussions is impressive. But the record of real achievement is, I fear, a melancholy one.

67. Fifty years ago, almost to the very day, world statesmen negotiated and signed the General Treaty for Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy.¹ The Treaty, negotiated in the first instance in the spring of 1928 between the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Italy and other Powers of the day, was eventually signed by 62 countries. Yet, 11 years later most of those who had renounced war forever had begun to fight the most disastrous war in world history.

¹ League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, No. 2137.

68. Seventeen years ago, by a unanimous vote, the General Assembly approved a joint statement of agreed principles for disarmament negotiations [*resolution 1722 (XVI)*]. This programme looked to a world where armaments and military expenditure would everywhere be limited to the level needed for police and internal security purposes. Two decades later, world expenditure on armaments had nearly doubled, and it is growing steadily each year.

69. Clearly, then, it is not enough to proclaim and to hold a special session of the General Assembly. It is not enough to point, as I have done and as each of us here at this rostrum will do over the next few weeks, to the dangers and the waste of resources on armaments. What matters is the approach that we take to the special session and how far we are ready to move at last from rhetorical statement to concrete action. Otherwise there is a danger that instead of achieving any good result we may increase public cynicism and apathy.

70. What does this mean in practice? It means in the first instance that our approach must be a realistic one, without high expectation of immediate progress but with the determination to use this unique occasion to set a direction and make a start. I think that we need to see clearly what a special session such as this can do and what it cannot. The General Assembly itself, comprising as it does 149 Member States, is not necessarily a suitable forum for detailed negotiations. But because it does include almost every nation in the world, it can mobilize world public opinion, put pressure on those who are in a position to negotiate to do so, and establish an order of priorities.

71. The world has already set itself the goal of general and complete disarmament and, as I have said, the General Assembly endorsed this aim in 1961. The goal remains a highly desirable one, though a very difficult one to achieve. I hope profoundly that we can achieve it eventually. But, if we are ever to do so, we need not simply to talk about it but to plan how we might hope to get there and what first steps we might take.

72. In these matters, however, the better must not always be the enemy of the good. While retaining the long-term aim of complete disarmament under effective control, we should welcome any more limited disarmament measures; and if, pending such steps towards real disarmament, the larger Powers can agree among themselves on arms control measures to limit the development of new weapons, we should welcome this too while pressing for further steps. When we come to deal with these problems, of course the steps open to us as leaders of Governments will differ according to the size and importance of our countries, our military and alliance commitments and the armaments we already possess.

73. It is clear in the first instance that the nuclear Powers have a special responsibility because it is the weapons which they have developed and which they now deploy that most seriously threaten humanity. Each country has its own security needs, and there is no doubt a logic in the strategic theories of the great Powers which are directed to their own defence. We have come to accept this. But it is

not easy to see from the perspective of a third-world country which does not have nuclear weapons—or, indeed, from the perspective of a non-nuclear Power in the developed world such as my own—why the security need of the population of the great Powers should be so much more important than that of our own people. Certainly, it is hard to see how these needs can continue to justify measures which could destroy humanity.

74. We believe, therefore, that the nuclear Powers have a special responsibility to negotiate agreements among them which will control and lessen the dangers which their weapons pose. For this reason, we would be concerned to see early progress in the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT). There should be an early agreement on what has come to be called SALT II and a start made on SALT III.

75. The rest of the world which has not yet developed or acquired nuclear arms has its responsibilities too. Many of us have voluntarily renounced any right to acquire nuclear weapons under the terms of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XII), annex*] which, I may say, was first introduced by the then Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Frank Aiken, in this Assembly in 1958. That Treaty now needs to be further strengthened and to be accepted and ratified by all those States that have not yet acquired nuclear weapons.

76. If we voluntarily give up our right to acquire nuclear weapons, we are of course according a positive privilege to the great Powers that already have those weapons. We recognize this as a reality and we accepted it voluntarily under the Treaty because the alternative is a world where nuclear weapons gradually spread and the danger of disaster increases dramatically. But we are entitled in return to make certain demands of the Powers that now have nuclear weapons. We can require of them that there be an adequate system of guarantees to assure those States that have renounced nuclear weapons forever that nuclear weapons will not be used by others to attack or threaten them. We are entitled too to demand that the effort to stop nuclear weapons from spreading widely should be matched by an equal effort by the nuclear Powers themselves to stop the constant increase in the quantity and the destructive power of the weapons which they hold.

77. Nuclear weapons are of course the greatest danger, since it is these weapons which have the greatest destructive power. But there are other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical weapons or weapons which modify the environment, now within the capacity of the great Powers; and we need action to halt the development and deployment of these weapons also.

78. These matters are the responsibility in the first instance of the Powers that have the capacity to build such weapons. But there is also a steady and dangerous growth in the spread of conventional weapons in every part of the world; and this is something which involves great and small, rich and poor alike.

79. In the years before the Second World War there was much talk about the "merchants of death" and those who sold arms around the world were blamed for causing wars.

Today—and in many cases for understandable reasons—arms sales abroad are encouraged, since greater sales reduce the unit cost of weapons required for defence purposes by the country which manufactures them.

80. The problem is, however, that these efforts to sell arms as if they were an export like any other can have damaging consequences. And in addition, of course, in some cases there are large-scale arms transfers to particular countries for political rather than purely commercial purposes.

81. It is understandable that many countries of the third world feel that in a world of armaments, where some countries feel entitled to deploy nuclear weapons for their own protection, they too should be entitled to build up their military power. But the consequence all too often is a diversion of resources which might be used for development, so that they go instead to bolster the position of a military élite or a particular faction in the country concerned. At worst, the result can be, as we have seen in some recent cases, a war between two neighbouring States whose energies have been diverted to conflict, in large part because one or the other, and sometimes both, have been armed by a great Power.

82. Clearly, therefore, in our approach to disarmament we need to work out some agreed measures to limit and control the spread of conventional weapons. It seems to me that if we are serious about this and about the long-term goal of general disarmament which we have set ourselves, we might begin to think of voluntarily adopting at international level a target figure setting a limit to the percentage of gross national product which each of us would devote to national defence. Clearly, of course, the defence needs of different countries vary greatly and not everybody could keep to whatever target might be set. But we have now voluntarily adopted at the international level a target for the percentage of the gross national product which the developed countries feel they should devote to development aid. Could we perhaps also begin to think, by analogy with this, of adopting voluntarily a percentage limit for our military expenditure even if for particular reasons not all could hold to it? It seems to me that at least we might include this idea as one worth studying in future disarmament negotiations.

