



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 17TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia)

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General debate

Statements were made by:

Mr. Kostov (Bulgaria)
Mr. Sourinho (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Mr. Venkateswaran (India)
Mr. Haydar (Syrian Arab Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 39 TO 56, 128 AND 135 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): With the progress of the discussion in this Committee on the various disarmament issues that are on the agenda of the present session, it has become more evident that the vast majority of Member States have emphasized the urgency of adopting resolute practical steps to curb, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the arms race and to promote disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament.

Unfortunately, however, we must note that those imperialist forces that are desperately trying to obtain military and strategic superiority on a global scale have once again been pursuing an obstructionist line. It is in the light of that line that important disarmament initiatives are qualified as "meaningless" and discussion of the serious problems in this field as having "an air of unreality". Such statements, no matter how vigorous their language may be, cannot mislead anybody, for they are completely at variance with a serious, responsible and constructive approach to disarmament issues. They reflect a complete lack of political will and readiness to contribute to making real headway in curtailing the arms race and achieving disarmament. Moreover, they attest to the fact that all sorts of pretexts are sought to foil any attempt in that direction. The myth of the so-called Soviet military threat has been concocted again in order to justify and reassert the overt course of stepping up rearmament. Attempts are being made to assert that the enormous military potential represented by present weapon stockpiles would serve only as a guarantee of peace and would contribute to the strengthening of international security.

Other obstacles are also being raised to stall the efforts aimed at disarmament, such as the artificially inflated and overstated problem of verification, the spurious concept of the so-called linkage, which is tantamount to a policy of diktat vis-à-vis sovereign States and the rejection of any new initiatives and proposals as being unrealistic or propaganda.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

We categorically reject that policy as contravening the efforts at promoting disarmament and the genuine interests of peace and international security. The adoption and implementation of measures to curb the arms race and to achieve disarmament constitute an essential prerequisite to eliminating the danger of war and strengthening peace and international security. Such is the will of the overwhelming majority of Member States as embodied in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In its first statement before this Committee my delegation set forth in detail the reasons for its support for the outstanding initiative of the Soviet Union concerning the prevention of nuclear catastrophe.

In this statement I wish to dwell, first of all, upon the other important new proposal of the Soviet Union, namely, for the concluding of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. In our view, the importance of this proposal lies in the fact that it is a reflection of the undisputed necessity that, alongside efforts to curtail armaments and in further sophistication, steps should be taken to limit the spreading of the arms race to other spheres, such as outer space. It is universally acknowledged that at present the earth is overstocked with weapons. If outer space is also further militarized, this would launch a new and dangerous round of the arms race whose consequences would be unpredictable. It is obvious that this would entail further aggravation of international tension, thus undermining the efforts aimed at utilizing the enormous potential of outer space for solving our problems here on earth for the benefit and in the interest of the socio-economic progress of all countries.

The Soviet Union has always been the principal initiator and proponent of the idea of the exclusively peaceful use of outer space in the service of peace and human progress. Considerable progress has been achieved so far in the implementation of that idea as embodied in a number of international instruments, such as the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and the Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques and others. The fact is, however, that these instruments do not preclude the possibility of the stationing in outer space of weapons which do not come under existing limitations and in particular under the definition of weapons of mass destruction. The stepped-up development of space weaponry shows that it is high time the idea of outer space free from weapons was further elaborated.

That has become even more urgent in view of the fact that certain military circles in the United States rely on the placement of new weapons in outer space as an important means of gaining military superiority. It is no secret that in the past few years plans have been drawn up for the creation of a series of weapons designed to destroy targets in outer space, in the atmosphere and on earth. News reports indicate that one third of the flights of the Space Shuttle scheduled for the next few years are earmarked by the Pentagon for military purposes, including experiments with laser as a potential weapon for destroying intercontinental missiles and satellites. In the longer run, entire military bases in outer space are envisaged for the purpose of waging laser and ray warfare.

These are a few of the facts, and they are widely known to world public opinion. It is precisely against the background of such dangerous trends that we consider the new proposal of the Soviet Union to be so timely and practical, and we are confident that this important initiative will receive the support of all Member States which are concerned with ensuring that outer space should become an arena for co-operation and not confrontation.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

At the same time, we cannot fail to note with deep concern the attitude of the United States delegation which, while obviously preoccupied with the alleged preparations of the Soviet Union for "aggressive" uses of outer space, has nevertheless taken an outrightly negative stand a priori.

Logic and constructiveness have never been the strong side of United States reactions to disarmament proposals coming from the Soviet Union, and there is no exception in this case. The proposal for the concluding of a treaty on the non-stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space is based on the principle of equal security and therefore should be fully in the interests of the United States if the latter is genuinely concerned about preventing a new round of the arms race in outer space.

My country, which has undertaken considerable national activities with regard to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and actively participates in the international co-operation in this field, stands ready to lend its contribution to the realization of the new Soviet proposal.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is consistently in favour of the speedy concluding of concrete agreements in the current negotiations on topical disarmament issues. In this respect we attach special importance to the work of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva as the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. After its reorganization it seemed that all conditions existed for its carrying out effectively the mandate entrusted to it. The fact is, however, that during the past three years the Committee has failed to work out a single agreement. Moreover, the Committee has failed to elaborate a procedural framework for discussing urgent questions such as a comprehensive test ban and nuclear disarmament. The stumbling block that has brought about this failure is, no doubt, the lack of political will on the part of a number of States to seek progress in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

Besides other problems of nuclear disarmament on which my delegation has stated its position in its first statement, I wish also to emphasize that my country has a keen interest in finding a solution to the problems of strengthening the guarantees for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States.

The growing threat of the use of force in international relations, including the use of nuclear weapons, is a source of grave concern for many non-nuclear-weapon States throughout the world. We deem it necessary to reiterate the prevailing position that the concluding of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, which do not have nuclear weapons on their territories against the use of nuclear weapons, would be the most effective way of enhancing the security of those States. At the same time, it should be noted once again that all nuclear-weapon States could make declarations, identical in substance, concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States having no such weapons on their territories, as a first step in that direction. It is necessary, in our view, for the Committee on Disarmament to continue, on a priority basis, the negotiations on this question until concrete results are achieved.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The People's Republic of Bulgaria considers the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world to be one of the measures that could reduce the threat of nuclear war and strengthen the non-proliferation régime. We supported the creation of such a zone in Latin America and we are in favour of the proposals to create further such zones in Africa, the Middle East and northern Europe.

For our part, we are firmly committed to the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Balkan peninsula.

At the official meeting on the occasion of the 1,300th anniversary of the founding of the Bulgarian State, Todor Zhivkov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, proposed that a meeting be held next year in Sofia of the Heads of Government of the Balkan States to discuss the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Balkans. In our view, the creation of such a zone would correspond to the interests of all peoples in the region and contribute significantly to improving the international climate and gradually turning Europe into a nuclear-weapon-free continent.

