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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 9TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAIK (Pakistan)

later: Mr. MULLOY (Ireland)
(Vice-Chairman)

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Statements were made by:

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Mr. Kravets (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)
Mr. Nava Carrillo (Venezuela)
Mr. Michaelsen (Denmark)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 TO 49 AND 121 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): Sir, my delegation joins the other delegations in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. The confidence in you which has been demonstrated by the First Committee is a well merited honour in recognition of your prominent role in the manifold activities of the United Nations, including your contribution to the cause of disarmament. At the same time, my delegation would also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election to their high offices.

The tasks before us are as difficult as they are important, and in the present international climate of uncertainty and distrust the world is faced with the very real possibility of nuclear confrontation. It is essential, therefore, that we redouble our efforts in the field of disarmament, so that the horrendous prospects of nuclear war are rendered less probable, and the attainment of universal peace, with all its rich and exciting perspectives, becomes attainable. I wish to assure you that the Pakistan delegation will co-operate purposefully towards this end with all other delegations so that the results of the work of this Committee will be both positive and productive.

I have listened with great care and attention to the statement made by my friend and colleague, Ambassador Garcia Robles, when he addressed this Committee on 15 October. His intervention was, as always, thought-provoking, as well as imbued with practical suggestions, and was characteristic of the valuable and outstanding contribution that he has been making to disarmament negotiations for so many years.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The goal of disarmament continues to be elusive, and it is a matter of special concern that the recent deterioration in the international situation has both intensified the nuclear arms race and brought the world nearer to the possibility of a nuclear confrontation.

Pakistan is deeply disturbed that the SALT II treaty has not been ratified by its signatories; that the negotiations for a nuclear-test-ban treaty remain inconclusive; that additional nuclear forces are being deployed, by both military alliances, on the continent of Europe; and that new and more destructive systems of strategic nuclear weapons are being developed by the super-Powers, despite the agreed or expected restraints in the SALT process. We must also express concern about the emergence of nuclear targeting strategies which contemplate a "limited nuclear war". This will take the world a step closer to a nuclear holocaust.

Pakistan appeals to the major military Powers to reverse the trend towards an unrestrained nuclear arms race. We urge the United States and the Soviet Union to ratify the SALT II treaty as soon as possible. In the meantime, it is in their interest and in the interest of a saner and safer world that they should strictly observe the limitations and restrictions agreed upon in SALT II. Furthermore, we hope that the SALT III negotiation process will begin in the near future and will pursue a wider and more ambitious objective than that adopted so far. In the view of my delegation, it is of the utmost importance to take immediate steps, under SALT or elsewhere, to freeze the nuclear arms race at the present level. If the development and deployment of new nuclear-weapon systems continues, it will become almost impossible to achieve agreements for their balanced reduction or their elimination from the arsenals of the nuclear Powers. It is our hope that recent initiatives taken in the context of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe will create a propitious climate for more ambitious endeavours to achieve the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in the view of the Pakistan delegation, was a watershed in the history of disarmament negotiations, in so far as it reversed the process of political fragmentation of those negotiations. The Final Document has set forth the various partial and collateral measures of arms control and disarmament that are on the current agenda of the international community, within the framework of a programme that has as its ultimate aim the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Moreover, the Final Document has, in paragraph 109, set in motion the process of elaborating a comprehensive programme for disarmament designed to achieve general and complete disarmament. It is a matter of extreme regret that, despite the fact that the Disarmament Commission has rapidly discharged its responsibilities for recommending the "elements" of a comprehensive programme for disarmament, the basic recommendations and decisions of the special session on disarmament have not until now been implemented. This is a situation which none of us can view with equanimity, for it demonstrates the stark and dangerous reality in our present situation, wherein technology has far outstripped diplomacy. The slow pace of disarmament negotiations has failed to cope with the accelerated arms race; and the increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons and delivery systems that now threaten mankind are rendered ever more ominous by our failure to subject them to any form of credible or effective control.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

In the present climate of tension between the super-Powers, disarmament is bound to suffer. Yet, those two Powers have a special responsibility to avert another arms spiral and to demonstrate tangible progress towards nuclear and conventional disarmament. The Pakistan delegation notes that the series of negotiations between the super-Powers and the two major military blocs are to be continued. In this context, my delegation takes cognizance of the fact that recent developments have placed impediments to the early ratification of the SALT II agreement. But we nevertheless take the view that despite all of its imperfections, the SALT II agreement should be ratified by both parties as soon as possible. Trust and mutual confidence is of the utmost importance between the super-Powers. But today it is equally important to build such trust between the super-Powers and the majority of the small and medium-sized States of the non-aligned and third world. During the past two decades, threats to world peace and security have emanated most frequently from conflicts and tensions that have arisen in regions of the world that are far from Europe, the traditional focus of political and military confrontation between the two super-Powers. The conflicts in the Middle East, southern Africa and South-East Asia continue to pose threats to international peace and security, due to the involvement of one or the other major Powers as well as the aggressive and expansionist designs of regional Powers, such as Israel and South Africa.

Pakistan is deeply disturbed at the continuing deterioration of the international situation, particularly as a result of aggressive actions of major Powers pursuing their global ambitions. There have been increasing instances of resort to force and military interventions, jeopardizing international peace and security. The military intervention by Soviet forces in Afghanistan is a matter of grave concern for the international community, a concern which has already been expressed by 104 States Members of the United Nations, as well as by the Conference of Islamic States. The continued presence of the Soviet forces in

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

Afghanistan adds to the tension that exists in the current international climate and is detrimental to regional as well as international stability. We believe that the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from Afghanistan is a basic requisite for the creation of the peaceful conditions under which realistic disarmament measures can be pursued.

