

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**
THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION
*Official Records**



FIRST COMMITTEE
53rd meeting
held on
Friday, 4 December 1981
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 53RD MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GOLOB (Yugoslavia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 42: CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 55: GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT (continued):

(j) STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS

CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/36/PV.53
15 January 1982

ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 42 (continued)

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS (A/C.1/36/5, 10, 16; A/C.1/36/L.54 and L. 62; A/36/27, 81, 104, 121, 157, 173, 207, 229, 232, 254, 312, 509, 549, 566, 584 and 664)

Mr. KOSTOV (Bulgaria): The Bulgarian delegation has asked to be allowed to speak to state some considerations with regard to the report of the Group of Experts to Investigate Reports on the Alleged Use of Chemical Weapons in document A/36/613 and the draft resolution which has been submitted on this question in document A/C.1/36/L.54.

First of all, I should like to express our regrets at seeing the First Committee seized of a matter which is from start to finish a concoction of fabrications and a deviation from the Committee's generally constructive work and which, in our view, is not conducive to creating a favourable climate for achieving progress in the field of disarmament.

As a matter of fact, the topic under consideration is not new. We all recall the discussion in this Committee during the last session of the General Assembly when this question was presented for the first time, as well as the inconclusive end of that discussion. We are of the opinion that last year's deliberations left little doubt about the provocative nature of the whole idea. My delegation, like many others, set forth its position that the proposal to investigate reports on the alleged use of chemical weapons was aimed solidly at employing the name of the United Nations for purposes of a slanderous propaganda campaign. We are still convinced that, under the guise of sincerity, objectivity and impartiality, the sponsors of the aforementioned idea harbour impure political goals which are at variance with those of disarmament and efforts to strengthen understanding and co-operation among States. The preliminary study of the report under consideration has confirmed and reinforced our conviction.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

The basic conclusion of the Group of Experts is laid down in paragraph 96 of the report -- namely, that:

"... the Group was unable to detect signs and symptoms which would be suggestive of exposure to chemical warfare agents. " (A/36/613, para. 96)

Paragraph 95 of the report informs us that:

"The medical personnel interviewed in the refugee camps stated that they had not come across cases which could be attributed to chemical warfare agents." (Ibid., para. 95)

One would expect medical personnel, due to the nature of their work, to be the first to come across the results of eventual use of chemical warfare agents.

As far as the physical samples supposedly related to the alleged use of chemical weapons are concerned, and which, as may be recalled, were used to raise a sensationalist clamour, the report rightfully points out that:

"Since the Group cannot ascertain the actual source of these samples it cannot base its final conclusions on the results of such analyses." (Ibid., para. 97)

Significant in many respects is the reaction of academic circles to the substance of the submitted evidence. Suffice it to refer to the opinion, already referred to, of Mr. Matthew Meselson, a Harvard University biologist, who, according to The New York Times, is a leading academic expert on chemical weapons:

"In such an important situation, one looks to our Government for a very high standard of evidence. But, in some respects, official Government statements have contained demonstrable and serious scientific errors which damage our credibility and raise doubts about our case".

It seems, however, that the chief objective of this propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet-Nam is to create an uproar, to sow doubts and to make accusations in order to achieve certain goals. As far as truth is concerned, the engineers of this campaign obviously hope that it can be concealed through a series of investigations, or, if that proves impossible, at least to cast serious and lasting doubts

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

about it. This has been attested to by the fact that, in conformity with the pre-planned scenario, first the charge of alleged use of chemical weapons was made, with the promise of providing later corroborating evidence, and then measures were taken for producing the necessary facts.

The immediate goal of this scenario, no doubt, is to furnish more favourable conditions for the on-going large-scale modernization of the United States chemical warfare arsenal and the production of new classes of chemical and biological weapons, and also of bacteriological weapons.