Owing to its importance and urgency, the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is still high on the agenda as one of the items of fundamental significance for achieving progress in the field of disarmament. We support the activities aimed at the all-round strengthening of the régime of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In this respect the undisguised nuclear ambitions of countries like Israel and South Africa, which enjoy the sympathy and support of well-known countries and influential circles, should be resolutely condemned. The General Assembly ought to condemn also the unprovoked Israeli air raid on the nuclear reactor in Iraq, which, being a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, has put its nuclear programme under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The People's Republic of Bulgaria reiterates its conviction that there is a need for further intensification of the efforts aimed at strengthening the system of guarantees of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in particular through the universalization of this momentous international instrument.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The problem of prohibiting the development and manufacture of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction also needs to be settled urgently. Its urgency is constantly growing, along with the need to halt the qualitative arms race. My delegation is convinced that this question can be solved most effectively on the basis of a comprehensive agreement of a preventive character which would safely obviate all possibilities of opening up new avenues in the arms race involving weapons of mass destruction.

The meetings held by the Committee on Disarmament with the participation of experts have once again confirmed the urgent need to set up a special group of experts within the framework of the Committee with the task of making periodic reviews of the prospects for the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction with a view to the timely elaboration of agreements banning them. We support the proposal of the USSR that the permanent member States of the Security Council, as well as other militarily significant States, as a first step towards the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement statements identical or similar in substance concerning the renunciation of the development of new types and systems of mass destruction. The Security Council could later adopt appropriate decisions endorsing them. In our all-round approach to the problem of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction we also support the idea of concluding conventions on the prohibition of individual types of weapons of mass destruction. In this respect I wish to note the intensive negotiations on the draft treaty to ban radiological weapons which are currently under way in the Committee on Disarmament. We consider that real opportunities exist to overcome the remaining obstacles, with a view to submitting the draft treaty for consideration by the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

In this context it is hardly possible to bypass the problem of the prohibition of the neutron weapon, which, owing to the well-known decision of the United States Administration, has become extremely acute. The mass movement which has swept the world, especially Europe, in protest at the United States decision to **start** full-scale production of this particularly inhuman type of weapon of mass destruction has once again demonstrated the pressing need to elaborate a convention to ban the production and stockpiling

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

of neutron weapons. The People's Republic of Bulgaria is a sponsor of such a draft convention, which was submitted in 1978 in the Committee on Disarmament. We believe that the General Assembly should adopt a clear-cut position on this question, thus living up to the expectations of the majority of countries and peoples of the world.

The consideration of the problem of prohibiting chemical weapons has gone on for years. However, a number of Western countries have still not shown the necessary political will for a comprehensive agreement to be reached on this question. Instead, we have again witnessed the unilateral breaking off of talks with the Soviet Union on the part of the United States. The reasons for the repeated delays in elaborating a relevant international agreement are obviously linked intimately with the growing military chemical arsenals of the United States and other countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the launching of large-scale programmes for the production of chemical weapons, including binary gases. The same explanation applies to the latest slanderous propaganda campaigns of accusations of use of lethal chemical agents by other countries.

My delegation is of the opinion that the General Assembly should resolutely speak out in favour of the conclusion without delay of a convention on the prohibition of the production of chemical weapons and elimination of stockpiles of such weapons. It is imperative that the bilateral Soviet-American talks, which, in our view, are a major prerequisite for the success of the common efforts in that direction, be resumed without delay.

There are a number of other issues to which my delegation attaches no less importance. Without going into details, I wish only to note that we consider the strengthening of the system of existing international agreements in the field of disarmament to be a solid basis for ongoing and future disarmament efforts.

We are of the opinion that implementation of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade requires the adoption of new, genuine and practical measures and new and constructive initiatives and proposals, as well as the goodwill and endeavours of all States.

The second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament can and must impart a fresh impetus to the efforts to solve the urgent problems of arms limitation and disarmament. That is why its decisions and recommendations should be aimed at adopting real and practical measures to halt and reverse the

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The recent activization of broad masses of the population, especially in Europe, against militarism and in support of the cause of peace and disarmament, clearly indicates the significant role which world public opinion can play in the efforts for disarmament. In our view, the United Nations cannot fail to take steps aimed at further activizing and rallying world public opinion on behalf of disarmament, as envisaged in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. For this reason the People's Republic of Bulgaria fully supports the initiative of Mexico on launching a world disarmament campaign and looks forward with interest to its further elaboration and concretization.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that the People's Republic of Bulgaria is ready to support and work for the implementation of all constructive initiatives which aim at solving the vital issue of our time, namely, that of halting the arms race and achieving progress in disarmament, and is willing to make its own contribution to the attainment of that goal.

Mr. SOURINHO (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, never in the First Committee has the debate on the problem of arms limitation and disarmament been as timely and as urgent a matter as it is now, under your diligent chairmanship. That makes your term of office particularly important and I am sure that your election will prove to be one of the most praiseworthy actions of this important Committee as a result of your assuredly brilliant performance on the basis of your vast and profound knowledge of disarmament and great talent as a negotiator, with which we are all familiar. It is on this optimistic note that I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your well-deserved election to the chairmanship of this Committee and to wish you full success in your delicate mission. I should also like to convey, through you, my sincere congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur of the Committee.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

International peace and security at the present time are being put to a severe test. Indeed, a number of negative factors have been with us for some time now on the international scene, the most disturbing of which are obviously the deterioration of détente; the constant growth in the military budgets of certain North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Powers, in particular the United States; the unbridled efforts in those same circles to secure, through a new spiral in the nuclear arms race, a position of military superiority over the socialist countries, in particular the Soviet Union; the de facto breaking-off by the United States and its allies of negotiations on certain aspects of arms limitation and disarmament; the NATO decision to place medium-range nuclear missiles in certain Western European countries; the adoption of Directive No. 59 on the limited nuclear conflict strategy; the choice by the new strategists in Washington of a confrontation policy in East-West relations accompanied by a declaration regarding America's zones of vital interest in various parts of the world, the massive concentration of imperialist air and naval forces in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf and the feverish strengthening and enlargement of the military base of Diego Garcia and other similar bases in those two areas and in other parts of the world; and finally and very recently, the shattering announcement by the United States Government that it would produce neutron bombs, which made the eventuality of a limited nuclear war more plausible. It must be said that that announcement was welcomed only in Peking.