83. Some countries such as my own have neither nuclear weapons nor a large build-up of conventional armaments. Indeed, without wishing to dwell on the point, I might say that my own country has always had limited military forces at about the level which would be acceptable in a world of general disarmament. We too, however, have our responsibilities.

84. If nations are to limit armaments and engage in serious disarmament measures, they have a corresponding right to expect that their security will continue to be assured by other means. One way which would at least contribute to this would be the strengthening of international procedures for reducing conflict and settling disputes. Another is strengthening and developing the capacity of the United Nations to supply peace-keeping forces in areas of conflict, with the consent of the parties.

85. My delegation has always argued for and supported these ideas in the General Assembly, and we continue to do so. We have also tried to respond, to the extent of our capacity, to requests to supply units from our limited defence forces for international peace-keeping duties, and an Irish contingent is at present on its way to the Lebanon. Indeed, as I was leaving my capital city, Dublin, a couple of days ago, I saw some of these troops actually boarding one of the transport planes. We want to continue to play our part in this way, and we hope that other smaller and middle-sized Powers will increasingly see this as their special contribution to disarmament and international security.

86. These then, in broad outline, are the points which I believe we have to consider at this special session. It is important, beyond this, that we should approach the work of the session in what I would call the right spirit. This would mean that we should each consider not so much what we can propose but what we are prepared to accept. We should each be ready to say not what others must do but what we ourselves will be willing to undertake.

87. The agenda before us for the special session is short but important. We are now engaged, as a first item, in a general debate which is useful and necessary since it allows the world leaders who come here to use the occasion to draw the attention of the Assembly and of their home audiences to the magnitude and gravity of the problems and to the extent to which disarmament and other world issues are linked.

88. At this general debate, we must consider a declaration on disarmament which will establish the aims and the guiding principles of future negotiations. Then we are to agree on a programme of action which will establish priorities for future disarmament negotiations. Finally, we will be considering the negotiating machinery available to us and reviewing the role of the United Nations in disarmament so that we may make it more effective.

89. The Preparatory Committee has prepared documents on each of these three items, to which we shall turn after this general debate. Detailed discussion of these texts is a function more appropriate to the plenary of this special session and its subordinate Committees. I shall therefore confine my remarks on these documents to stating what, in the view of the Irish delegation, each should ultimately contain, at a minimum, to ensure that an effective strategy for disarmament emerges from this special session.

90. The declaration on disarmament sets out the policy aims of future negotiations; and it established principles to guide our efforts towards their achievement. The texts suggested to date for a declaration, which appear in the documents produced by the Preparatory Committee, are certainly comprehensive. But they will require more work and, in particular, the elimination of repetitive material, if the declaration is to be clear and effective. I believe, however, that this can be done by improving the formulation and structure of the text rather than by making any major change in its substance.

91. Even as it stands, however, that draft declaration

takes due account of the basic principle that disarmament should not diminish but should improve the security of nations. Nor is the fact forgotten that the ultimate goal we have set ourselves is the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

92. It is in the second task of the special session, that of adopting a programme of action, that we are likely to encounter the greatest difficulties and divergence of views.

93. A serious programme of arms control and disarmament measures obviously must be comprehensive. This means it should cover the main issues of which I have spoken, that is, the problem of nuclear weapons, the problem of other weapons of mass destruction and the growing problem of conventional weapons. It should also take account of the fact that these problems are in some way interrelated. Some States see their own nuclear weapons as a protection against the superiority in conventional weapons of a possible opponent. Nor can the spread of nuclear weapons be halted unless States which are asked to renounce them completely are assured that their security will not be endangered as a result.

94. I believe, too, that a serious programme of action should take account of the inherent difficulties and complications of arms control and disarmament negotiations. This means that it should avoid setting over-rigid time constraints. A truly effective programme should also try to lay the groundwork for a proper relationship between disarmament and development.

95. The final item on the agenda is a consideration of the negotiating machinery for disarmament and a review of the role of the United Nations. My delegation has no rigid views on the best structure for such negotiations, but we believe that an effective approach to disarmament requires effective machinery.

96. We will, therefore, support proposals designed to increase the effectiveness of the existing disarmament machinery, particularly in ways which permit more equitable participation in these negotiations. These measures should also, at a more general level, allow all Members to take a full and active part in the discussion of disarmament problems in the General Assembly. I believe, too, that we should consider setting up a body linked to the United Nations which could verify arms control and disarmament measures. It could do this, for example, by arranging for the assembly and exchange of information and data provided by Governments and by international agencies.

97. I have outlined briefly the general attitude we will take to the items on our agenda. But the work of this session is only a beginning. It must lead to action. As I emphasized earlier in this statement, we need concrete progress on particular measures and not simply further rhetoric. In my view there are a number of specific steps which we could take following the special session to ensure that a real beginning will at last be made on the difficult road of disarmament.

98. First, the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty is a crucial priority of any genuine effective pro-

gramme of disarmament. In the meantime a moratorium should be declared now on all nuclear testing.

99. Secondly, to complement a test-ban treaty there should be a halt to the qualitative development and refinement of new nuclear weapons.

100. Thirdly, there must be clear, unambiguous and satisfactory guarantees which will assure those States which have renounced nuclear weapons completely that they will not be attacked or threatened with attack by nuclear weapons.

101. Fourthly, those States must also have a real assurance from the nuclear States that the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology will be made available on a wide and generous scale to all countries seeking to avail themselves of them.

102. Fifthly, there must be strict, adequate and universally applied safeguards, under agreed international supervision, when nuclear material and sensitive technology is transferred from nuclear Powers to other States, in order to avoid the risk of nuclear-weapon proliferation. I believe that every State which is serious about disarmament should be prepared to show the political will to acknowledge this and to adhere to an agreed system of safeguards.

103. Sixthly, we need at the earliest possible date a treaty to eliminate all chemical weapons and prevent their further production. As a practical measure, in the interim there should be a voluntary moratorium on the development and production of such weapons.

104. Seventhly, the further production of napalm, incendiaries and other weapons with excessively injurious, cruel and indiscriminate effects should also be stopped. As a minimum step, the major military Powers should declare their intention to cease development of such weapons and take steps to remove existing stockpiles.

105. Eighthly, we need to regulate, and if possible to limit, the growing transfers of conventional arms through the international arms trade. To this end, the major military Powers should begin negotiations aimed at the progressive reduction of their arms grants and arms sales. At the same time, work should proceed at the international level on a comprehensive agreement to regulate and reduce arms transfers.

106. Ninthly, action should be taken in the immediate future to study in more detail the relationship between disarmament and development.