My delegation has frequently expressed its view on the question of the cessation of nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. I shall not, therefore, repeat the importance which my country attaches to the achievement of these great objectives. Recent developments - MIRVED launchers, new strategic systems, increased accuracy - portend a new spiral in the nuclear arms race and do not create any optimism in this regard; on the contrary, the increased suspicions generated by enhanced weapons sophistication have led to decreased stability. Despite all its known as well as anticipated horrors, a nuclear war, which should remain unthinkable, is evidently being seriously considered as a rational or acceptable recourse. There can be no other explanation for discussions and theories that are now being propounded on the subject of "first strike capabilities", "immediate retaliation", "launch on warning" and other related concerns. In this connexion, my delegation has read with great interest the report of the Secretary-General on a comprehensive study on nuclear weapons, prepared by a group of experts pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/91 D of 16 December 1978, and submitted to this session as document A/35/392, dated 12 September 1980. The document spells out with great precision and clarity the significance of the presence of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the world and the nature of what the report aptly quotes as "the perpetual menace to human society". This is a document which my delegation commends to the Governments of all Member States for careful perusal.

We have all agreed, in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly's tenth special session, on the broad areas on which nuclear disarmament is to be pursued so that the final goal of total destruction of nuclear weapons can be achieved. But it is self-evident

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

that the first and most drastic step in the process of nuclear disarmament will have to be taken by the two major nuclear Powers, and it is also clear that considerably greater progress will have to be made by those Powers in halting the qualitative development of their nuclear weapons and delivery systems, and in bringing about real and significant reduction in the nuclear arsenals in order to lend credibility to their commitments. We should like to see, among the first steps, a decision to halt nuclear testing by the super-Powers and the conclusion of a third SALT agreement which can deal with reductions in both strategic and medium-range nuclear weapons and delivery systems. The phase of general nuclear disarmament would then become realistic and its achievement a possibility. As a corollary to these measures, it would also be necessary to build upon the general agreements reached in paragraph 50 of the Final Document, and we should, inter alia, endeavour to define the basic terms for nuclear disarmament negotiations, to outline with greater clarity the stages in the process of nuclear disarmament, to deal with the relationship between nuclear and conventional disarmament, and to examine the kinds of international mechanisms which could assure effective and non-discriminatory verification of nuclear disarmament measures.

Pakistan has always rejected the concept of the balance of deterrence or, as it is sometimes more realistically referred to, the balance of terror. Apart from its questionable moral validity, we do not believe that this is a doctrine which can either remain viable or maintain stability in international relations. As a United Nations document has indicated,

"There exist today at least 40,000 to 50,000 nuclear weapons, the combined explosive power of which is believed to be equivalent to that of more than one million Hiroshima bombs or, to put it differently, some 13 billion tons of TNT, which represents more than 3 tons for every man, woman and child on earth."

(A/35/392, para. 492)

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

With such tremendous destructive power already available to mankind, it is impossible to believe that a nuclear war, once it has been triggered, even for "tactical" considerations, can be limited in scope or devastation. It is obvious also that there can be no winners. A counter force strategy cannot totally destroy the retaliatory capacity of an opponent, and neither can any known methods of civil defence organization provide any semblance of survival of the community in the event of a nuclear war. We therefore maintain that it is a highly dangerous fallacy to presume that effective deterrence depends upon parity or essential equivalence in nuclear weaponry. The only way that security can be assured is through a process of disarmament which will lead to the final elimination of nuclear weapons.

A treaty on a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons tests has been under negotiation for a long time. Although the last report submitted by the tripartite negotiators to the Committee on Disarmament was a considerable improvement on the document that they had submitted in the previous year, a large number of questions remain unanswered and serious doubts continue to exist. In so far as a distinction has been drawn between the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests and a moratorium on peaceful nuclear explosions, there is evidence of a significant evolution in the positions of at least two of the three negotiating parties. However, we note that the duration of the test ban has yet to be agreed upon, that verification is to be left to national technical means, and that in this process of verification account will be taken of the "special concerns or circumstances" of the three negotiating parties. But even more important, is our concern that in several other respects, for example, with regard to amendments, decisions at the review conference, and so on, the treaty being negotiated would include provisions extending the right of veto to the five permanent members of the Security Council. Such stipulations are bound to inhibit the prospects for general acceptance of the treaty.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

From the report submitted by the three negotiating parties on the progress of these talks it, therefore, appears to us that the treaty being evolved will be neither comprehensive, durable, nor equitable. Moreover, the trilateral negotiators have provided no assurance that the treaty will, in fact, become subject to multilateral negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament. I should like to express the sincere view that in the present stage of international relations, it will be self-defeating, even for a powerful condominium of States, to seek to impose an unequal and discriminatory treaty on the rest of the world.

Unfortunately, instead of devoting themselves to the elimination of the escalating danger of nuclear war, the major nuclear Powers, and their allies, seem preoccupied with maintaining their nuclear monopoly. The theory and practice of nuclear non-proliferation, as made evident at the recent Second Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has become nothing short of a device to impose a sort of technological colonialism in the nuclear field over the countries of the third world.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

In the present situation the need for education on disarmament problems and for public awareness of the dangers of nuclear warfare is of paramount importance. In this connexion, the proposal by the Secretary-General of the United Nations that all States devote one-tenth of one per cent of their military expenditure to research, education and information on disarmament is to be widely recommended, so that we can create a world-wide climate of public opinion, conscious of the dangers of nuclear war and the threat to civilization under which we are at present living.

Turning to other specific items on the agenda of this Committee, I should like to state that the Pakistan delegation will once again, in co-operation with other like-minded delegations, submit a draft resolution on the subject of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. For over a decade, Pakistan has made consistent efforts to evolve effective and credible assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. While we acknowledge the importance of the decisions of the United Nations on the subject, as well as that of the unilateral declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States, we still feel, in common with many others, that the non-nuclear-weapon States have yet to be assured, in an effective manner, that they will not be the victims of nuclear threat or attack.

Pakistan, like the majority of non-nuclear-weapon States, is of the view that such assurances of non-use must be provided to non-nuclear-weapon States in a binding form and within a multilateral context if the assurances are to be effective and credible. It is our hope that the present session of the Committee will find it possible to make progress towards the objective of this uniform obligation. Such an agreement not only would constitute a significant advance on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, but would in itself represent an important advance in the whole process of disarmament.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The Committee on Disarmament has

"... noted with interest the suggestion that upon the recommendation of the General Assembly, the Security Council might consider the question of concrete measures to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons ..." (A/35/27, para. 49, subpara. 17)

and stressed the necessity for

"... the indispensable renewed efforts to reach agreement on a common approach acceptable to all which could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character." (ibid.)