All those factors have inevitably revived the cold-war psychosis and that has inevitably aroused a great wave of indignation among peace-loving peoples. That indignation has taken the form, in the capitals of Western Europe, of demonstrations over the past week-end by hundreds of thousands of people from all segments of society, who have vigorously protested about the forthcoming deployment of Euro-missiles and the monstrous decision to produce the neutron bomb.

In this extremely disturbing international situation no man, no people, that cherishes peace can or should remain silent. Everyone must raise his voice to defend the imperilled peace and join the efforts of the international community to improve international relations, restore confidence among States and build a secure and lasting peace based on general and complete disarmament under appropriate international control.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

It is this noble consideration that has prompted me to take part today in the Committee's debate.

However, since I am not a specialist in disarmament and have not personally followed the work of the Disarmament Commission and the Committee on Disarmament, before preparing this statement I took care to study closely the reports of the Secretary-General on certain questions which are now before us and I also read carefully the statements that have been made since the beginning of our debate by eminent disarmament specialists from the non-aligned countries, including the impressive statement by Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, and the statements of all the representatives of the two great military blocs, on which depends progress or lack of progress in joint efforts to put an end to the ruinous arms race, to reverse it and to reduce existing stockpiles until their complete elimination. I have also read the statement by the representative of China, which for some time now has been showing an increased interest in the disarmament problem. I welcome that and hope that that country, which is also one of the nuclear Powers, will in the future make more specific contributions to our common task of ensuring a future for our world, free from any danger of a thermonuclear holocaust, rather than a mere show of enthusiasm, which in any case is always wrongly directed.

At the conclusion of my lengthy reading of the above-mentioned reports and statements, I was able to establish without great surprise that no progress had been made at the latest sessions of the Committee on Disarmament, the negotiating body, in efforts to translate into reality the judicious decisions of the first special session devoted to disarmament. That lack of progress, the very little progress made can be blamed on the obstructionist attitude of the enemies of arms limitation and of disarmament, which are, obviously, the United States and some of its allies. As proof I shall mention two precise cases.

First, in connexion with the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, which has pride of place on the Committee's agenda, no real negotiations have begun because the Committee has not been able to establish, as urged by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/145 A, paragraph 4, an ad hoc working group whose task would consist, according to the resolution, of beginning the multilateral negotiation of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's Democratic Republic)

According to the information given by Ambassador Garcia Robles in document A/AC.1/36/PV.3, on page 22, the United States and the United Kingdom were opposed to the creation of that ad hoc working group.

Then, in connexion with consideration of the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race, which has second place on the Committee's agenda, again it was the obstructionist attitude of the United States and its allies which prevented the establishment of a special working group to study the question, thus leaving the Committee powerless to act.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

These two irrefutable cases make it abundantly clear who has worked for the cause of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and who has relentlessly opposed it while at the same time feverishly engaging in nuclear rearmament.

With all this evidence, one may ask whether it was really the representatives of the countries of the third world and those of the socialist countries who have engaged in sterile polemics and rhetoric in this Committee for the last week in the examination of problems which so seriously affect the future and even the survival of mankind.

The primary task of this Committee and, indeed, that of all the other major Committees of the General Assembly, is to adopt resolutions recommending measures to be adopted in connexion with items before it. To oppose, and to invite others to oppose, the smooth functioning of the Committee without having anything to offer in exchange other than neutron bombs will hardly serve the cause of peace, which we are trying to build in a world with fewer arms or, rather, in a world without arms.

The stepped-up arms race and the excessive stockpiling of weapons are at variance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations which are to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war¹. They are also entirely immoral as vast amounts of money are being used only to sow terror and destruction, while millions of human beings, children, women and old people everywhere in the world are dying from hunger, sickness and deprivation of all kinds.

Because of the immense implications of this for peace and development, the question of the cessation of the arms race and disarmament is today foremost in the minds of the peoples of the world. It is being discussed in nearly all international conferences and debated by scientists, businessmen, the working classes, and even the man in the street in every country.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Consequently, it is the primary duty of the United Nations, which is the highest body where all the nations of the world are represented, not to get lost in the labyrinth of ideological quarrels which the advocates of confrontation are trying vainly to create by brandishing the myth of the alleged Soviet threat and engaging in a new spiral of the arms race while ignoring the profound legitimate aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the peoples of the world, who only wish to live in an environment of peace protected from the use of force and free from the nightmare of nuclear war. The United Nations has an obligation to take every possible step to ensure that the Second Disarmament Decade, which has only just begun, will not be, like the first, a decade of all-out rearmament. It has an obligation to implement the objectives set forth in the Programme of Action of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, which would be a great stride forward on the promising path towards disarmament. Without that step, peace, security, prosperity, development and co-operation among peoples and nations will remain but an illusion.

If our Organization is to be successful in its noble task, then the United States and its allies must sincerely co-operate in implementing this Programme of Action by deeds and not just by words. The first step in this direction would be to remove whatever obstacles they have created to prevent the Committee on Disarmament from discharging its functions and to respect all commitments entered into in good faith.

In this respect, we deeply deplore the fact that the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), which was the subject of long and difficult negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States and whose implementation has been and is being unanimously demanded by the international community, has still not come into force owing to the failure on the part of the United States to ratify it.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

There is no doubt that the implementation of that Treaty would release that country from much blame and make for progress towards nuclear disarmament.

In any case, this deplorable state of affairs in connexion with SALT II has made it possible for us to draw a clear distinction between the conduct of what are known as the two super-Powers in disarmament matters, which is certainly a very complex problem, but not outside our scope provided that all the parties were animated by the same determination to find a solution to it. In addition, we have carefully examined the alleged arguments put forward by the United States to justify the measures and decisions which it has taken or will take to involve the world in a new stage of the arms race, thus bringing mankind ever closer to the brink of the nuclear abyss.

Placed with this severe tension and the dire threats resulting from the unbridled arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, we believe that any proposal truly aimed at removing the danger confronting us deserves not only the active support but also the appreciation of the entire international community.

It is in this spirit that my delegation has welcomed the initiative by the Soviet Union to have placed on the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly two new items entitled respectively: "Prevention of a nuclear catastrophe" and "Conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space".

These two new Soviet proposals clearly testify to the tireless efforts of the Soviet Union to bring about, by all possible reasonable means, real progress in the area of disarmament, thereby keeping mankind away from a nuclear confrontation in which, whatever its nature, no one would emerge the victor. In the interests of protecting all the peoples of the world and bringing about a peaceful future we must support the steps that the Soviet Union has taken. The adoption of a declaration firmly opposed to the first use of nuclear weapons would create a climate of general confidence and would scale down the arms race and, first and foremost, the nuclear arms race.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

We believe that no country here, unless it still nurtures the illusion of a possible victory in a limited or widespread nuclear conflict, could oppose the adoption of such a declaration.