As is justifiably pointed out in the document just distributed by the Soviet Union, the United States already has the world's largest chemical weapons arsenal. It should be recalled that only a few days before the emergence of the so-called reports on the alleged use of chemical weapons by the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and by Viet Nam in Laos and Kampuchea, the House Appropriations Commission discussed, at a meeting, the Pentagon plans for waging chemical warfare. It became known from the scarce information available about that meeting that the document submitted for consideration pointed to the necessity of modernizing United States offensive chemical weapons. In accordance with this necessity, again a bill was passed to finance the construction of a large chemical complex for the production of binary gases in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The construction of other large plants is envisaged as a next step. The five-year programme of the Pentagon has earmarked \$4 billion for research into and development of new types of chemical weapons. At the same time, plans for increasing this figure many times over are being discussed.

It is in light of these plans that we should view the suspension by the American side of the bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their elimination, as well as the difficulties in the Committee on Disarmament regarding the conclusion of a relevant convention.

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

It is asserted that the raising of the question of the alleged use of chemical weapons has been motivated by humanitarian reasons only - that is, to protect the peoples of Laos, Kampuchea and Afghanistan from the alleged use of poisonous chemical substances. These assertions sound patently presumptions, since they come from a country which has refused for 50 years to accede to the 1925 Geneva Protocol in order to preserve its freedom of action in this field. Resorting to this freedom of action, the United States used on a mass-scale, during its aggressive war against those same people in South-East Asia, toxin chemical substances and gases for the annihilation of the civilian population and the destruction of the environment. According to data supplied by the United States itself, more than 45 million litres of chemical substances were used in Viet Nam during the war, while the figures provided by the victim, Viet Nam, point to a much larger quantity: 100,000 tons. Obviously, some circles are interested in having these facts forgotten and also in diverting public attention from reports that chemical hand-grenades, made in the United States, are being supplied to the Afghan counter-revolutionary gangs operating from the outside against Afghanistan.

However, the campaign in connexion with the reports on alleged use of chemical weapons, by design, goes beyond the question of chemical weapons. It cannot be considered in isolation or apart from the overall policy of the United States in the field of disarmament. This campaign is a new attempt at reviving the hackneyed myth of the so-called Soviet military threat by imbuing it with fresh "chemical" colouring and by casting doubts generally about the good faith of the Soviet Union and its willingness to negotiate disarmament agreements.

My delegation cannot subscribe to the proposal to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts, since there is not a single fact in the submitted report which confirms the alleged use of chemical weapons. Draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 is not of a purely procedural nature, as some are trying to convince us, because it is intimately related to a direct follow-up of resolution 35/144 C of the thirty-fifth session, which as this debate made clear, was baseless and completely unnecessary. Moreover, any extension of

(Mr. Kostov, Bulgaria)

the mandate of the Group of Experts would be completely at variance with the professed willingness of the United States to participate in talks in the field of disarmament.

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is committed to the continuation of the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva and, together with the other socialist States, will contribute in good faith to the elaboration of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their elimination.

Mr. SOURINHO (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): The only people likely to have their eyes opened by reading the report of the Group of Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/144 C to inquire into the widely-publicized campaign surrounding the alleged utilization of chemical weapons in South-East Asia, particularly in my country and in Kampuchea, are the leaders of the United States and all those who have given it active support, either by echoing the United States in this body and elsewhere or by going along with it in the fabrication of this myth which is poisoning the climate of international relations and which is an out-and-out diplomatic scandal unprecedented in the history of the United Nations. Indeed, never since its creation has our Organization witnessed in its own ranks so absurd a manoeuvre designed deliberately to discredit certain independent and sovereign States that have always displayed a great sense of responsibility in the conduct of their affairs, both domestically and internationally.

(Mr. Kittik Houn, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

It is on this particularly gloomy note, reflecting our feelings of profound indignation, that my delegation would like to begin to state its views on the report of the Group of Experts and on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54, sponsored by a number of countries under agenda item 42 on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and now before the First Committee.