My delegation, together with other like-minded delegations, will pursue this objective during the course of the work of our Committee.

My delegation will also pursue the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia, Africa and the Middle East. It is not necessary for me at this stage to dilate upon the importance of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. This concept has been endorsed in principle, not only in the United Nations but in different forums all over the world, as an integral part of the process of disarmament. Today, several non-nuclear-weapon States could become the object of threats from certain nuclear Powers, including implicitly the threat of use of nuclear weapons. Moreover, in situations of crisis a nuclear threat may emanate from countries which are not now formally recognized as nuclear-weapon States.

We have all expressed considerable concern at the nuclear explosion conducted in the vicinity of South Africa on 22 September 1979, and presume that this presages the emergence of another quasi nuclear-weapon State. All those African countries which oppose the abhorrent policy of apartheid are potential victims of South African nuclear threat or attack. The Arab States also feel threatened by Israel's presumptive nuclear capacity.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

Pakistan is dedicated to the objective of nuclear non-proliferation, perhaps more so than most of the parties to the NPT. Our reasons for not acceding to that Treaty are well known and are based upon realities. At the same time, Pakistan has made strenuous and consistent efforts to promote the objective of non-proliferation through other, more realistic and equitable avenues. We have proposed the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia and promoted that objective to the best of our ability. The proposal has received the support of the overwhelming majority of the international community, including most of the States of the region. We continue to hope that those regional States which have reservations about that proposal will review their position and join in that arrangement or other similar regional arrangements in South Asia that would provide credible assurance to the world of their sincere commitment not to acquire or deploy nuclear weapons.

Pakistan believes that the cause of peace and security would be enhanced by the establishment of a military equilibrium in our region. We cannot fail to be concerned when some States in our region leave no stone unturned to prevent Pakistan from acquiring a minimal means of self-defence while themselves embarked on an ambitious programme of arms procurement and development, on a scale out of proportion to any conceivable threat to their security. No State should seek maximum security for itself while denying even a minimum measure of security to others.

Pakistan has, on more than one occasion, expressed its readiness to enter into negotiations with its neighbour, India, to reach agreement on a mutually-acceptable and balanced ratio of forces between the two countries. We are prepared to pursue such negotiations together with other States in the region.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The intensification of military rivalry between the super-Powers and their resort to the use of force in the Indian Ocean region is a matter of deep concern for Pakistan as a littoral State. Pakistan has, therefore, fully supported and has joined its efforts with those of other countries to promote the historic initiative launched by Sri Lanka for the realization of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean. It is regrettable, however, that the political climate in the region has deteriorated, particularly during the past year, casting serious doubts on the hopes for an early realization of a zone of peace.

The task of the proposed conference on the Indian Ocean in 1981 has become even more difficult. We believe that improvement in the political climate of the region is essential for the success of the conference, which should address itself to the primary objective of strengthening the security of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean.

While delineating the principles for the establishment and maintenance of a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean, we take into account the security concerns of the regional States in their totality. It will not suffice to call for the elimination of foreign military presence and bases from the Indian Ocean itself. We must also demand the complete elimination of foreign military presence from the region, including the territories of littoral and hinterland States. In addition, the major Powers should undertake not to deploy their military forces in the vicinity of the region, which could threaten the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the regional States.

Another aspect of the security of the region relates to the commitment of the regional States themselves to refrain from resorting to the use of force in their relations and to agree to evolve a military balance at a reduced level among themselves on the basis of the undiminished security of all the States.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

There have been two conferences during the course of the last year which have, in some measure, advanced the cause of disarmament.

The recently concluded Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects has achieved a measure of success beyond our earlier expectations and could rightly be regarded as a significant advance in the process of disarmament negotiations. Pakistan would wish to congratulate the participants of that Conference, and in particular its able President, Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria, on the successful outcome of their arduous deliberations.

The Committee on Disarmament, which also met during the year in Geneva, has brought to bear a great deal of thought to the problems of disarmament and has achieved significant progress in its negotiations, particularly through the activities of its four important working groups. There is reason to believe that the working group on the comprehensive programme of disarmament should soon be able to reach agreement on the measures of disarmament which should be reflected in the programme. Similarly, the working group on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States has made limited progress in its efforts to arrive at a realistic yet credible form of international security assurance.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons achieved a result which we felt has been highly constructive and fruitful, whilst the substantive exchange of views which took place in the Ad Hoc Working Group on radiological weapons has helped to identify certain conceptual differences and problems regarding the joint elements of a radiological weapons convention presented by the United States and the Soviet Union. It remains, however, a matter of serious disappointment that during 1980 the Committee on Disarmament was unable to initiate negotiations on two items which have been accorded the highest priority at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, namely, the comprehensive test ban treaty and nuclear disarmament.

This year we are faced with particularly significant responsibilities in the pursuit of "the final objective" of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. It may well be said that this is hardly a propitious moment to embark on this ambitious task. But we believe that it is precisely because of this deterioration in the international situation that it devolves upon us to instil a measure of restraint, particularly in the policies of the great Powers. A reiteration by the vast majority of Member States of their continuing and irrevocable determination to achieve general and complete disarmament will exercise a great moral influence for restraint.

Despite the gravity of the present state of international relations, we have not lost hope for the future. The present situation has demonstrated the devastating consequences of the policies of domination, the instability of a peace based on the balance of terror and the dangers of an uninhibited arms race. The message is again reiterated with emphatic warning. If mankind is to avoid a catastrophic conflict, then nations large and small must conduct themselves in accordance with the established norms of international conduct and evolve an effective system of collective and universal security.

To those ends, the Pakistan delegation will exert its utmost efforts and co-operate in ensuring the success of our deliberations and our work.

Mr. KRAVETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): The beginning of the 1980s has been darkened by a deterioration of the international situation. The stepping-up of the forces of militarism and hegemonism has created a serious threat to peace and détente and has increased the danger of war.

Aggressive circles in the United States, the leader of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bloc, have decided to disrupt the existing approximate balance of military power between East and West and have set themselves the task of bringing about military and political supremacy. That policy of military supremacy, which is so dangerous for the security of the world, has been camouflaged by them by myths concerning a so-called Soviet military threat which allegedly exceeds the defence needs of the military might of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Resorting to the dubious expedient of verbal acrobatics, the militaristic and hegemonistic circles have been intensifying tension in the world and have increased the tempo of the build-up of their military potential and have been striving to expand existing, and to create new, military blocs.