Furthermore, we understand and share the keen concern of the littoral States of the Indian Ocean over the growing military activities of the imperialists in that part of the world. We deplore the fact that the most profound aspirations of the peoples of that part of the world continue to be flouted by the United States and other Western Powers which have defeated the attempt to convene an international conference this year. The purpose of that conference was to have been to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

My delegation thinks that in the interest of strengthening security in that region, where a quarter of mankind lives, we should complete preparations for that conference as soon as possible and implement the decision of the General Assembly on that matter.

As one of the countries which were victims of the massive and abusive use of force, my country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, supports the proposal of the Mongolian People's Republic on the conclusion of a convention of non-aggression and non-use of force in relations between the States of Asia and the Pacific, the region of which we are part. The signing of such a convention would discourage the transfer of weapons to that part of the world.

I should like now to turn to the question of chemical weapons, which received second priority in the Programme of Action of the tenth special session (Res. S-10/2, para. 45). Although in operative paragraph 3 of its resolution 35/144B, of which my country was a co-sponsor, the General Assembly urged the Committee on Disarmament to continue from the very beginning of its session in 1981, as a matter of high priority, negotiations on the banning of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction, the Committee was unable to carry out its task, on this question as well, because of the obstructionist attitude of the United States and some of its allies.

However, the height of cynicism is to be seen clearly in the fact that the United States, not satisfied with simply blocking all the Committee's activities and feverishly launching itself into the production of new generations of chemical weapons known as "binary weapons", had the audacity to slander a number of countries, including mine, accusing us of having used chemical weapons. But it is no secret that the only country which has thus far used such weapons on a massive scale, weapons which cause so much suffering, is the United States. In the recent past that country tested chemical weapons of all kinds against the three peoples of Indo-China, and at present it is using biological weapons against Cuba.

(Mr. Sourinho, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The best way to salve the conscience of the United States is not to make gratuitous, completely unfounded accusations against those countries that were formerly its victims but to contribute to the efforts of the three peoples of Indo-China to eliminate the disastrous consequences of the massive use of chemical weapons for their environment. Moreover, the United States has an obligation to co-operate actively and seriously with the other members of the Committee on Disarmament to conclude an international treaty banning such weapons as soon as possible. It must immediately suspend its programme to modernize and perfect its chemical agents.

What is more, history has given ample evidence that the use of force is the prerogative of those who have it to use, and those countries which do not possess it have no choice but - in the parlance of the circles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) - to accept the "zero option".

In a free-flowing statement early in the debate in this Committee, one of the representatives of the United States urged us, in the interest of the cause of disarmament, not to engage in rhetoric or sterile polemics. But, as the saying goes, "Advice is cheap", and that saying was not exactly heeded in the statements made later in this Committee by the various representatives of the United States.

Not wishing to follow the good - or rather, the bad - example of the representative of the United States, I shall merely say before I conclude that, in the enlightened best interest of stopping the arms race and of disarmament, the United Nations must make tangible progress in implementing the Programme of Action advocated by the tenth special session, before the holding in 1982 of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

That second special session will no doubt thoroughly review the implementation of the decisions of the tenth special session and will take measures to accelerate progress and give fresh momentum to disarmament, which remains the ultimate objective of all mankind. It will also, we hope, represent an important step on the path towards a world disarmament conference, the importance of which and the need for which were expressly recognized in the Final Document of the tenth special session.

(Mr. Sourinko, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic will work resolutely, within the limits of its modest means, for the success of the second special session.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): In his statement of 22 October in this Committee, Mr. S. M. Krishna, member of the Indian Parliament, gave an assessment of the current international situation and our general approach to questions of disarmament. In my intervention today I propose to elaborate my delegation's position on certain specific items on our agenda and also to comment on some of the issues which have been covered in our debate so far.

Every statement that we have heard so far in this Committee has drawn attention to the perilous consequences of the continuing build-up of nuclear arms. Not one delegation has questioned the urgent necessity to achieve the reduction in and eventual elimination of nuclear armaments. There is a generally heightened awareness of the dangers of a nuclear war and the need for urgent measures to prevent the outbreak of such a war. Yet we seem unable to arrive at a consensus on the concrete steps to be taken in this direction.

Meanwhile, the thesis has been advanced that control over nuclear arms and their eventual elimination must take as its starting point the maintenance of parity between the two major nuclear Powers and the alliance systems headed by them. A concurrent assumption of this thesis is the prevention of the outbreak of war through the practice of deterrence - or, in layman's terms, making it too costly for the other side to contemplate aggression, by the maintenance of a capability to launch a retaliatory attack or a second-strike capacity. It is also argued by the advocates of this theory that nuclear arms serve to make up for deficiencies in conventional strength; that countries suffering from such deficiencies must perforce retain the option to use nuclear arms even against a conventional attack. In this scheme of things, nuclear and conventional weapons are dealt with together as a single continuum.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

Over the last two decades, it has become self-evident that the nuclear arms race has, in fact, been accelerating rather than decelerating, despite the achievement and maintenance of so-called strategic parity. New weapon technologies have been spawned and incorporated into the nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States. There were the MIRVed missiles with new and more accurate warheads, the cruise missiles and now the neutron bombs. The achievement of the so-called parity has not helped to cap the nuclear arms race. It has not resulted in even a single nuclear weapon being eliminated. While both the United States and the Soviet Union had engaged in negotiations for the limitation of their strategic armaments, neither SALT I nor SALT II had done anything more than to try and define the parameters within which the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union in regard to strategic armaments could proceed. A number of vital components of the nuclear arsenals were, in fact, not even covered by the negotiations. For some time now, even those limited efforts at the management of nuclear arms competition between the major Powers have been suspended and put in the deep freeze.

It is clear, therefore, that experience does not support the thesis that the achievement of a so-called parity or balance is a necessary precursor to the achievement of nuclear disarmament. And if we take into account the fact that parity or balance is mainly a matter of perception and is subject to technological movement, miscalculation, shifts in political alliances and so forth, then using those concepts as the basis for serious disarmament negotiations can only be a prescription for failure. Perhaps deterrence had a certain relevance in the pre-nuclear weapon age. Nations have throughout history sought to ensure their security by threatening punishment against a potential aggressor. However, playing deterrence with nuclear weapons takes us into a new dimension altogether. A nuclear war would be in the true sense of the phrase, an absolute war. No conceivable political or military objective could possibly be achieved in the aftermath of such a war. A nation using nuclear weapons against another will not merely bring about the annihilation of its adversary, it will be inviting the same annihilation upon itself. Worse, it exposes to risk the very survival of

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mankind. The question then arises whether it is rationally or morally defensible to pursue one's own narrow security concerns by threatening the entire world with nuclear disaster. Attempts by arm-chair strategists to evolve doctrines of limited or theatre nuclear conflict have only served to make the whole theory of nuclear deterrence even less credible than the earlier concept of so-called mutual assured destruction, or MAD, that held fascination for the nuclear weapon Powers through most of the 1960s. It is inconceivable in the current context that a limited nuclear exchange would not inevitably and immediately escalate into a strategic nuclear exchange with all its global consequences. Deterrence, therefore, in its nuclear aspect, clearly cannot form the basis of any acceptable strategic doctrine aimed at the avoidance of war.