Before doing so, however, I should like to reiterate my country's position with regard to General Assembly resolution 35/144 C. As the First Committee may recall, my delegation, together with a number of others, voted against that resolution last year because we felt it was tendentious and ill-intentioned. Furthermore, we believed that that text would in no way further the cause of arms control and chemical disarmament but that, on the contrary, it would simply increase distrust and make it more difficult to undertake any genuine steps towards chemical disarmament.

However, the United States, which was behind the sponsors of that text, just as today it is behind those who have sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54, succeeded, through shameless lies, in having it put to the vote and adopted. The purpose of that manoeuvre by the United States was to distract the attention of world public opinion from its own considerable efforts in the production and development of its chemical arsenals, and in particular to blot out the monstrous crimes it had committed against the three peoples of Indo-China during its lengthy war of aggression in that part of the world.

During that war, the United States not only rained death and destruction down upon the three peoples of Indo-China - three million tons of bombs on Laos alone, or one ton of bombs per inhabitant - but it also made lavish use of the chemical agents known as Agent Orange, Agent White and Agent Blue. Agents Orange and White were used for the purposes of defoliation, while Agent Blue was used to destroy seedlings under ground. All of those agents contain a high dosage of TCDD dioxin, which induces prolonged dizziness, cancer and birth defects. The devastating consequences of the abusive use of those chemical weapons were described in some detail in a publication of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) entitled "Warfare in a Fragile World," which appeared in 1980.

(Mr. Kittik Houn, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Perhaps it is the memory of that fall of heavy and all-too-real "yellow rain" or "yellow powder" that the United States poured upon Laos with such abundance that still haunts the minds of certain Hmongs, whose evidence, collected by the Group of Experts, totally gives the lie to the allegations of the United States and its henchmen. Moreover, the height of cynicism and immorality has undoubtedly been achieved by the fact that, even though the United States itself recently utilized chemical agents on a vast scale in Laos, Viet Nam and Kampuchea, it is now accusing some of those countries of employing such weapons against their own populations, without any valid proof whatsoever.

However, facts are facts, and lies can never become truths. This is particularly so in the present case. The report of the Group of Experts is particularly enlightening in this connexion. After a close scrutiny of that report, the only reasonable conclusion one can draw from it is that the alleged cases having to do with my country and Kampuchea that were reported to the Group of Experts by the United States and Canada are all made-up scenarios concocted in the sick minds of certain compliant, individuals suffering from imaginary ailments who were picked up here and there in refugee camps in Thailand and whose names, when they were provided to the Group of Experts, could not even be found on record in any refugee camp. Other sinister individuals, who played their roles in the American-Canadian farce without sufficient rehearsal, were brought before the Group of Experts for questioning, the result of which must have been particularly disappointing, not to say dismaying, to the United States and Canada.

There is no need to be an expert in chemical weaponry to realise, after examining the report, that the allegations made by the United States and its cohorts against my country and Kampuchea are nothing other than pure slander, and we would strongly urge international public opinion to condemn them severely. We appeal to the sense of responsibility of members of the First Committee and urge them to put an end, once and for all, to the unedifying exercise in which the United States and Canada persist in attempting to involve the Committee, an exercise that can only lead to an undermining of the prestige of the United Nations.

(Mr. Kittik Houn, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The United Nations, a highly responsible international Organization, must not allow itself to be manipulated by the United States and its henchmen in discrediting certain countries whose political orientation is not to their taste. Under its Charter, the United Nations must remain the best instrument for international co-operation and, therefore, the instrument for promoting understanding among all peoples, without any distinction as to their political and social systems.