107. Tenthly, studies should also be undertaken with a view to working out a system of incentives and targets to encourage progress in arms control and disarmament. One possibility, as I have already suggested, might be for the Assembly to consider adopting as a voluntary target a maximum ceiling on national defence expenditures which States would be encouraged to observe. The ceiling could, for example, be calculated as a proportion of gross national product and, with progress towards disarmament

over the years, the voluntary ceiling might steadily be lowered.

108. These points, together with the improvement of the negotiating structures available to us for disarmament would, it appears to me, be a very good beginning towards realizing the hopes raised by this special session.

109. In conclusion I should like briefly to say something about our procedures at the special session. The question is whether to proceed by majority vote or to try to proceed by consensus. In deciding on the establishment or improvement of disarmament bodies no great difficulty arises. A resolution adopted by a majority decision can easily be put into effect. But when we try to work out a declaration on disarmament policy or a programme of concrete disarmament measures, the situation is different. It is not sufficient that we adopt exhaustive or even extravagant proposals which are acceptable to a majority but are rejected by those whose agreement is vital if they are to be carried out. Effective steps towards disarmament will be taken only where there is mutual trust and agreement, since those involved believe that their vital security interests are at stake.

110. In submitting our views to the Secretary-General on the preparations for the special session, the Government of Ireland suggested that as far as possible decisions at the session should be taken by consensus. I make this point again not because we have any doubt about where we stand on the issues which confront us here but because we are convinced that the willing consent of every Member State is crucial.

111. As the outcome of this session we need to have for the first time a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated strategy for disarmament, a strategy that will work. Nothing less will meet the expectations which have been raised by this special session. Nothing less, it seems to me, will meet the hopes which our peoples have placed in us that we will at last begin to lift the burden of arms and armies from the peoples of the world.

112. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Ireland for the important statement he has just made.

113. Mr. CALLEJAS BONILLA (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The beginning of each session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, be it a regular session or a special session, prompts renewed hopes that a world of peace, concord and harmony may be attained.

114. It is undeniable that in many ways the world of today is better than the world of yesterday. Scientific and technological achievements have made a reality of what until recently belonged to the realm of Utopian dreams. It can be said that, as far as is humanly possible, we have the means to fight and overcome three of the deadly horsemen of the Apocalypse. One remains, the cruellest and most ruthless of all, the threat of which still hovers over all the peoples of the world: it is that of war.

115. The objective of analysing and seeking the solution to this problem, which is perhaps the most serious problem mankind has faced through its long history, is what has gathered us together here now in this special session of the Assembly.

116. The issue of disarmament cannot and must not be further disregarded. It directly concerns both the Powers which possess thermonuclear weapons and the countries which lack them, because if they were used, all would inevitably be victims of a universal holocaust.

117. The Charter of the United Nations, cornerstone upon which the new world society should be based, contains the necessary principles to guide nations on the path towards understanding and mutual respect. The United Nations is entrusted with the delicate task of maintaining international peace and security. None the less, we have observed with concern that the machinery established for this purpose, that of preserving international harmony, has been weakened and seems powerless.

118. When the individual no longer takes first place in the values of nations and is replaced by economic and political interests, then war is approaching.

119. When trust among States is no longer a guarantee of the rights of others and is replaced by fear and intolerance, international security is threatened.

120. Humanism and war cannot coexist, and fear cannot be a firm basis for peace.

121. The United Nations emerged out of the destruction caused by a universal disaster and the determination of peace-loving peoples to preserve intact the fundamental rights of man, and the dignity and worth of the human person.

122. Thirty-three years ago the spectre of war induced us to establish this Organization in order to practise tolerance and to coexist as good neighbours, joining forces to promote the economic and social progress of all peoples. Although we have endeavoured to achieve those objectives, in the course of three decades our efforts have been insufficient. The barriers which we have constructed against the scourge of war have on many occasions proved ineffective, the machinery for the peaceful settlement of international disputes has proved inadequate, and the economic and political conditions of the contemporary world make it essential for us to seek new principles of international responsibility guaranteeing for all mankind mandatory compliance with the universal imperatives of peace and development.

123. The task is a difficult one, since during the past 33 years States have taken to playing the game of appealing to the moral and legal values common to all nations only when defending individual interests. Nevertheless, the smallness of our planet, the interdependence of States, technological progress, the vast economic and social problems of our world today and the scarcity of resources devoted to meeting these problems cannot be dealt with by

individual standards or unreliable commitments. They require real and effective action by the international community, and above all by those States which have accepted the principles of the United Nations and which, because of their singular power, have the greatest responsibility.

124. The passage of time seems to erase the terrible image of war, leaving us only hidden fears and anxiety which can be alleviated, not by the security of the universal system of nations, but by the conviction that if there were a world war destruction would be total. How far we are, then, from achieving the common goals, the objectives of harmony and respect for the principles to which we committed ourselves in 1945!

125. No one is unaware of the causes of the unbridled arms race in the bipolarized world of today and in the present international structure, based on the principle of absolute sovereignty. In recent decades the main international relations have developed on the basis of national power. The result of this policy has been a quest for security through a balance of military power, and the maintenance of zones of influence or attempts to extend them. Thus, States with economic and political interests throughout the world have accumulated vast arsenals and have perfected and refined their weapons to such a degree that the existence of mankind hangs on a thread of distrust and fear of mutual destruction. Small States have also armed themselves, have accumulated a vast quantity of military equipment, and compete in acquiring the latest and most sophisticated devices of war.

126. This situation contrasts with the ineffectiveness and weakness of international control in preventing the use of force, curbing the arms race and bringing about the peaceful settlement of international disputes. The balance of power among States, the escalating arms race and the failure to apply methods of peaceful settlement run counter to the United Nations system, undermine the principles upon which it is based and push the world towards annihilation. Security, which was supposed to be achieved by means of an arms race, has been nullified by the very existence of so many death-dealing devices.

127. The world society can no longer continue to use the grandeur of mankind, its intelligence and creative genius to devise the means of its own destruction. In 1945 we were still shuddering from the nightmare which we had experienced, and we established this Organization to protect ourselves from another holocaust. Today we tremble at the possibility of living through another tragedy perhaps the last, and we must therefore take the decision most likely to prevent this. In this connexion, Honduras feels that general and complete disarmament is an obligation to mankind, to the human being, on whose behalf we have determined to create a better world, a peaceful and secure society.

128. The first decision to be made must therefore be to re-lay the foundations of the present international structure. There are interests of the community of nations that transcend the individual duties of a State. There are international duties that transcend the economic and political interests of any given State. Yet the international interests

are not adequately protected and there are no effective methods of ensuring that such duties are discharged. Consequently, if we want an effective international system, a system of harmony and effective respect for human rights, we must provide it with the means of action necessary for its success.