It is quite clear that a policy of that kind only serves to undermine the positive results which have previously been achieved in terms of peaceful co-operation, which are to the credit and the advantage of all peoples and to the majority of peace-loving States. Such a policy is designed to return the world to the policy of brinksmanship.

Let us take one of the most recent examples of a naked manifestation of the policy of diktat in international relations. Recently, one more attempt was made in the United States to provide a military and political basis for Washington's claim to lord it over the world. A so-called new nuclear strategy was adopted. If we were to translate Directive 59 into plain English, it would boil down to this: acknowledging the possibility, and hence the admissibility, of a limited nuclear war providing that use be made of strategic offensive forces to strike a sudden blow against the military targets of another State. That is a really murderous directive.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

We can only be surprised by the casual way in which the United States, with one stroke of the pen, erased the obligation it had earlier assumed to work for the prevention of nuclear war and to follow the principle of equality and equal security. Such a development is extremely alarming and disturbing.

Some delegations here in the First Committee, as a primary cause for the exacerbation of the international situation and the curb on talks on limiting the arms race and bringing about disarmament, have been attempting to use the events in Afghanistan. Those assertions could not be further from the truth. This change in the policy of member States of NATO involving a build-up of military preparations began long before those events.

As far back as May 1978, while the United Nations was working on and adopting the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, the efforts of the United States and its NATO allies were concentrated on adopting a document of a completely different kind - a document which provided for an automatic significant increase in the military budgets of those countries right up to the end of this century.

In December 1979, NATO adopted a decision to manufacture and deploy in Western Europe a new American medium-range nuclear missile, and at the same time, the leadership of NATO were very well aware that in the last 10 years the number of medium-range nuclear missiles in the European part of the USSR had not been increased by a single missile or by a single aircraft.

How can we fail to be surprised at the statement of certain representatives that, so they say, the Soviet Union gave no response to the proposal of the Western Powers to reduce military forces and armaments in Central Europe. If we make an objective rather than a prejudiced appraisal of the situation in those talks, how can we but acknowledge that it is precisely the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist community which have so consistently striven to achieve substantial progress in those talks, while the Western countries have adopted an unconstructive position and have even departed from the proposals they submitted themselves.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

It is well known that this summer, in addition to the unilateral withdrawal of 20,000 Soviet troops, 1,000 tanks and other military technology from Central Europe, the socialist countries proposed the withdrawal of a further 20,000 Soviet and 13,000 American troops; that would be an extremely important element in the first stage of reduction. But so far, there has been no response to that constructive proposal.

If the policy of confrontation and the acceleration of the arms race are not ended, the only result will be an increase of the danger of war and the threat of the outbreak of conflicts. At the present time, the world has become so interdependent and the means of destruction so sophisticated that any, particularly a nuclear, conflict could lead to a universal military conflagration.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

A legitimate question therefore arises: what must we do to give international détente a further boost to diminish the danger of war and to achieve a reduction in military confrontation? For the countries of the socialist community the answer to this question is clear. They favour an increase in and an intensification of détente, and the holding of an intensive political dialogue among States belonging to different social systems. We believe that that dialogue should be on a subject-by-subject basis and should embrace the cardinal problems of contemporary international affairs. There are no problems in Europe, Asia or other parts of the world which the socialist countries would not be ready to settle around the conference table.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR is convinced that there exist at the present time objective opportunities and possibilities to curb the slide of the world towards a new cold war, but for this we need the joint efforts of all States that would be genuinely interested in strengthening international security and eliminating the threat of war. The General Assembly of the United Nations, where practically all the States of the world are represented, can and must make a substantial contribution to normalizing inter-State relations and to improving the political climate.

The attainment of this goal that is vital for all nations is served by the initiative of the Soviet Union, which proposed that the First Committee should consider the item entitled "Urgent measures for reducing the danger of war". The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR whole-heartedly supports that proposal. We believe that its primary importance lies in the orientation of the whole world community not in the direction of confrontation but rather in that of creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding among peoples, of an early bringing about of concrete measures in the field of limiting the arms race and achieving disarmament.

The continent of Europe was the cradle of international détente. The peoples of Europe have realized from their own experience how deeply détente ties in with their vital interests, therefore the Governments of Europe at the present time are faced with a very important task, that of preventing the recrudescence of the spirit of the 1950s and of being very thrifty and jealous about the positive experience that has been accumulated in mutual relations among States with different social systems and in practice, of implementing conscientiously and consistently the principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

But the military bloc of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was created in Europe. That happened in 1949. The Warsaw Treaty Organization was founded six years later. That was a necessary defensive measure by the socialist countries, as was stressed by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Mr. Brezhnev:

"Our union always found aggressive ambitions and aspirations alien to itself. It was never designed to be detrimental to the interests of any country or group of countries. It was created to defend the peaceful work of our peoples who are busy building a new life. It was created for our joint struggle for the cause of lasting peace and for respect for the sovereign rights of States and the freedom of peoples."

The socialist States have always opposed the bloc policy and we are extremely pleased to note that the Soviet Union has reaffirmed, particularly here, in the First Committee of the General Assembly, its readiness to agree to an elimination of the Warsaw Treaty if at the same time the NATO bloc is dissolved. As a first step the military organizations of both groupings should be eliminated, beginning with a reciprocal reduction in military activity. Thus it would be possible to do away with the division of the world into politico-military blocs and to strengthen trust in relations among all States.

Of course a reduction in the danger of war is essential to the peoples of all continents. That is why it would be so important for States members of military alliances to renounce the idea of any action that would lead to an expansion of those blocs by admitting new members to them, and for countries that are not members of such groupings to refrain from joining them. All States without any exception must avoid any action that might lead to the creation of new military alliances or assign military functions to regional organizations that do not possess them.

Undoubtedly a decision not to expand existing military alliances or groupings or to create new ones would make it possible to avoid bringing ever more States from different parts of the world into the arms race that is so dangerous for the cause of peace.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

In that regard it is extremely regrettable that the Greek Government should have decided to renew participation in the NATO military organization, an action that is cynically and frankly described as strengthening that military bloc that is aimed against the countries of the socialist community, the national liberation movements and all peace-loving peoples.