The recent thirty-first Pugwash Conference held in Banff, Canada, had the following to say in its concluding statement about nuclear weapon doctrines:

"It is a fallacy to believe that nuclear war can be won. It was widely felt that the leaders of the nuclear Powers should explicitly deny military doctrines which legitimize limited nuclear warfare ... an immediate freeze of the current nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union is recommended as an effective step towards nuclear disarmament. Implementation of a freeze should be followed by substantial weapons reductions. Such a freeze could be initiated as a mutual moratorium on new weapons development, and should be rapidly reinforced by formal agreements on weapons production and testing, a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and a cut off in the production of fissile material for weapons purposes."

The well known diplomatist and strategic thinker, Professor George F. Kennan of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton also had the following to say in his lecture given to the Norwegian PEN Club in Oslo, as published in the German weekly Die Zeit of 28 August 1981:

I do not view the nuclear bomb as a proper weapon at all. I regard it as a vast and fateful misunderstanding ... a misunderstanding as to the true potential purposes and uses of weaponry in general. I do not believe that any useful purpose can be served by the further proliferation

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of nuclear devices or by deploying them in further areas where they have hitherto not been deployed, or by inventing and developing new forms of them. I do not consider that anyone becomes more secure by having these devices on his territory.

He went on to conclude:

I distrust any and all efforts to solve these problems by limited restriction on the use or deployment of such weapons. I see no answer to any of these problems but the earliest and complete elimination from national arsenals of these and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Let us now examine the tenuous relationship which is claimed to exist between nuclear and conventional weapons. Nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction, whose use would wreak global destruction. Conventional weapons, particularly some of the more sophisticated and modern versions, can certainly cause great destruction and loss of life, but they are not weapons of mass destruction. The entire logic of the drive towards ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to additional countries, which is being pursued with such zeal and enthusiasm by several nuclear-weapon States and their allies, has been based on this clear-cut distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons. The possession of nuclear weapons has given a handful of States the means of global destruction. That has resulted in a division of the world into a small group of nuclear-weapon countries, while the others, the vast majority of non-nuclear-weapon States, have had to seek their security as best they could -- either through participating in alliance systems headed by the major Powers or through sustained international efforts for the creation of a more just and equitable world order, free from the danger of nuclear threat and blackmail. It is for that reason that nuclear disarmament was recognized as a matter of the highest priority, without any reference to other measures. Speaking in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly many years ago on 9 November 1970, the then French representative, Mr. Mattei, had drawn attention to the danger of perpetuating the division of the world into nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States and said:

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It is not the nuclear weapon that has caused that division, but it helps to perpetuate it just as it also permits localized conventional conflicts to be endlessly prolonged. This is one more reason, in addition to the frightful dangers which it symbolizes, for calling for true nuclear disarmament as my country has been doing without interruption since 1960.

It is that disarmament which, to my delegation, still takes priority over everything else. Let it be undertaken that is, let all nuclear Powers, without exception, agree, according to the wish expressed by France, to prohibit the manufacture of such weapons and to eliminate the stockpiles, not forgetting the problem of vehicles of delivery, and then, and only then, would the task of general and complete disarmament acquire its full meaning. Thus, conventional disarmament measures, which are highly desirable now, but which, in present circumstances, could be considered discriminatory towards non-nuclear Powers, would then be recognized, without umbrage to anyone, as the necessary counter-weight to the imbalances which nuclear disarmament might create. (A/C.1/PV.1754, paras. 34 and 35)

My delegation favours efforts towards conventional disarmament, but it is opposed to any dilution of the highest priority and urgency which has been accorded by the international community to nuclear disarmament. We cannot accept the thesis that nuclear disarmament would somehow be assisted by measures to achieve conventional disarmament, especially by the non-nuclear-weapon States. The French assessment, expressed more than 10 years ago, has even greater validity today when the gap between the nuclear-weapon States on the one hand and the non-nuclear-weapon States on the other has become even more glaring.

What, then, is the correct approach to the question of nuclear disarmament? First and foremost, we need to address ourselves to the prevention of a nuclear war. True, the only real guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be their complete elimination from the face of the earth. However, in the interim, a useful and timely initiative to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war would be to agree on a total prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. It was the moral revulsion caused by the use of chemical weapons during the First World War that led the international community to outlaw their use in 1925. Have the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki been lost on the post-Second World War generation? The havoc caused by the atomic bombing of those two cities in 1945 certainly caused greater revulsion than the use of chemical weapons in the First World War, yet we seem unable to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons. Are we really less humane than people were half a century ago? I would like to think not. We would do well to reflect solemnly on what the representative of Japan said in this Committee on 20 October 1981:

"I myself said in the summer session of the Committee on Disarmament this year, on 6 August - the 36th anniversary of the Hiroshima bomb - that Japan had been reminding the world for the past 36 years that it was the 'only country' which had suffered from nuclear weapons, but that if the world continued to behave as it was behaving I felt inclined to change that wording slightly and say that Japan was the 'first country' to know the horrors of those weapons, the implication being, of course, that many other countries could follow in our wake." (A/C.1/36/PV.4, p. 24)

As already argued, concepts such as parity or balance, nuclear deterrence, or the concept of using nuclear weapons to make up for perceived imbalances in conventional strength cannot by any means serve as a serious basis for a credible

programme of nuclear disarmament. Those concepts, therefore, should not be allowed to obstruct agreement being reached as a first step towards the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We all have an obligation to ensure that Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain the only reminders of the horrors of nuclear war.

In fact, certain principles of international law which have been generally recognized and applied by all nations would make any use of nuclear weapons illegal. For example, let us take the principle that the use of weapons against an adversary should not jeopardize the security of third States which are not parties to the conflict. The international community has long since recognized that the use of nuclear weapons would affect belligerents and non-belligerents alike. In fact, a nuclear war, no matter where it were to begin, would have global consequences, through nuclear fallout and the irreversible damage done to the environment. Under what canon of international law, therefore, is it permissible for any nation to pursue its narrow security concerns in a manner which jeopardizes the interests of third parties which are not involved in the conflict?

Similarly, any use of nuclear weapons would obviously not distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, or between civilian and military targets. Yet the same nuclear-weapon States and their allies which profess to accept these principles of the laws of war close their eyes and adamantly refuse to admit that those principles would be violated by the use of nuclear weapons.