129. This means that the States Members of the United Nations must begin by strengthening the role of this Organization, creating an atmosphere conducive to trust, establishing a system of collective security and increasing the application of peaceful means of settling disputes among States. As long as a country is free, on the basis of its sovereign attributes, to leave unresolved a dispute which endangers international peace and security, this universal system of nations will not discharge its responsibilities, and its principles will be, at best, rules of international morality that are without effect.

130. Therefore my Government believes that the problem of the arms race is not merely a problem whose deadly consequences we must attempt to eliminate by general and complete disarmament. The problem of the arms race includes the problem of its causes, which we must root out by restructuring international society.

131. It must be remembered that the League of Nations, which was established at the end of the First World War, was a political entity ostensibly broad in scope, but its backbone was the Treaty of Versailles, which meant that its action was extremely limited, without political force or effective legal force and lacking the flow of inspiration that should invigorate international bodies entrusted with the safeguarding of peace.

132. The League of Nations perished ingloriously. When there is no meeting of wills and no real identification with principles, any undertaking, however noble, will fall, collapse and disappear.

133. I am convinced that the United Nations, originally consisting of 51 Member States, was consecrated by the wisdom of mankind, and that with the passage of time it will discharge the task entrusted to it.

134. The economic and social consequences of the arms race and of military expenditure are known to all. Resources essential to the well-being of mankind are diverted to weaponry. The vastness of the sums devoted to the arms race persuades us that the development of mankind depends on the halting of that race. With only a quarter of the resources which in just one year are devoted to weapons research and production, it would be possible to wage a most significant battle against underdevelopment and social injustice in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The arms race consumes resources which could be invested in production and development. The gap between the industrialized countries and the developing countries is widening steadily. Co-operation among these States is considerably restricted, and in these conditions it is even more difficult to establish a new international economic order.

135. If substantial progress were achieved in disarmament and in limiting the arms race there would be suffi-

cient resources to contribute to a resolution of the health, food and housing problems of the poorest countries. Similarly, the advanced technology which is devoted to military purposes could be used to increase the well-being of the human race.

136. Unfortunately, the results so far achieved in limiting weaponry cannot be considered significant. The number of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, has been reduced, but new types, more destructive than before, have been produced.

137. The Government of my country feels that from this special session of the General Assembly should emerge a programme of action the final objective of which will be general and complete disarmament under effective international control, guaranteeing the survival of mankind and eliminating the threat of war, especially nuclear war.

138. Responsibility for the implementation of that programme of action is shared by all, but the major Powers bear additional responsibility. My Government is particularly interested in measures aimed at protecting the non-nuclear States and in the establishment of denuclearized zones and zones of peace. Similarly, it attaches particular importance to measures to be adopted to establish and strengthen a system of non-proliferation and to machinery to prevent a nuclear war. Finally, Honduras welcomes with great interest the idea of establishing an international organization to monitor the implementation of international treaties on arms limitation and to promote Member States' general objectives in this area.

139. Participation in this august Assembly is a deep responsibility. The peoples and Governments we represent have trust in our actions and in our experience in debates on world policy. They are confident that we shall establish brotherhood and harmony as a means of achieving a better future for the great community of nations.

140. It has been stated repeatedly, and has been biting emphasized, that the United Nations has not been able to implement the principles enshrined in its Charter.

141. We are aware that it has a delicate mission, that it has met enormous obstacles and that on occasion Member States themselves have impeded its progress. None the less, the question facing mankind is whether we will be able to meet the challenge posed today by the threat of war and to avoid the consequent destruction of the human race.

142. Political and economic extremism are mutually intolerant and generate tension which threatens the peace of all peoples. The alleviation of that tension is inseparable from the solution of the problems we face, problems such as disarmament, the democratization of international relations, and the progressive elimination of the division of the world into blocs.

143. Those who in the past sought to build a peaceful and safe world did so with determination and zeal which we must now imitate. It is in our power to light the path towards disarmament and thus towards lasting peace. This Assembly should result in effective action, offering man-

kind the benefit of friendly relations, international co-operation, economic and social development and the peaceful solution of international disputes through a United Nations system drawing strength from forceful and far-reaching resolutions on general and complete disarmament.

144. Mankind can no longer exist within the vicious circle which is called armed peace.

145. Mr. DENNIS (Liberia): I bring special greetings and very best wishes from Mr. William R. Tolbert, Jr., President of the Republic of Liberia, whose prayerful wish is that every success will attend our deliberations at this special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament—a question so vital to international peace and security and, indeed, to the very survival of mankind. I assure you of President Tolbert's deep commitment to the search for a just and more equitable world order and for global peace and security.

146. May I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as President of this historic special session on disarmament. Since you have already presided ably over the thirty-second Session of the General Assembly, as well as the special sessions on Lebanon and Namibia, my delegation is confident that your vast experience, skill and ability will guide this Assembly to adopt measures that could ultimately lead to general and complete disarmament.

147. We also pay tribute to Mr. Kurt Waldheim, our esteemed Secretary-General, not only for the administrative skill that he has manifested in the preparation for this session, but even more for the moral and spiritual leadership he has exemplified in this unique United Nations initiative.

Mr. Scheltema (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

148. For those of us belonging to the African continent, today has a special significance, for it marks the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity, an organization which, much like the United Nations, is persistently pursuing laudable objectives—the promotion of African unity and solidarity, the fostering of co-operation amongst African States, the preservation of peace on the African continent, the attainment of total liberation of African peoples, and the enhancement of socio-economic development.

149. Of paramount importance to the Organization of African Unity at present is Africa's quest for total liberation. In this endeavour we are encountering the stubborn resistance and intransigence of the racist minority régimes in southern Africa, which continue to deny our brothers and sisters their inalienable rights of freedom, justice, equality and self-determination.

150. As an expression of our undaunted solidarity with the oppressed peoples of Africa, each year 25 May is observed as Africa Liberation Day.

151. This special session on disarmament is a most fitting occasion on which to renew our appeal to the interna-

tional community to end its supply of arms to the racist régimes in southern Africa and its collaboration with them, particularly in the field of nuclear technology, so that those engaged in the just struggle for the exercise of their legitimate rights may not be exposed to weapons of massive destruction.

152. This tenth special session is being convened at a crucial moment in history, and it has been made possible through the determined and concerted effort of the movement of the non-aligned countries. It comes at a time of veritable revolutions in political, social, economic and technological endeavours. It comes at a time when self-determination, human rights, and social and economic justice have gained the ascendancy in international relations, buttressed by unprecedented advances in science and technology.