There is a great deal of evidence one could adduce to show what a high price mankind is now having to pay for the arms race. According to data provided by the United Nations, since the Second World War more than \$6 trillion have been spent for military purposes. Each year 5 or 6 per cent of the world gross national product is being spent on military preparations and four fifths of military budgets are being swallowed up by the conventional arms race. If we take into account the fact that since the end of the Second World War hundreds of thousands of people have perished as a result of wars in which conventional weapons have been used, the danger of the growing sophistication of those weapons is obvious.

That is why such special importance should be attached to the appeal by the Soviet Union to all States, primarily the permanent members of the Security Council and countries associated with them by military agreements, not to increase, with effect from a given date, for example, 1 January 1981, the strength of their armies and conventional armaments as a first step towards their subsequent reduction. That proposal, if it were put into effect, would not only make it possible to restrain the unbridled increase in armed forces and conventional armaments, but also would make it possible in the future to embark on a substantial reduction in them and would create favourable conditions for a major breakthrough in the field of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

The policy of the United States and certain other NATO countries and of the present Peking leadership of undermining détente is making it more difficult to approach the settlement of many international issues and has led to the blocking and often the actual frustration of talks aimed at limiting the arms race. Many of those talks, which have currently been going on in various forums and on a more restricted basis, have been dragged out unjustifiably. The General Assembly must do something decisive to promote their revitalization.

The talks on the strengthening of security guarantees against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons for States that do not possess nuclear weapons should be concluded urgently. We continue to believe that the best way of strengthening guarantees for non-nuclear States could be to conclude an appropriate international convention. The Ukrainian delegation considers that a positive contribution to the search for a mutually acceptable solution to this problem is represented by the readiness of the Soviet Union to agree that, as a first step towards concluding such an international convention, all nuclear States should make solemn declarations of identical content. The essence of those declarations should be that States that possess nuclear weapons undertake not to use and not to threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States which do not have such weapons of mass destruction on their territory. The Security Council of the United Nations could back such declarations by an appropriate decision.

We must also complete work on and conclude as soon as possible a treaty on the full and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In spite of the fact that 17 years have already gone by since the establishment of the prohibition on nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, it has not so far been possible to agree on the prohibition of the testing of such weapons in all environments by any State. Thus the way is open for building up strength and perfecting ever more destructive means of waging war. We therefore consider of fundamental importance the Soviet proposal that all nuclear Powers should declare a one-year moratorium on the carrying-out of any nuclear explosions. That proposal enjoys widespread

(Mr. Kravets, Ukrainian SSR)

support from many States and would make it possible to conclude work on an appropriate treaty in a very short space of time. The ball is now in the court of the other Powers that possess nuclear weapons.

All these are practical measures of an urgent and immediate kind. They represent the minimum that is necessary to do urgently in order to prevent the world sliding into first a cold and then a hot war.

We support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/35/L.1 and the Ukrainian delegation believes that if the measures I have mentioned were really put into effect that would be a very important contribution to the reduction of the danger of war and the limitation of the arms race and would help the second Disarmament Decade to get off to a successful start. The adoption of those measures would be in the interests of all countries, regardless of their size and social system, since they would promote the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. NAVA CARRILLO (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Venezuela wishes to associate itself with the warm congratulations extended to Ambassador Naik, as Chairman of this Committee, and to you, Sir, and the other officers of the First Committee. We wish to say that we recognize in Ambassador Naik a tenacity and unfaltering skill that will undoubtedly be of great benefit to this Committee.

In the light of the gravity of the events that of late have characterized a world situation fraught with tension and uncertainty, it might perhaps be justified to begin this statement on a note of pessimism, although in no way of resignation. International conflicts, old and new, are undoubtedly given an impetus or exacerbated by the growing arms race and the economic benefits derived therefrom.

Never before has there been such a clear evidence of the risks and dangers that may be engendered by unbridled nuclear competition accompanied by explosive circumstances in various parts of the globe.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

Never before has there been such clear evidence of the urgent need to make a supreme effort and to undertake specific action to curb the arms race as an indispensable condition of the strengthening of international peace and security. We cannot and should not allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by discouragement. Nor does the persistent and senseless opposition to disarmament perturb us to such an extent as to prevent our seeing the still existing possibility of embarking on a course that is in keeping with the responsibilities and demands obviously imposed by our knowledge and conviction of present-day realities.

The promotion of disarmament is the avowed aspiration of all peoples and because it is a fundamental objective of the United Nations we once again tackle the many and complex aspects of the armaments question in the conviction as well as the hope that the work of this Committee can and will become a useful contribution and a definite stimulus to deliberations and negotiations in other disarmament forums.

The delegation of Venezuela makes these assertions although well aware of the limitations and difficulties confronting us and despite the critical international situation and the disappointing results of specific actions undertaken in the course of the past year in an endeavour to achieve some progress in the field of disarmament.

Our analysis of those efforts and attempts has merely confirmed that the States that bear primary responsibility for the development of a genuine disarmament process, far from contributing to the attainment of that objective with positive attitudes and specific deeds, remain embroiled in an absurd arms race, fed and justified by the most varied pretexts, which in the last analysis derive only from rivalries and disputes for reasons of domination and hegemonism.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

The possibility of the great Powers agreeing on even modest measures of arms limitation appears to be even more remote as a result of the deterioration of the international situation that they themselves have brought about either directly or indirectly, either overtly or covertly. Thus, in the midst of this unceasing confrontation, the prospects of ratification of the SALT-II accord - which it was hoped could despite its shortcomings proceed forthwith and contribute to the emergence of an international climate more propitious for negotiation and the adoption of authentic disarmament measures, or for negotiations on SALT-III, which were to determine considerable reductions and limitations of the nuclear arsenals of the two super-Powers - have virtually vanished.

I should now like to refer to three international meetings among those held this year in respect of the disarmament process.

Between 11 August and 7 September 1980 there took place in Geneva the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the nuclear weapons non-proliferation Treaty. It would seem redundant to emphasize the importance that the successful conclusion of that Treaty would have had for the international community, but we should like to address ourselves to it.