Both rationality and morality argue strongly for the conclusion of an agreement on the total prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We have, in this context, studied with interest the Soviet proposal on the prevention of nuclear catastrophe. At this stage, I should like to reiterate our consistent and principled position that we stand for a complete prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons by all States, and not merely a prohibition of the first use of such weapons. We look upon the prohibition of use as an integral step in the process of the eventual complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The link with nuclear disarmament is central to our proposal.

During the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, resolution 35/152 D, entitled "Non-use of nuclear weapons and prevention of nuclear war", which had been sponsored by as many as 24 countries, was adopted by an overwhelming majority of votes. An important feature of the voting pattern last year was the positive

vote cast by one nuclear-weapon State. We earnestly trust that more and more nuclear-weapon States and their allies will follow this example and join the mainstream of opinion in the international community, which stands firmly opposed to the use of nuclear weapons.

Another major step towards nuclear disarmament which could be taken and which is long overdue is the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons in all environments by all States for all time to come. While this would not in itself result in the reduction of existing nuclear weapon stockpiles, such a treaty would constitute an important step in the cessation of the nuclear arms race, particularly in its qualitative aspects. India, along with other non-aligned and neutral countries represented in the Committee on Disarmament, has been pressing for the setting up of an ad hoc working group of the Committee to undertake multilateral negotiations on a treaty text that would be universal and non-discriminatory in character. Unfortunately, two nuclear-weapon States have prevented the Committee from discharging its legitimate negotiating function with regard to this item of the highest priority on its agenda, preferring to continue to deal with it in the more restricted and rarefied atmosphere of trilateral negotiations among the United States, the USSR and the United Kingdom, and this despite the restricted negotiations so far not having produced an acceptable treaty text. The last report submitted to the Committee on these negotiations at the end of 1980 revealed that in certain major aspects the treaty under negotiation would not be able to attract universal adherence. For example, with respect to verification, the trilateral negotiators envisaged one set of provisions that would be applicable only among themselves, while another set of provisions would apply to other States parties.

The question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban is not a matter of concern merely to a handful of nuclear-weapon States. It is a matter of universal concern since it involves the security of all States. It is only proper, therefore, that its negotiation should be entrusted to the sole multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament, the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. It is our hope that, during the next session of the Committee, a consensus will emerge on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on a nuclear test ban. We continue to hold that, pending the conclusion of such a treaty, all nuclear-weapon States should agree forthwith to an immediate halt in their testing of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

It is also our firm conviction that concrete measures of nuclear disarmament ought to be the subject of multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament. As we have pointed out time and again, the very existence of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of a handful of States directly and fundamentally jeopardizes the vital security interests of the vast majority of States. All countries, therefore, have a vital interest in negotiations for the complete elimination of these weapons. Nuclear disarmament is too important an issue to be left to the nuclear-weapon States alone. This is not to argue against nuclear-weapon States pursuing separate negotiations amongst themselves for the control or reduction of their nuclear arsenals. But we are firmly convinced that non-nuclear-weapon States must have the opportunity to reflect their own vital security concerns in any negotiations concerning nuclear weapons.

The Indian delegation to the Committee on Disarmament had, as early as April 1980, put forward a proposal for the setting up of an ad hoc working group of the Committee to undertake negotiations on certain concrete measures of nuclear disarmament. Subsequently, the Group of 21, consisting of non-aligned and neutral countries, had identified certain concrete and substantive issues on which negotiations could be initiated immediately within an ad hoc working group. Here, again, it was the negative attitude of some nuclear-weapon States and their allies which prevented the Committee from discharging its negotiating function with regard to one of the most pressing items on its agenda.

At first, those who opposed our proposal maintained that no specific or concrete measures had been identified by the Group of 21 on which multilateral negotiations could take place. However, when the Group put forward specific measures of nuclear disarmament for inclusion in a comprehensive programme of disarmament, such as an agreement to prohibit the production, development and deployment of new and modernized nuclear weapons and their delivery systems to replace existing versions, we were told that we were being too specific and that concrete measures could be determined only in the course of negotiations amongst the nuclear-weapon States themselves. It is this kind of ambivalent attitude which has prevented the Committee on Disarmament from seriously tackling the problems of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

The tempo of activity in the Committee on Disarmament has shown a dramatic increase over the last two years, but it is unfortunate that very little has been achieved by way of practical results. This is because the rule of consensus has been used by some States to block agreement on purely procedural questions - which was never the intention of those who framed the rules of procedure of the Committee. The rule of consensus was intended to ensure that decisions on substantive questions once taken would have a binding effect on all participants. We hope that during the Committee's forthcoming 1982 session better counsels will prevail and the rule of consensus will not be used to obstruct the setting up of additional ad hoc working groups on any item on the Committee's agenda, so as to enable it to undertake multilateral negotiations in accordance with the mandate given to it by the international community.

The delegation of the Soviet Union has correctly drawn attention to the dangers of an arms race in outer space. The outer space Treaty currently in force bans only weapons of mass destruction from being placed in orbit. However, our aim should be to ensure that outer space remains the common heritage of mankind and is used for peaceful activities. We are of the view that our further efforts in this direction should not only prohibit the stationing of all kinds of weapons in outer space but also prohibit the testing of all weapons in outer space; otherwise a major loophole for the future militarization of outer space would remain uncovered.

It is relevant to note here that in its proposed measures of disarmament to be included in the first stage of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the Group of 21 has specifically recommended the negotiation of an anti-satellite weapons treaty.

While India supports efforts to ensure that outer space does not become a new arena for military competition, it reserves the right to engage in space research for peaceful purposes without any restrictions or limitations. Demilitarization of outer space should not in any way become a pretext for perpetuating an exclusive space club or preventing developing nations from deriving the full benefits of space research.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

I should now like to turn to another important disarmament measure which has been the subject of multilateral as well as more restricted negotiations for several years now - the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the complete destruction of their stockpiles. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons of the Committee on Disarmament has made substantial progress in its negotiations, but certain fundamental issues still remain unsolved. An acceptable definition of chemical weapons has yet to be agreed upon, and differences continue over whether the prohibition once more should cover the use of chemical weapons as well. The question of verification has also, unfortunately, become intertwined with broader political controversies. Despite these difficulties, a chemical weapons ban is nearer realization than perhaps any other disarmament agreement before the Committee on Disarmament. What is required at this time is the display of the necessary political will and a spirit of mutual accommodation. This is particularly the case with issues relating to verification and control.