153. While this era has been marked by significant achievements in all fields of human endeavour, these achievements, most regrettably, have not met with needs of humanity but instead have been directed largely to the accumulation of arsenals of destructive weapons reaching astronomical proportions and thus generating suspicion, fear and terror in the international community. There is a search for development but, most unfortunately, not so much the development of peoples as of more and more destructive weapons.

154. The fundamental challenge which we now face is how to transform this precarious condition of growing fear and terror into a genuine commitment to common action for the realization of a durable and secure peace for all mankind.

155. Born from the ashes of a devastating war which brought untold sorrows to mankind, the United Nations, since its first session, has concerned itself with disarmament negotiations. Its first act in 1946 was the establishment of an Atomic Energy Commission. Disarmament was thus given an element of immediacy and became a major preoccupation of international politics. In succeeding years since 1946 this world body has established a number of committees with a variety of flexible procedures all designed to curb the arms race.

156. In spite of these early initiatives, the record reveals more failures than successes in our efforts at disarmament, and what successes there are do not go beyond a few agreements which have had no meaningful impact. The failures have not been due to the lack of machinery for negotiating disarmament agreements but rather to the absence of the requisite political will on the part of the major Powers, which have preferred to establish their own procedures and negotiating forums.

157. As we meet here where the issue is at the point of challenge, it would seem that our first step in disarmament should be to disarm the scepticism that looms over this session; to disarm public opinion of the pessimistic and negative attitude that sees the ultimate objective of disarmament as illusory. We can do this best by adopting a positive approach and taking constructive action aimed at re-

solving a common problem, one which is also a common peril.

158. It has become increasingly apparent that our safety and even our survival depends upon our ability to reverse the momentum of the arms race, and this special session provides a singular opportunity for accomplishing this objective if we act with courage and dispatch. Let us resolve to act with realism and with pragmatism beyond the commitment of mere words.

159. No subject illustrates the need for global unity more urgently than that of disarmament. It has a human dimension which is overlooked and neglected. Vast financial and manpower resources, huge quantities of raw materials and extensive technical skills are diverted to military purposes, whereas all could be utilized for the improvement of the social and economic conditions of mankind everywhere and the alleviation of universal human suffering, and here I speak not only of developing countries but of developed countries as well.

160. Throughout the ages man has deplored armaments of war and has encouraged the constructive utilization of resources for the betterment of society. That is revealed in the biblical injunction that swords be beaten into ploughshares. That same concern was manifested at the Hague Peace Conference of 1899, which endorsed the principle that a restriction of military expenditure was essential for improving the material and moral welfare of mankind. It is again reflected in the Charter of the United Nations, which charges its Member States individually and collectively to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the "least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources".

161. The time has come for us now to re-order our priorities and re-examine our values, recognizing the difference between self-interest and selfish interest. This task is all the more urgent when we review the statistics indicating that expenditures for the operation of United Nations world-wide programmes in health, food, education, environment, labour and so on, amount to less than \$2,000 million annually, which is equivalent to the amount spent in two days by the international community for military purposes. For each school-age child Governments spend an average of \$230 a year, as compared with military expenditures averaging \$14,800 per soldier.

162. While it may be considered parochial to view disarmament in terms of the resources which could be released for the socio-economic development of the less developed nations of the world, this position would seem justified, given the great disparity between expenditures for destructive purposes and those allocated for constructive purposes. Such expenditures in a world where two thirds of the people live in abject poverty could only be aimed at advancing selfish interests.

163. While we are aware of the great benefits which mankind could derive in terms of real resources, economic growth, the modernization of technology and the elimina-

tion of inequalities in international economic relations if positive results were achieved in the dismantling of arsenals of armaments, we are equally aware that disarmament does not necessarily mean peace, nor does it guarantee peace. It is only the goodwill of all nations, coupled with mutual trust, confidence, understanding and co-operation that will encourage disarmament and achieve the international stability and security so urgently needed in our one world.

164. As developing countries, we would be most fortunate if some of those vast expenditures on armaments could instead be directed in such a manner as to wage an effective battle against the age-old enemies of mankind—ignorance, disease and poverty.

165. We could begin by endorsing the proposal of the President of this Assembly that, where a measure of success is achieved in checking the spiral of military expenditures, a portion of those resources should be allocated for increased assistance to developing countries. Contributions received could be channelled through the various international development programmes sponsored by the United Nations system. In view of the importance which my Government attaches to the proposal, it is my hope that this Assembly will include in its conclusions a specific recommendation on this matter.

166. The Charter of this Organization had envisaged disarmament and the regulation of armaments as elements in the progressive establishment of an international security system. That hope was lost by cold-war antagonism, acceleration of the arms race and the so-called balance of terror. The progressive realization of détente gives us another opportunity to enhance the process of disarmament so as to remove the dangers of war hanging menacingly over mankind.

167. My Government advocates a pragmatic and realistic approach to this question. Too ambitious a goal might result in rhetoric and declarations that are soon past and forgotten. As I have already mentioned, the only success record of disarmament consists of agreements negotiated on Antarctica, outer space and the deep sea-bed; a partial ban on nuclear tests is working, and a comprehensive test ban is in sight. We have yet to claim a degree of success on armaments control or reduction.

168. My Government supports the view that while emphasizing the general acceptance of concepts such as nuclear-free zones and zones of peace, concrete efforts should be directed at the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the transfer of fissionable materials.

169. We believe that arms control should be the starting-point for any disarmament programme.

170. Not wishing to minimize the prospects for arms reduction and, eventually, disarmament, the question of verification will require considerable will-power, time, effort and, of course, a guaranteed security system.

171. In the field of chemical and biological weapons, considerable progress has been made, and the ratification

of the Geneva Protocol,² as well as the entry into force of the convention on biological weapons,³ are significant steps towards the effective prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. It is important, therefore, that States which are not parties to those conventions should accede to them as part of the common objective of disarmament.

172. My Government would welcome a declaration on disarmament whose objective should be general and complete disarmament as a major factor for the establishment of a new and more humane international order, a programme of action and negotiating machinery. That objective is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations to which we have all subscribed. We must seek a balanced programme in which the security interest of all States is paramount, in which confidence and trust are secured and in which the will to forge ahead can be attained and encouraged.