In its function as the juridical instrument that comes closest to universality in the field of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation Treaty cannot be viewed as the sole regulator of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, nor as a security agreement par excellence. That function of the Treaty should, as far as its political effects are concerned, be viewed within the broader framework of all international relations, given its effect on the promotion of co-operation for the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the promotion of a new international order and the strengthening of international peace and security. We are convinced that the political implications of an exhaustive and sincere evaluation of the Treaty, the pertinent conclusions and recommendations being set forth in a final declaration, would have gone much further than giving greater impetus to efforts in favour of the horizontal and vertical non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, for it cannot be doubted that, as regards the promotion of measures aimed at halting

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the nuclear arms race, the non-proliferation treaties would create the necessary conditions for a transitional movement towards nuclear disarmament and reduction of the international tensions that today beset the international community.

That is why we deeply regret that it was not possible to elaborate a final consensus declaration. We fully share the reasons put forward by the representative of Sri Lanka in his statement of 7 September 1980, when he spoke on behalf of the States members of the Group of 77 participating in the Conference. In particular we wish to quote the following paragraph:

"The non-nuclear States have complied effectively with the obligations assumed under article II. It has been clearly acknowledged that there has been no horizontal proliferation. It is equally clear from the review of that article, from the deliberations and negotiations during the conference, that the obligation concerning vertical proliferation has not been complied with. As far as effective measures aimed at the cessation of the nuclear arms race are concerned, there is little evidence of, and so far even less hope of their being adopted. If today we have no final document, that is because the non-nuclear States parties - at least those of the Group of 77 - wish to draw attention to the reality that article VI remains virtually unimplemented 10 years after the conclusion of the Treaty and five years after the last review."

Venezuela's position is crystal-clear. At the Conference we supported, and we shall continue to support, **evaluation of the non-proliferation Treaty** functions and operations and the conclusions and recommendations contained in Working Paper NPT/CONF.II/C.1/2 of 26 August 1980, submitted by the Group of 77 at the Second Review Conference of the Treaty. That document contains the common views of the Group as stated in various forums, in particular in the Disarmament Committee, as a negotiating multilateral body of which we are members, on the question of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, and the manner in which, in our opinion, negotiations on the most urgent matters should be conducted on the basis of a systematic programmed agenda capable of bringing us closer to concrete results and effective disarmament measures.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

In March last the first Review Conference on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction was held in Geneva. We attach primary importance to that Convention within the context of the efforts made by the international community in favour of disarmament. As was repeatedly emphasized in the course of the debate, that Convention is the sole effective disarmament measure adopted so far in connexion with one of the most awesome instruments of war.

We regret that it was not possible to carry out a more detailed examination of the regulations in the Convention governing the procedure for denouncing cases of non-compliance with or violations of the obligations it contains. However, we fully subscribe to the principles, purposes and objectives of the Convention as well as the Final Declaration arrived at as a result of those deliberations.

In that context we reiterate our view that first priority should be given to the conclusion of an agreement on the elimination of all chemical weapons. The establishment of the Ad Hoc Group at the Disarmament Committee level, which would through a substantive examination define those questions that should be dealt with in the negotiations on that Convention, is a valuable contribution that will help speed up the multilateral negotiations. We are happy to note that the Committee on Disarmament carried out profitable discussions on matters relating to the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons, which led to the definition of those questions that should be embodied in a convention on this subject.

The Committee on Disarmament has a fundamental role to play on this question in keeping with the mandate that the General Assembly at its special session entrusted to it as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. That is why the total and controlled elimination of chemical weapons should not depend exclusively on the results or progress that may be achieved by the two super-Powers in their negotiations.

The deliberations of the Committee on Disarmament and the Working Group established to consider this item confirm the general acknowledgement of the unpostponable need forthwith to negotiate and to elaborate a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. Its elaboration would represent the first really effective disarmament measure to be achieved since the United Nations undertook efforts in that field.

Now that efforts to achieve agreement on chemical weapons are being intensified, it is essential for the great Powers to refrain from taking any action that would in one way or another hamper even further the possibilities of achieving that objective within a reasonable period of time and which might under the cloak of new excuses connected with strategic competence, yet again frustrate the hopes of all peoples.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

Another conference that deserves special mention for the results it obtained is the United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, which ended recently in Geneva on the 10th of this month. As we know, the Conference adopted the following instruments: Convention on the prohibition or restriction of the use of certain conventional weapons; a protocol on non-localized fragments; a protocol on prohibition or restriction of the use of mines, booby traps and other devices; and a protocol on prohibition or restriction of the use of incendiary weapons.

These decisions did not achieve the optimum goals of the total prohibition of weapons which have indiscriminate effects in their use. However, it may be considered that the instruments adopted represent progress as regards the protection of civilian populations in an armed conflict, this not being the case with regard to protection of the armed forces, which makes it necessary to include other norms to improve the mechanisms that have been established and thus lead to more concrete progress.

We have said that Venezuela attaches great importance to the Committee on Disarmament as the sole multilateral forum for negotiation on disarmament. At its second session, while it is true that much of the debate was devoted to procedural questions, nevertheless that body worked very intensively. Despite the adverse circumstances in which the Committee began its work, it was possible to make some progress which we might qualify as positive in performing the negotiating functions given to it by the General Assembly in the Final Document of its special session on disarmament.

In connexion with the work carried out by that body in 1980, we cannot fail to mention as being very important the creation of two ad hoc groups on chemical weapons and radiological weapons, negative guarantees and a comprehensive disarmament programme. We remain convinced that the working groups are the best mechanism available for concrete negotiations within the Committee. Therefore, given the importance of the items that are to be considered by the working groups, it is obvious that those groups should continue their work during the next session of the Committee on Disarmament while other such groups should be set up on the cessation of nuclear-weapons tests and the halting of the nuclear-weapons race and nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the complete prohibition of nuclear tests,

"No other question in the field of disarmament has been the subject of so much international concern, discussion, study and negotiation as that of stopping nuclear-weapon tests". (CD/86, p. 4)

This matter has been since 1957 one to which the greatest priority has been given in the field of disarmament. Despite the partial agreements that have been achieved, underground nuclear tests without limitation have continued to be conducted. It is alarming to note that in 1979, for instance, about 53 nuclear explosions were effected.