Furthermore, the First Committee has much more important and urgent work to do in the field of disarmament than to waste time adopting texts such as resolution 35/144 C, which do not advance the cause of disarmament one iota. In this context, although the mere renewal of the mandate of the Group of Experts seems innocent enough, draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 now before the Committee is designed, in essence, to carry forward the futile intent of resolution 35/144 C. I would go so far as to say that it is designed to bring the First Committee to condone false accusations. As a result, it should be categorically rejected. In so doing, we would be restoring this Committee's credibility and doing a great service to the four eminent experts who are members of the group set up by the the bizarre resolution I have referred to, experts who, when they heed their intellectual and scientific consciences, cannot be looking forward to pursuing their mission, given their recent sterile experience, just to come up, once again, with a negative result.

It is indeed ridiculous that the sponsors of this draft, one that insults the collective intelligence of the members of the First Committee, should be so stubborn in submitting it to the Committee for its adoption. It might be useful to recall for their benefit a saying that goes: "You can fool all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."

Although we recognize that draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 is a sort of face-saving device for those who, bound hand and foot, hurled themselves into the morass of false accusations, we do not believe the adoption of this draft to be either reasonable or advisable. The proper thing would be to put an end once and for all to this guerilla campaign that has already caused great damage to

(Mr. Kittik Houn, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

certain sovereign States, among them my own, whose responsibility and respectability are above question. In other words, the most rational procedure would be to wipe the slate clean of this affair and to work resolutely together, from today onwards, in the true cause of disarmament, within the framework of the procedures already laid down for that purpose, adopting a more civilized approach and one more in accordance with the ethic of peaceful co-existence among States and the code of conduct that rules international relations.

Mr. VO ANH TUAN (Viet Nam) (interpretation from French): For the second consecutive year our Committee is called upon to take a decision on a matter on which depends the very prestige of the United Nations.

Last year, information was concocted to the effect that chemical weapons were being utilized in certain continuing conflicts. On the basis of these allegations, resolution 35/144 C was imposed on the General Assembly. Pursuant to that controversial resolution, a Group of Experts was formed. It met a number of times, it visited refugee camps on the territory of Thailand and it prepared a report which the Secretary-General has now submitted to the Assembly in document A/36/613. The report being of a technical and specific nature, Member States need a certain amount of time to study it before making any judgement on its contents. Without awaiting the reaction of Governments, we have been presented with a draft resolution, submitted in some haste, requesting the General Assembly to "take note with appreciation of the report" and requesting the Secretary-General to continue his investigations without taking any account of the real state of affairs and the opposition of the Governments directly concerned and the impartial opinions voiced by a number of scientists throughout the world.

The Committee will recall that last year, while considering the New Zealand -- or, rather, the American -- draft on this same matter, a number of delegations voiced their opposition to the procedure to be followed with regard to the substance of that draft. Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria stated:

We think, of course, that...the best means of ensuring the **avoidance** of use of (chemical) weapons would be the conclusion of a **convention** or a **treaty** on chemical weapons...an instrument which in itself would contain effective verification procedures...Pending that, the question of ascertaining whether or not chemical substances have been used in warfare can in our view only arise out of a fairly wide **consensus** among the membership of the General Assembly and also among all the parties to the Protocol.

"...we have made it clear that we thought that it would be a futile exercise if we were to adopt a draft resolution which saddles the Secretary-General with responsibility as a result of a proposal adopted through the kind of polemic and divisive debate which we have had over this subject."

(A/C.1/35/PV.47, pp. 66-67)

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

These views were shared by the representative of Madagascar, who stated the following:

"We feel that the question of establishing the facts is too important in international life for us merely to adopt, in a casual way and using polemical arguments, certain machinery or certain positions."

(A/C.1/35/PV.45 p. 31)

The manoeuvres engaged in by the United States in the course of the past year in connexion with resolution 35/144 C have proved that those delegations which were apprehensive or voiced objections concerning that resolution were right.

The delegation of Viet Nam declared clearly last year and wishes to reaffirm today that the sponsors of resolution 35/144 C, like those of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.54 - for they are the same - were not motivated by the horrors of the use of chemical weapons or by the desire to express their preoccupation in the light of the possible risks of damage to the 1925 Geneva Protocol as they hypocritically declared. Because it is none other than the United States and the United States alone which waged a chemical war, the most barbarous in history, against the peoples of the three countries of Indo-China in cynical violation of the Geneva Protocol. Most of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 were involved one way or another in that dirty war of aggression.