173. It is our deep conviction that the United Nations must remain the most effective forum for debates on this crucial problem; it must also be recognized as a forum in which the voices of all nations can be heard on an equal footing, in deference to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

174. That does not imply a denial of the importance and effectiveness of other forums. Admittedly, disarmament negotiations on strategic and other delicate issues may be more effectively dealt with on the bilateral level. We are aware of the hopeful signs which characterize present-day talks among the super-Powers. Although those talks have resulted in the reduction of tensions and in the promotion of international understanding, peace and security, agreements which have emerged thus far would appear to be peripheral, partial and collateral. It is therefore our belief that disarmament discussions and negotiations held under the umbrella of the United Nations would provide the atmosphere for sustained, broadened and accelerated efforts which could be more creditably directed to the fundamental goal of general and complete disarmament. That is why we endorse the proposal advanced by the Secretary-General for the appointment of an advisory board to study the various facets of disarmament.

175. Finally, we are already looking beyond the horizon of this session. It is our opinion that a system of world disarmament conference might be institutionalized, not merely as a deliberative forum but essentially as a decision-making and an appraisal body. Such a conference could convene periodically—perhaps once every three or four years—to assess progress achieved on resolutions adopted and goals and targets agreed upon. Disarmament is a problem which requires regular appraisal. A periodic conference system could therefore serve to maintain a momentum for concrete, albeit gradual, achievements.

² Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV, No. 2138, p. 65).

³ Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (resolution 2826 (XXVI), annex).

176. Let me now pay a particular tribute to the movement of the non-aligned countries, a vital force in contemporary international relations whose initiative has culminated in this special session. Its role in creating the new concept of peace and unity based on the universal application of the principles of active and peaceful coexistence and co-operation among all peoples, irrespective of their social systems and levels of development, is a great force in our one world.

177. We must mention that the addition in 1961 of eight non-aligned countries to the Committee on Disarmament was a significant step in the quest for disarmament. Over the years the forceful role of non-alignment has contributed immeasurably to international co-operation, unity and the search for a common denominator in dealing with the most important issues of contemporary international relations.

178. The political reality of disarmament must be accepted now if mankind's hope for a more secure, prosperous, humane and co-operative world is to be realized. The attainment of that goal is a moral imperative. I have no doubt that this Assembly will meet the challenge.

179. Mr. DIEZ (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): First of all, I should like to extend the congratulations of the Chilean delegation to Mr. Mojsov on his election to preside over this important session. The contribution of Mr. Mojsov's country and his own contribution to the cause of disarmament are the best possible guarantee of a successful completion of this special session.

180. We should also like to convey our congratulations to the representative of Argentina, Mr. Carlos Ortiz de Rozas, for the excellent report submitted to us by the Preparatory Committee over which he presided with such skill.

181. This tenth special session of the General Assembly is meeting today to consider the age-old and ever-present topic of disarmament, thus gathering together the almost 150 States Members of the United Nations, heads of State and of Government, several of the leading international political figures and the best experts of the world on these important matters.

182. We might well wonder what meaning this Assembly has after more than 30 years of constant efforts by the United Nations devoted to disarmament—from the first resolution, which the President recalled in opening our work, and involving more than 300 other resolutions, innumerable debates and several international agreements adopted in these very halls. The United Nations itself was conceived, just as was its predecessor the League of Nations, to achieve peace and international security and to serve the cause of disarmament.

183. We are told today, after 70 local conflicts in the post-Second-World-War period, that the world spends \$400,000 million per year on armaments—several times more than is spent on international economic development assistance and a sum comparable to the education and health budgets of the whole world.

184. We also know that nuclear weapons are proliferating day by day, and that military technology is developing, as is the production of sophisticated weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, we have observed that the negotiating bodies for disarmament created by the international community are foundering in sterility and impotence.

185. What then is the significance of this special session of the Assembly, wisely recommended by the non-aligned countries and approved two years ago by the General Assembly?

186. The debate which we have heard thus far, the importance attached by various States to this session, and the documents which we are now considering, should provide the answer: this is an effort to resituate the issue before the world, to reintroduce this vast and distressing problem, and to begin the task anew in the spirit which should prevail over all truly great undertakings. There should be a restoration of the interests of the peoples of the world in finally resolving this problem, and confidence in the efforts developed in this field by the community of nations expressed in the United Nations must be revived.

187. We must discuss here the central, major issues, the general projections of the topic; we must evaluate the world situation in respect of disarmament, the instruments and means necessary to know and publicize that reality, and the machinery created by the United Nations to attain disarmament. All of this must be expressed in a final document including a draft declaration, a global disarmament strategy and a programme of action.

188. This afternoon I am speaking on behalf of a country which has no intention of using nuclear energy for military purposes, but rather for its peaceful development and for the well-being of its people—a country which is not a member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament or of the Preparatory Committee for this session. We are a medium-sized country, a peace-loving and developing nation, which can therefore view the problem as a whole from a distance, and which, perhaps for this very reason, is in a way morally in a position to attempt to express the feelings of world public opinion, which aspires to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

189. Chile is a country of peace, a country which adheres to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations; we wish to maintain friendly relations, based on international law, with all countries throughout the world which respect, just as we do, the principles of self-determination and non-intervention.

190. Finally, we believe in the peaceful settlement of international disputes, in unrestricted respect for treaties, in the equality of States before the law, in the non-use of force and in the other principles solemnly proclaimed by the Assembly upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

191. Chile will support all measures aimed at international, regional or subregional disarmament, because we

are convinced that the arms race, armed peace and even a hint of the use of force contradict the principles of natural law on which the United Nations is based, and run counter to the very essence of just coexistence among nations.

192. Therefore, we decisively support the goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, and all measures that will steadily lead to that noble end. Thus it is that we support the concepts and principles contained in the draft declaration, the strategy, the programme of action, and some of the negotiating machinery proposed to us by the Preparatory Committee [see *A/S-10/1, vol. I*].

193. Similarly, we feel that the initiative taken by the Secretary-General in designating a group of experts of world renown to study the situation of disarmament in the world and to propose ways and means to achieve it deserves the support of the General Assembly. We also support Mr. Waldheim's suggestion that one thousandth of the sum devoted to armaments be allocated to disarmament purposes.

194. Adequate information on disarmament problems and its dissemination to the population of the world are objectives of primary importance, because what is important is not only what we can obtain or negotiate here and now, but also the harvest which will be reaped from the knowledge and conviction of the young generations of our world, and therefore the preparation of world public opinion, which will be the better informed and therefore stronger. If part of the billions of dollars spent on new weapons research was devoted to this publicity objective, an important step would have been taken towards a more stable and more just international order.

195. One of the main objectives of the negotiations upon which we are embarking is to restore international trust. There is a need to overcome world political instability caused by conflicting ideologies, the expansionist zeal of some States and the consequences of an unjust international economic order.