I believe it necessary to make some comments on the Joint Report submitted by the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the progress of their negotiations. We are concerned over the fact that, despite the repeated requests of the Group of 21 to the effect that the report on the progress of negotiations should be exhaustive and detailed and should indicate those points on which there is agreement or disagreement, the delegations were faced with a general document from which we can hardly conclude that the progress achieved is actually considerable as the document itself asserts. On the other hand, as happened last year, the report of the negotiating Powers was submitted towards the end of the Committee's deliberations, and this obviously did not contribute to the progress of the negotiations and hindered its proper evaluation and analysis.

We still believe that the creation of a working group would contribute to progress in the multilateral negotiations. It is regrettable that the Committee on Disarmament should have been unable even to open negotiations on the subject. On the other hand, it would appear that at the Committee level an attempt has been made to divert attention towards other aspects of the problem. It has been insistently stated in the negotiations outside the Committee and in activities such as those of the ad hoc group of scientific experts and other initiatives that, while they are complementary and very helpful to the work of that body, they departed from its main task of negotiating concrete agreements on the subject. In connexion with the total prohibition of nuclear tests, the main question is the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting such tests.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

The early conclusion of a treaty prohibiting nuclear tests in all environments, including nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, should be the subject of the highest priority in the work of the Committee, and the Committee should undertake those negotiations without delay.

The working group on radiological weapons worked rather intensively in the course of the past year. The delegation of Venezuela made concrete proposals with a view to contributing to the results of those negotiations and ensuring that they establish clearly and definitively that radioactive elements shall not be used for hostile purposes. We hope that in the course of the forthcoming deliberations of that group it may be possible to reconcile the various proposals, which were put forward in a constructive spirit.

The special session of the General Assembly, in revitalizing the Disarmament Commission, assigned to it, among other functions, that of considering the elements of a comprehensive disarmament programme. That task was performed satisfactorily by the Commission at its first session.

The Secretary-General transmitted to the Committee on Disarmament the Commission's report and recommendations on the elements of a comprehensive disarmament programme, which was the object of special attention by the Committee and the ad hoc group that was set up to consider that subject.

The delegation of Venezuela participated actively in the work of the Committee in this field and, in a spirit of co-operation, submitted a working paper which contained a proposal connected with the principles that should be embodied in that Comprehensive Disarmament Programme. We hope that that draft will help to orient the work of the ad hoc group in its quest for a formulation of the principles to be included in the programme, which is one of the most important elements of the international strategy for disarmament contained in the Final Document of the special session.

The First Committee has before it, for its consideration and adoption, the document that contains the elements of a draft resolution entitled "Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade", which was prepared by the Disarmament Commission in compliance with the request made by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. On that occasion, the General Assembly determined that

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

"... the draft resolution should embody, inter alia, an indication of targets during the Second Disarmament Decade for accomplishing the major objectives and goals of disarmament, as well as ways and means of mobilizing world public opinion" (resolution 34/75)

The Commission adopted, by consensus, the text ~~that~~ is included in ~~its~~ report. However, in the part that refers to concrete disarmament measures to which priority should be given in the negotiations, it was not possible to reach agreement as to the span of time in which such measures should be concluded.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

It is not our intention that fixed deadlines be established for negotiations so complex and so influenced by many other factors as are those on disarmament. However, we must continue to insist that such measures be transformed into specific agreements in keeping with the aspirations of the international community. The finalization of some of those agreements, among them those on ratification of the SALT II treaty, on the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and on chemical weapons, would help to create the conditions necessary for the continuance of the efforts to curb and reverse the arms race, in particular the nuclear arms race.

We wish to emphasize once again that the two most important objectives of the international community in the decade of the 1980s are disarmament and development. In a world in which the nations are divided by such great economic and social differences stemming from the continued existence of obsolete structures and concepts, it is impossible to divorce the vast world expenditures on arms from the process of international restructuring we are pursuing or from the economic and social progress of all peoples, especially the developing countries.

It is appropriate to mention here the provision to that effect in the Riobamba Charter of Conduct, signed last September by the Heads of State of the countries of the Andean Group - that is, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela - and also by the Presidents of Costa Rica and Panama and the personal representative of the President of the Spanish Government:

"To promote a process of subregional and regional disarmament which, inspired by the tenets of the Declaration of Ayacucho, would constitute an effective contribution to general and complete disarmament and permit the release of resources for economic and social development."

This reveals the great concern that exists with regard to the phenomenon of the arms race in its dual connotation: its continued threat to world peace and security and the diversion of resources of every kind which should be used instead for the general progress of mankind.

(Mr. Nava Carrillo, Venezuela)

A more conscious use of knowledge and of the economic and social consequences of the arms race and well-informed public opinion would no doubt help to convince everyone finally of the risks and implications of the arms race in all its aspects and to reorient the human and material resources now devoted to scientific and technological research for the benefit and well-being of mankind and the harmonious progress of all the members of the international community.

We trust that the positive spirit in which we are all participating in the debates of this Committee will be reflected in a show of goodwill and in practical results in favour of the halting of the arms race and the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. MICHAELSEN (Denmark): Mr. Chairman, first of all I wish to extend to you and to the other officers of the Committee my sincere congratulations on your election. Your professional skill and your wide experience, not least in disarmament matters, are well known to all of us. Your election augurs well for the work of this Committee.

More distinctly than for many years, the deliberations of this Committee are taking place in the shadow of increasing world tension and dangerous local armed conflicts presenting grave risks of escalation - risks which we cannot afford to neglect in the nuclear age. We must admit that developments on the international scene over the past 12 months have had a negative impact on disarmament efforts at a time when they are needed more than ever before. In these circumstances it is of paramount importance that the general belief in the necessity and the possibility of substantive progress in the disarmament negotiations is not questioned. We have a universal obligation to continue the dialogue in good faith and with the utmost vigour. No Member of the world Organization can disclaim its share of our common responsibility to pursue the search for a rational alternative to an unconstrained, dangerous and potentially destabilizing world-wide arms race. If we all show perseverance, goodwill and realism we can make progress in disarmament, which is so vital to peace and security, and to development as well.