My delegation is convinced that every disarmament agreement must incorporate adequate measures to verify compliance. Disarmament and control go hand in hand and must be negotiated together. However, concrete provisions of verification must be commensurate with the scope of application of a particular treaty, and not go too far beyond its horizons. In the case of a ban on chemical weapons, strict measures of verification are both necessary and possible for the destruction of existing stockpiles and the dismantling of facilities for producing chemical weapons and their means of delivery. The purpose of the ban is not to regulate the production of lethal and even super-toxic chemicals, many of which have perfectly legitimate peaceful uses, but rather to prevent their diversion for chemical weapons production. Given the complexity of the chemical industry, which is still growing in size and variety, measures of verification would necessarily be imperfect; otherwise, there would be undue and indeed expensive intrusion into a productive industry. The problem cannot be solved through esoteric technical discussions of remote sensing techniques to locate the presence of lethal or toxic chemicals. The presence or absence of such chemicals is no conclusive evidence of the production of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

Instead of getting sidetracked, therefore, into issues which are not strictly relevant, we must balance the political risks involved in negotiating a chemical weapons ban with measures of verification that may not be perfect and the alternative that we face, namely, the prospect of a dangerous and unbridled chemical weapons race. My delegation believes that our collective security would be better served by the immediate conclusion of a chemical weapons ban with the means of verification that are currently available to us.

I venture to think that, despite the problems before us, the general tenor of the debate in this Committee so far has not been discouraging. We have no differences of view on the importance of halting and reversing the nuclear arms race and bringing about the urgent elimination of such weapons. More and more nations acknowledge that the continuing arms race and the eradication of poverty throughout the world are incompatible. And there is general consensus that the only way to tackle problems of security and disarmament is through serious and painstaking negotiations.

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

The statements made by delegations belonging to non-aligned and neutral countries, socialist countries and Western countries have all expressed consistent views on these major themes. We were especially encouraged to note that, in his statement made on behalf of the 10 member nations of the European Community, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom underlined the importance of making progress in arms control and disarmament as a means of preserving and if possible enhancing international peace and security. We also noted with appreciation his emphasis on the need to control expenditure on armaments in order to release resources for alleviating the social and economic problems faced by all countries, particularly the poorest ones. The European Community's forthright attitude on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is also to be welcomed.

We also welcomed the statement of the Soviet representative, Ambassador Petrovsky, who assured this Committee on 23 October that "there is no type of weapon, especially weapons of mass destruction, which the Soviet Union would not be ready to limit, to ban, on a reciprocal basis, in agreement with other States, and subsequently to eliminate from military arsenals". (A/C.1/36/PV.9, p. 44-45)

In the days ahead my delegation will work alongside like-minded delegations towards building upon this broad consensus which exists amongst us so as to set the stage for a successful and meaningful second special session on disarmament to be held next year. Let us take initiatives and support proposals that would serve to unite us in our common endeavour. Let us avoid the temptation to push through resolutions which would only exacerbate mutual suspicions and distrust without in any way serving the noble cause of disarmament.

Let us remind ourselves of the famous prayer of Stephen Vincent Benet, which was read out by President Roosevelt when he put forward the proposal for the United Nations on 14 June 1942:

"Our earth is but a small star in the great universe. Yet of it we can make, if we choose, a planet unvexed by war, untroubled by hunger and fear, undivided by senseless distinctions of race, colour or theory."

It is my delegation's earnest hope that the spirit of this prayer will continue to infuse the work in this Committee.

Mr. HAYDAR (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): Sir, it is a pleasure for me, as I speak here for the first time, to extend congratulations to our Committee on having elected you Chairman. Your well-known experience and qualities make us fully confident that you will be able to guide the deliberations of this Committee with great objectivity and success. It is also a pleasure for me to congratulate Mr. Yango, representative of the Philippines, and Mr. Carias, representative of Honduras, who were elected Vice-Chairmen, as well as Mr. Makonnen, representative of Ethiopia, who was elected Rapporteur of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it is unnecessary for me to mention the close co-operation and friendship that bind our two countries and peoples. Suffice it to say that both the leaders and people of your country, Yugoslavia, have been and still are genuine friends of the Arab nation. I should like to reaffirm to you that the Arab people, which have good memories, will never forget their friends which stood and still stand by them in their times of crisis.

There is no doubt that the tasks entrusted to this Committee are basic and fundamental, and therefore the accomplishment of those tasks, or at least of some of them, is considered a basic requirement, to the fulfilment of which mankind looks forward in its efforts to maintain international peace and security. But it is indeed unfortunate that this Committee finds itself obliged year after year to try to answer the same questions and provide solutions to the same problems as have been pending for many years. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that those problems appear today to be more complex and more interrelated than ever. Of course, our Committee, or rather the majority of its members, is not solely responsible for this deterioration in the face of the genuine efforts being exerted to safeguard international peace and security.

The studies, reports and research available to this Committee make it unnecessary for us to go into details that are known to everybody, consequently we can devote more time to efforts to provide solutions and specific answers to the problems before us.

(Mr. Haydar, Syrian Arab Republic)

I believe that we are all striving for and looking forward to a world that is permeated by peace, justice and security. How can we achieve that goal and what has so far been achieved on the way to attaining that sublime objective? A cursory and rapid glance at the world in which we live today and at the developments that have taken place on the international scene since last year are sufficient to reinforce our feelings of pessimism and disappointment. There is no doubt that that pessimism is fully justified. Over the past year the world has witnessed new and extremely dangerous developments. It has also seen the further complication and intensification of crises which have existed for some time.

In Europe, as we hear every day, there is an increase in the campaigns of protest against and popular opposition to the efforts to deploy medium-range nuclear missiles there, a development that would make the European continent a possible arena for a destructive nuclear conflict, the consequences of which would not be confined to Europe alone. There is no doubt that such a conflict would be destructive not only to Europe but also to other continents.

The theory concerning a limited nuclear war is nothing but an attempt to justify the escalation of nuclear armaments, because it is inconceivable that one of the parties to a nuclear conflict would accept defeat in a limited area or region while it still possessed enormous quantities of destructive weapons sufficient to end all human existence. Moreover, to speak of the need to acquire a so-called nuclear deterrent capability, of a balance of terror, of a preventive war, or to use any similar pretexts, which are totally illogical, is nothing but an attempt to avoid entering into serious talks leading to comprehensive nuclear disarmament. The aim of all this is to achieve superiority, since neither party is going to allow the other to gain military superiority, regardless of the sacrifices that such competition entails.