196. So-called détente—sometimes translated into our language as a relaxation of tension—is being partially applied and is limited to certain regions of the world. While we cannot fail to promote and support that détente, it should be made universal and should be supplemented by respect for the principles which guarantee just and lasting peace. Only respect for the main component principles of international law will achieve a restoration of trust, which is the foundation and basis of a genuine disarmament programme.

Mr. Mojsov (Yugoslavia) resumed the Chair.

197. The contemporary world faces disturbing and potentially dangerous situations.

198. Political détente in Europe, which reduced cold-war tension, should, we feel, go hand in hand with an agreement for a balanced reduction of forces in the area, creat-

ing an effective climate of peace. That détente should be extended to other regions until it becomes universal in nature.

199. The situation in the Middle East causes special concern, because a delay in achieving just and lasting peace recognizing the rights of all constantly threatens to disturb world peace. We feel that the efforts made by the major Powers concerned in the search for a settlement to this explosive situation are very plausible, but undoubtedly are still insufficient.

200. We also hope that a just solution will be found soon to the tension prevailing in southern Africa and in other parts of that continent in order to bring about the climate of peace and harmony which we all desire.

201. The role of the United Nations in these situations of conflict or tension should be strengthened, and its essential function in promoting international peace and security, including, quite logically, disarmament and its control, should be reaffirmed.

202. Existing disarmament machinery seems to have proved ineffective and therefore thought must be given to replacing or, at least, substantially modifying it.

203. First of all, there is a need for a universal forum vested with broad authority to adopt agreements and decisions. This special session, together with the possibility of other sessions, tends to fill that gap.

204. There also seems to be a need for a genuinely operational negotiating body in which initiatives and decisions should not be subject to the discretion of the major Powers.

205. These forums should deal with the traditional disarmament issues—issues considered year after year in the First Committee of the General Assembly. Above all, they should focus on a selection of the main problems which today afflict our world in this field.

206. That, of course, should not preclude negotiations of the SALT type which can contribute to the over-all objectives sought, but these in turn cannot replace the primary role which must be played by the United Nations. On the one hand it is clear that no large, medium-sized or small country can contribute to the security of the world by yielding its own security; but it is equally clear that all are duty bound to negotiate in good faith a disarmament which will open the road to lasting peace.

207. It is appropriate to highlight one or two central issues among the classical disarmament topics within the necessarily general framework of this statement.

208. In respect of the nuclear-arms race, the primary responsibility should fall to the Powers that have acquired a capacity to produce this type of weapons of mass destruction. What is termed vertical proliferation—or the massive development in quantity or quality of nuclear weapons by their present possessors—is to be feared as much as hori-

zontal proliferation, represented by the danger that during the next decade approximately 40 more States may have nuclear weapons.

209. Efforts aimed at preventing both types of proliferation—which my country vigorously supports—should not undermine the undeniable right of all States to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In connexion with that peaceful co-operation, my Government would like to reiterate its support for the International Atomic Energy Agency and its system of safeguards, which makes it possible to keep the different nuclear programmes under international control.

210. Parallel to agreements on nuclear disarmament and the suspension of all tests in this field, conventional disarmament should also be planned.

211. In addition to these broad topics, a plan of action on disarmament must include a strengthening and an extension of denuclearized zones. The Antarctic Treaty,⁴ in the establishment of which two Latin American countries participated, and the Treaty of Tlatelolco⁵ are examples of treaties of which Latin America can justly be proud. In order to contribute to this strengthening it is essential to provide safeguards to States that establish such zones against their becoming victims of discrimination in terms either of their security or of their progress in the field of peaceful nuclear development.

212. In that respect, we were very pleased to hear the announcement made this morning by the President of the Republic of France on his country's ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

213. One area in which serious disarmament efforts must be made is the military use of outer space. It is essential to provide that this area will not become another element in the arms race and to avoid the extension of military purposes to which artificial satellites are being increasingly geared.

214. Finally, it is important to reiterate the decisive link that exists between development and disarmament. The release of at least some of the vast resources consumed day by day in weaponry, in the global expenditure in which many developing countries are becoming involved, would produce the necessary encouragement to international co-operation plans and would alleviate the economic burden of many less developed countries.

215. The Chilean delegation would like through me to express its confidence that this Assembly will restore world interest in this decisive issue, and that it will take a clear commitment to foster disarmament throughout the world and adopt a realistic and concrete plan of action.

216. Only thus can the United Nations fulfil its necessary role, and only thus can we achieve the objectives of peace and security for which it was established.

217. The world is today looking with hope towards this Assembly and is confident of the results of our deliberations. May God grant that we are worthy of that confidence, and may we count on his guidance.

218. Mr. NGOMO-OBIANG (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should like first of all to congratulate you on having once again been elected President of the General Assembly for this special session devoted to disarmament. In electing you its President, the General Assembly clearly wished to stress its desire to entrust to you, a distinguished statesman, the task, the delicate mission, of guiding our proceedings to a successful conclusion. I am personally convinced that under your wise conduct the General Assembly will achieve the best possible results. The excellence of the relations between our two countries is an additional reason for us to take pleasure at your election.

219. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the General Committee who will, I have no doubt, provide you once again with their valuable assistance in the performance of your noble task.

220. I should also like to congratulate Mr. Carlos Ortiz de Rozas on having been elected by acclamation to the chairmanship of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Tenth Special Session.

221. We have met once again, less than a month after the end of the ninth special session, to debate a problem just as important; because it will undoubtedly determine the future of the whole of mankind. In fact few problems have been so repeatedly discussed in United Nations bodies since its foundation as the problem before us today.

222. The emphasis given to this question demonstrates, if demonstration were needed, that the whole world is today aware of what has come to be called the "infernal arms race", and hence of the need to disarm. So true is this that each year the General Assembly reissues to States the appeal it first made in General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 1959. Indeed, in that resolution the General Assembly considers that "the question of general and complete disarmament is the most important one facing the world today" and expressed the hope that "measures leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control will be worked out in detail and agreed upon in the shortest possible time". The General Assembly has since that time adopted a spate of resolutions on the question of general and complete disarmament.

223. This feeling of urgency and insecurity stems primarily from the fact that mankind is today faced with the threat of mass destruction.

224. What was true in the early years of our Organization is all the more true today, in the light of the fantastic progress achieved in arms production—progress which has produced new generations of ever more sophisticated, powerful and deadly weapons which protect no country, whatever its size, its power and its geographic location,

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402, No. 5778, p. 72.

⁵ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 639, No. 9068, p. 326.)

from the possibility of fall-out in the case of conflict, no matter how far it may be from the scene of conflict.