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

The nuclear arms race has now assumed such proportions that no human mind can really visualize the effects of a general nuclear conflict. In fact a military clash between the great Powers would imply the end of modern civilization. It is the firm position of the Danish Government that strong efforts should be made as a matter of urgency to stop and reverse the nuclear arms race. The early conclusion of a treaty banning all nuclear-weapon tests would constitute an effective barrier to horizontal as well as vertical proliferation of these weapons. The Government of Denmark has therefore noted with satisfaction the latest joint progress report submitted by the participants in the trilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test ban. We welcome the fact that considerable progress seems to have been made, particularly in the vital field of verification.

In the longer view, the political will on the part of the nuclear Powers to halt the arms race will be a pre-condition of the preservation and, it is hoped, strengthening of the present international non-proliferation régime. For that reason, among others, Denmark urges early ratification of the SALT II treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union; and we urge a resumption of the SALT negotiating process to attain substantial future reductions of nuclear weapons as part of a SALT III treaty. We warmly welcome the latest developments aimed at beginning preliminary talks on arms control with regard to long-range theatre nuclear forces. We expect such talks to pave the way to early and realistic negotiations, thus making it possible to avoid a new and dangerous nuclear arms race on the European continent.

The report of the Committee on Disarmament is, as usual, very comprehensive and touches upon almost all important aspects of the disarmament negotiations. It is obvious that that negotiating body, after being reorganized pursuant to the recommendations of the tenth special session, has now grown up and is gradually maturing. An important pre-condition of the meaningful work of that body, the participation of all nuclear Powers, was met this year with the entry of the People's Republic of China. Though Denmark is not a member, we follow the work of the Committee on Disarmament very closely. It has been encouraging to note that the work of the four ad hoc groups

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

established during the 1980 sessions, although progressing slowly and not at the same speed, is nevertheless proceeding in a manner which gives hope for the future. My Government feels that at this session the General Assembly should avoid recommending new priority areas for discussion in the Committee on Disarmament, allowing the Committee to undertake a thorough discussion of the heavy agenda already before it.

The discussions in the Disarmament Commission at its second substantive session, this spring, represent for the Danish delegation an example of the possibility of making some progress after all. In spite of the international climate the Commission managed to reach a consensus in its report to the General Assembly. Although the report must necessarily reflect the differences of opinion on the various items under discussion, it nevertheless shows that a considerable degree of consensus exists. In this regard, I feel it is worth mentioning that the complicated negotiations on the text of a declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade were concluded, leaving only a few bracketed parts for further discussion. It was encouraging, too, that the Disarmament Commission for the first time embarked upon a preliminary discussion of the complicated issue of conventional disarmament. I shall revert to that matter shortly.

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

Among the encouraging events in the disarmament negotiations in 1980 was the outcome of the Review Conference on the Treaty Banning Biological Weapons. The Conference confirmed the general perception that the Treaty represents an outstanding example of a disarmament measure, being the first treaty of its kind totally to proscribe an entire category of weapons. From my Government's point of view, agreement on a similar convention prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction should be given high priority.

A message of hope has recently come from the Diplomatic Conference held in Geneva on prohibitions or restrictions of the use of certain conventional weapons that may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. The Treaty and the annexed three protocols adopted at that Conference represent limited but real progress both in the humanitarian and in the arms control field. It is encouraging - particularly against the background of current international tensions - that the international community has found the moral strength to take up the thread from the Hague Conferences at the turn of the century where the first steps were taken towards imposing concrete restrictions on the methods of warfare applied in international armed conflicts. Even if the humanitarian gains are only marginal, they certainly will be meaningful to those who happen to fall within that margin. It is the hope of my Government that the Treaty now adopted will, through its provisions on review and follow-up, set in motion a process which will lead to further advances in international efforts towards alleviating the sufferings of civilians and combatants alike during armed conflicts.

I now turn to another important Review Conference - that of the Non-Proliferation Treaty - held just a few months ago. One cannot but regret the fact that the Conference did not manage to reach consensus on a substantial final document. The overriding priority at that Conference ought to have been a reaffirmation of our continuing commitment to the purposes and principles of the Treaty in the form of a substantial

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

final document. Nevertheless, considerable and important work was accomplished during those weeks in Geneva, and a substantial degree of consensus was reached in most areas. What should furthermore be stated is the encouraging fact that at no time during the Conference was the non-proliferation régime as such questioned. For my delegation, the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons is of overriding importance and the Review Conference has not in any way thrown doubt into our minds that the adherence of all countries to the principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is a cornerstone of these efforts. The Treaty remains the most effective instrument available against the danger of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The main theme for the negotiations on disarmament in 1981 will undoubtedly be the preparations for the second special session devoted to disarmament in 1982.

An important task for this Committee will be to decide on the preparatory body for the special session. No endeavours should be left aside in this area, since thorough preparation is a fundamental prerequisite for fruitful progress at the special session.

Leaving it for the preparatory body to decide on the detailed preparations of the negotiations at the special session, it should be recognized at this stage that a highly valuable basis for the deliberations is being created by the studies of various expert groups set up pursuant to decisions of the General Assembly. Experience shows that such studies by groups of qualified experts are most useful. The high level of expertise, the geographically and politically balanced appointment of the experts, the opportunities for thorough and relatively informal exchanges and the established tradition of unanimous reporting make such groups particularly suited for working out studies of the complex and sensitive questions embodied in the disarmament process.

Before I conclude, I should like briefly to revert to the issue of conventional weapons.

(Mr. Michaelsen, Denmark)

In the Danish view, it is important that efforts to halt the arms race comprise all types of weapons. That is why we have repeatedly stressed that issues surrounding conventional weapons should be given more attention in the international disarmament debate.

At the second substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in May and June of this year, Denmark submitted a paper highlighting the problems and principles of conventional disarmament. That document was thoroughly and constructively discussed in the Disarmament Commission. As will be seen from the report of the Commission to this session of the General Assembly, there was wide support in favour of recommending to the General Assembly that it approve in principle the proposal for a United Nations expert study on all aspects of the conventional arms race.

Denmark has since been conducting consultations with a number of Member countries on a draft resolution on this subject. Those consultations being completed, the Danish delegation will introduce a draft resolution in this Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.00 p.m.