(Mr. Haydar, Syrian Arab
Republic)

On the other hand, there is an ever widening gap between the rich industrially developed countries and the poor developing countries, in spite of all the efforts that have been made and are still being made in that regard the latest of these efforts was the Cancún summit conference. The rich world is becoming ever richer, and the developing world is becoming poorer, and there is no doubt that this steady deterioration of the economic situation in the developing world and the absence of a new international economic order will have an impact on our attempts to bring about a world in which security and justice prevail. That is so because, we believe, it is impossible to separate stability and justice, nor can we separate security and food. On the basis of this, my delegation is of the opinion that the rich developed countries, which are still behaving with the mentality of looking for spheres of influence and trying to find markets, ensure their monopolies and exploit the natural resources and raw materials of the under-developed countries, must assume the responsibility for the deteriorating economic situation in the developing world.

The talk about the interrelationship between development and security and between stability and justice and the impact of all this on the international situation in general, as well as the enormous dangers to the world of a possible nuclear conflict on the European continent, lead us to think of another possible arena of international conflict. Here I am referring to the Middle East, for in the Middle East the situation is still very explosive and it is becoming more complicated and more dangerous every day indeed, that unfortunate region could actually become one of the most explosive hotbeds of tension in the world.

The situation is rendered even more dangerous by two decisions adopted by the United States Administration in a new phase of the conflict going on in that region. I am referring to the decision concerning the rapid deployment force, on the one hand, and that concerning strategic co-operation with Israel, on the other. Those two decisions, which complement each other, constitute, in our view, a dangerous qualitative change which is likely to create a very explosive situation

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Republic)

threatening peace and security not only in the Middle East but in the world as a whole. An accurate analysis of those two decisions must lead us to the following conclusions.

First, it has now become amply clear that the Camp David agreements and the consequent concluding of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty did not lead to real peace between the Arabs and Israel. Because of that failure, the United States Administration, prompted by Israel, has started to look for new means of containing the conflict in the region and regaining the initiative with a view to ensuring the strategic interests of the United States and Israel in the Middle East. To achieve that end, there have been several successive United States projects one after another: first, the project for a strategic consensus in the region; secondly, the rapid deployment force; and, thirdly, American-Israeli strategic co-operation. All this, of course, has been undertaken under the guise of protecting the Arabs from the so-called Soviet danger and under the guise of the so-called maintenance of security and stability in the region. It is well known, of course, that the United States heard from its Secretary of State, during his shuttle tour of the Middle East that the Arabs are aware of one danger, a danger to their territories and their peoples, and the source of that danger is Israel alone. Consequently it is that danger alone that is threatening peace and security in the Middle East. In spite of all this, the United States Administration forged ahead with the implementation of the Israeli strategy for the Middle East when it announced that it had supplemented its decision concerning preparation of the rapid deployment force with another decision by virtue of which it would enter into strategic co-operation with Israel.

Secondly, those two decisions, by their very nature, are hostile to the Arabs and consequently they place the United States in the camp of those hostile to the Arabs, something which would put an end to any possibility for the United States to play any positive role in the process of achieving a just peace in the Middle East.

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Thirdly, those two decisions place at the disposal of aggressive and expansionist Israel the potentiality to become a big Power, and there is no doubt that this is going to be a great temptation, prompting Israel to further acts of aggression and expansion, particularly as the United States, by virtue of its decision on strategic co-operation, has become what is tantamount to a strategic, military, economic and political backer of Israel.

Fourthly, those two decisions make Israel a United States base, full of conventional and non-conventional weapons, particularly as the co-operation agreement is going to lead to the creation of American military industry in Israel and the stockpiling of conventional and non-conventional weapons, including the neutron bomb. It is also going to lead to full co-operation in the fields of security, politics and war. Consequently the United States, a big Power, is going to become a mere partner in the American-Israeli strategy designed to safeguard the Israel strategic interests in the Middle East. That is so because there is no such thing as a United States political strategy in the Middle East; actually there is an Israeli strategy which is being implemented by the United States Administration.

After this analysis of the consequences of the implementation of those two decisions adopted by the United States, I would be well-advised to reiterate the following points.

First, this United States orientation constitutes in our view, an extremely dangerous specific strategic change in the conflict and the process of seeking peace in the Middle East. That is so because that trend is going to upset all possible balance and parities. It is also likely to create strategic instability in the region, thus leading to the disappearance of any possibility of achieving a just peace, and it is going to make that hotbed of tension a source of danger to international peace and security.

Secondly, Syria, which finds itself confronted with this grave strategic imbalance in our region, will spare no effort or sacrifice and will do everything possible, making use of all the potentials which are available or could be made available on the national Arab and international levels, in co-operation with brothers and friends, for the sake of restoring the strategic balance in the Middle East.

(Mr. Haydar, Syrian Arab Republic)

We are prompted in this by our view that the restoration of the strategic balance is a prerequisite for the achievement of any peace. In this connexion we hold the United States fully responsible for any repercussions or complications emanating from its complete alliance with Israel, whether these repercussions or complications are at the level of the Middle East region or the world at large.

My delegation would like to deal briefly with other basic items on the agenda of the Committee. Foremost among them is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in a number of the world's regions, particularly the Middle East and Africa. We are looking forward in particular to the liberation of the peoples of Africa and the Middle East from the spectre of the nuclear threat, since the peoples of these two regions are facing a common threat from the Pretoria and Tel Aviv régimes.

Needless to say, the similarity between those two régimes and the fact that both have acquired a nuclear capability, in addition to their open co-operation in the nuclear field, constitute a direct threat to peace and security not only in the two above-mentioned regions but also in the world as a whole

Therefore, my delegation supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and looks forward to the day when nuclear weapons will disappear from our planet. On this basis, we supported at the last session, and we shall support at the current session, the draft resolutions on these items, and we hope that some of them will be implemented in practice.

We for our part are ready to implement the provisions of the resolution relating to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East if Israel is committed to implement this decision. On the other hand, we do not have any hope that an entity which has always violated international law will commit itself to any resolution adopted by the international Organization, particularly if this resolution is in opposition to its strategy aimed at achieving expansion and hegemony in the Middle East.

(Mr. Haydar, Syrian Arab Republic)

The barbaric raid carried out by Israeli military aircraft on the Iraqi nuclear installations last June certainly comes within the framework of the policy of aggression, expansion and hegemony which constitutes the basis of Israeli strategy in the Middle East. There is no doubt that the policy of force which it considers to be the backbone of its policy is the policy which has prompted Israel to acquire a nuclear capability. We have no doubt also that the most foolish decision taken by Israel throughout its short history was the decision to acquire nuclear armaments, because we do not believe that there is anybody who would expect the Arab nation to act like an ostrich which hides its head in the sand to avoid the hunter. Nor do I believe that anybody would expect the Arab countries to be like sitting ducks waiting for Israel to deal the fatal blow.

Force has its inherent folly, and folly can go so far as to drive a certain Power to unleash its force without any calculation, thereby turning it into a self-destructive force. History abounds with examples and evidence of this.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.