225. It is easy to understand, then, that my country, the Gabonese Republic, the motto of whose great national party—the Gabonese Democratic Party—is “Dialogue, Tolerance, Peace”, is by no means indifferent to this problem, like all the African members of the Organization of African Unity and all the States members of the non-aligned movement.

226. We are happy to see that many States Members of our Organization have sent large delegations to this tenth special session, the initiative for which belongs to the non-aligned countries which first put forward this concept.

227. Our presence here proves once again that the best forum for discussion in order to ward off this curse remains undeniably the United Nations, even if the ability of our Organization to solve the major problems facing the world is very often inadequate.

228. For the Gabonese Republic, this special session of the world Organization should not be allowed, like the proverbial mountain, to bring forth a mouse, like so many other sessions the result of which we would find it difficult now to pin-point. Indeed, nothing is more heart-rending, if you will allow the comparison, for a shareholder than to have invested in an enterprise that has failed. Many of us would like to believe that our voices serve some purpose, that we can and must contribute to the solution of this problem, for which we are certainly not responsible but of which we clearly suffer the consequences.

229. Following the upheaval caused in world public opinion by the explosion of the first atomic bombs, the founding Members of our Organization on the morrow of the Second World War wanted, as they stated in the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind”.

230. Has this been done more than 30 years after that solemn commitment, when we witness the tremendous energies expended in vain, when we know of the vast sums of money swallowed up in the arms race which are out of all proportion to those expenditures devoted to development? Professor Daniel Colliard illustrates very well the absurdity of this situation when he writes in a book on disarmament:

“As we know, throughout the world in 1962 military expenditures amounted to \$120,000 million; in 1967 they broke a new record, because they amounted to \$182,000 million. At this rate, military expenditures will come to exceed the astronomic sum of \$4,000,000 million over the next 10 years. The United Nations figure is equivalent to about 8 or 9 per cent of annual world production of all goods and services; it represents at least two thirds of the monetary value of the global national income of all developing countries. It is approximately equivalent to the value of all products exported each year throughout the world and is roughly equivalent to half of the total of resources annually re-

served for generating capital. And the height of irony is reached in this long list of absurdities when we realize that the armaments expenditures of the less developed countries are increasing at the rate of 7.5 per cent a year while the world average is only 6 per cent.”

And this is an enormous sum for us.

231. We could go on multiplying examples of this kind and we could state that a number of countries do not hesitate to purchase fighter-bombers, the least expensive of which costs, nevertheless, about eight times the \$83 million which were required for the World Health Organization to eliminate smallpox in the world.

232. However, this feeling of general concern is also due to the fact that the vast sums of money devoted to military purposes are seen to be diverted from tasks which would make it possible to alleviate the suffering of mankind and to enrich the lives of national societies. This is indeed what is confirmed by the report on the economic and social consequences of disarmament⁶ submitted by the consultative group on 16 February 1962:

“There should thus be no doubt that the diversion to peaceful purposes of the resources now in military use could be accomplished to the benefit of all countries and lead to the improvement of world economic and social conditions. The achievement of general and complete disarmament would be an unqualified blessing to all mankind.”

233. One should recognize, however, the efforts of the United Nations to find a solution to this serious problem, efforts exemplified by the many texts adopted in this Organization on the problem of armaments since 14 December 1946. We could just as well mention the efforts made by so many countries, within both a bilateral and a multilateral framework, although those efforts, being aimed only, in the final analysis, at consolidating the bipolarization of nuclear power, could not in consequence provide an overall solution to this grave and distressing problem.

234. It should be pointed out, however, that to denounce the absurdity of these expenditures of energy and dollars in no way means that we should fail to recognize the need for each of our States to possess a minimum of arms necessary for the basic protection of its territory. Nor does it mean that we must not use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the decisions adopted at the First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo in August 1976.

235. The Organization has had many proposals placed before it that are designed to avert the risk of a nuclear holocaust. However, the working document of the non-aligned countries containing the draft declaration on disarmament, the programme of action and the machinery for the application of this programme [*ibid.*, vol. IV, document A/AC.187/55/Add. 1 and Corr. 2], does seem to us to provide a serious basis for our work.

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. 62.IX.1.

236. I should like to point out here how much the proposals which we heard this morning from the President of the French Republic, Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, seem to us, by virtue of their clarity, their seriousness and their well-justified nature, conducive to progress in the study of the problem of disarmament and towards a solution which we all hope for, with the participation of all. Indeed, some countries like my own believe that no nuclear conflict can fail to affect them and therefore believe that they should contribute to the solution of the disarmament problem, that problem which categorically determines our development.

237. If some countries no longer have an answer to the question of what are the deep aspirations of mankind, inasmuch as they have invented everything and developed everything, to the point where they no longer know what to do in life, that is not true for our countries that are still in the process of construction, that still have everything to do, and that aspire to one thing alone—to peace so as to be able to devote themselves to what is essential, to what is most fundamental, from our point of view, at present, namely to satisfying the vital needs of their peoples. Because, as our head of State, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo is fond of repeating: "Development means providing people with the means of feeding themselves, housing themselves, clothing themselves and taking care of their medical needs." It is this praiseworthy task which should be tackled by all those who believe that human beings are entitled to the right to existence, the right to health, the right to education, the right to freedom and justice.

238. This is an objective which is far from having been achieved at the world level, as is clear from the fact that most countries which have more resources do not even contribute 1 per cent of their gross national product, the proportion stipulated by the United Nations, to development assistance.

239. May I be permitted to state in conclusion that it is

of no use, absolutely no use, to pile up resolutions or to produce compilations of them, if those resolutions are not put into effect. There are grounds for hoping that we will all be able to display a sense of realism, of objectivity, so that our work will produce some progress towards a solution to this serious and distressing problem.

240. In his statement last October, at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, His Excellency El Hadj Omar Bongo, in his dual capacity as President of the Gabonese Republic and current President of the Organization of African Unity, said: "For our part, we refuse even to consider the possibility of such a monstrous waste. The whole purpose of human intelligence is to avert catastrophe."⁷

241. My delegation wishes to place its confidence in this human intelligence. As an African proverb teaches us: "It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake; it is not necessary to succeed in order to persevere". Let us hope that this saying will inspire us in our work and guide us towards the new measures which should be taken in the field of disarmament in order to respond solemnly to the appeal of all the peoples of the world, for whom peace is the only desired and desirable end.

242. The PRESIDENT: Before adjourning, I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the general debate be closed tomorrow, 26 May, at 6 p.m. If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.

⁷ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings, 34th meeting, para. 80.