In taking the initiative albeit discovered, once more this year, in such a draft resolution, the United States is pursuing obvious political and propaganda ends, namely, to orchestrate a noisy campaign of propaganda and slander against the socialist countries, including Viet Nam, which are guilty in their eyes of having destroyed the myth of invincible American power and to do so in a spirit of revenge for a defeat they have not yet been able to accept.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam^{2m} ~~NXX~~)

Through this diversionary play they seek to evade responsibility for the real and wide-scale chemical war waged in the course of their aggression against the countries of Indo-China, whose immediate and long term consequences are extremely serious for millions of Vietnamese and for the environment of their country and to shirk their legal and moral responsibilities towards hundreds of thousands of American and allied ex-servicemen who themselves fell victim to chemical weapons because they took part in that war.

In raising the myth of the use of chemical weapons in Kampuchea they wish to create the false impression that the Pol Pot régime continues to exist and that it continues to control part of the territory of the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

Lastly, and this is not the least important point, they wish to have another excuse in order to justify the new stage in their unbridled arms race, which includes the large-scale manufacture of neutron weapons, as well as their decision to manufacture and deploy new types of weapons of mass destruction, including binary weapons and their obstructionist policy in the Committee on Disarmament particularly on the drafting of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons.

Apart from Canada, which is actively involved in the present American manoeuvre in connexion with resolution 35/144 C, the United States is virtually the only country showing unaccustomed enthusiasm for the implementation of that resolution. At the beginning of this year, it prepared a 157-page report - they could easily have fabricated a report of 1,570 pages or more - on what they call information according to which chemical weapons were used in Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Laos. Just before the present General Assembly session, the American Secretary of State hastened to make a tendentious statement on this subject which was followed by other declarations by high State Department officials, notes verbales from the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to the Secretary-General, sample analyses, replies to questions from the Group of Experts and so on and so forth.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

What was the reaction of world public opinion in the face of this excessive zeal of the new United States Government with respect to so-called information on the present use of chemical weapons in Indo-China? In my previous statements I have had occasion to show by a series of references that the scientific circles of many countries of the world, including the United States, are extremely sceptical about the validity of the accusations of the United States State Department, thus demonstrating the lack of seriousness in the attitude of the United States authorities on this question.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

Rapid perusal of the report of the Group of Experts suffices to confirm those remarks. What does the report tell us?

First, of more than 150 Members States, only 20 have replied to the note verbale of the Secretary-General concerning the implementation of General Assembly resolution 35/144 C, of which only two, namely the United States and Canada, have provided information, not backed up by proof. The others have dissociated themselves from that resolution and availed themselves of the opportunity to condemn the flagrant and massive use of American chemical and bacteriological weapons against their respective countries.

Secondly, the so-called important information provided by the United States with respect to mycotoxins has proved to be without scientific value, because that country was unable to reply to a number of substantive questions posed by the Group of Experts. The alleged victims mentioned in United States reports are pure fabrications; the Group of Experts was unable to find them in the refugee camps they visited.

Thirdly, after studying the information submitted in writing and the statements of alleged victims and witnesses, the Group of Experts arrived at a number of interesting conclusions. Concerning the reliability of information, they said:

"... it was difficult to determine the objectivity of alleged victims or witnesses." (A/36/613, Annex, para. 85)

From the technical standpoint, it was impossible to accept certain allegations concerning the use of chemical weapons - for instance the claimed dissemination of chemical agents by aircraft flying at over 2,000 metres - just as it was impossible that an aerial dissemination of that type could, as claimed, affect stored water by producing toxic or lethal effects, destroy the leaves of trees, or eat away flesh down to the bone. On that point the report stated:

"Some of the descriptions ... did not conform with the known practices for the dissemination of chemical warfare agents." (Ibid., para. 86)

From the medical point of view:

"... the Group was unable to detect signs and symptoms which would be suggestive of exposure to chemical warfare agents." (Ibid., para. 96)

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

Fourthly, the medical personnel of the three refugee camps visited by the Experts confirmed that they had never come across cases of victims of chemical weapons. Dr. Charles Weldon, Medical Director of the Nong Khai Refugee Holding Centre in Thailand, stated that he had never come across any person who had been the victim of chemical attack. Dr. Gideon Regalado of the Ban Vinai Refugee Centre in Thailand indicated that there were no means of confirming the allegations of those who claimed to be victims of chemical attack. Dr. Sorapipatana Chamras of the Panatnikhom Refugee Processing Centre in Thailand affirmed that he had never treated any case of alleged exposure to chemical warfare agents.

Fifthly, in its reply to the Group of Experts, the World Health Organization stated:

"We have not received any information directly from WHO Member States concerning the use of chemical weapons". (Ibid., p. 37)

The two representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees declared that they had seen absolutely no cases which could be attributed to chemical warfare agents. The International Committee of the Red Cross gave a similar reply.

The Committee will remember that in mid-March 1980 the International Committee of the Red Cross had analysed samples taken on the Kampuchea-Thailand border from patients suspected of being victims of chemical weapons. The results of those analyses enabled the International Committee of the Red Cross to conclude that no chemical weapons were involved (see document A/35/226).

Sixthly, in its conclusions the Group of Experts:

"... found itself unable to determine whether or not chemical warfare agents had been used." (Ibid., para. 93)

and stated that:

"... this report is inconclusive." (Ibid., para. 98)

In the light of the facts and opinions given in my previous statements and in this one - which have, incidentally, been corroborated by statements of many other delegations and by the above-cited comments of the Group of Experts - my delegation draws the following conclusions.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

First, despite manifold slanders, alchemist procedures in the analysis of samples and procedural pressures and manoeuvres during the vote on General Assembly resolution 35/144 C, the United States and its close allies were unable to compel the international community to accept as true what does not in fact exist. The reality is that at present there is no use of chemical weapons in Kampuchea, Laos or Afghanistan. Had such weapons been used, no one could conceal the devastating effects, which last for generations, on human life and on the environment - as in the case of the use of American chemical weapons in Viet Nam. There is no question here of fear or lack of fear, of guilty or innocent, as was stated last year by the representative of Singapore and the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, on two occasions. Rather it is a matter of slanders, of unfounded accusations, of gratuitous assertions, of lies pure and simple, which all self-respecting sovereign Governments must reject and condemn.

Secondly, my delegation regrets that the United Nations should have been dragged into an exercise of slander and propaganda that has not only cost \$700,000 of its budget, to say nothing of an additional \$320,800 if the draft resolution is adopted, but has also gravely affected its prestige. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 wish to repeat this misguided exercise, which is harmful from every point of view. It is high time for Member States to put an end to it by voting against the draft resolution.

Thirdly, last year many delegations pointed out that resolution 35/144 C could have dangerous consequences because the proposal for investigative machinery cast doubts on the effectiveness of the 1925 Geneva Protocol while involving the General Assembly in an illegal revision of the Protocol which was all the more unacceptable since the States parties to the Protocol and the Member States of the United Nations are not the same. Those apprehensions have proved justified, since the representative of New Zealand has admitted the true aims of resolution 35/144 C in that respect. This is what he said in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54:

"... because the 1925 Protocol is not supported by any formal system of control and makes no provision for investigating allegations of use, we" - that is, the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 35/144 C -

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

"proposed that the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a small group of experts, should be requested to undertake the investigation."

(A/C.1/36/PV.44, p.101)

He added that the report of the Group of Experts was

"a landmark in the history of this Organization, a precedent for the further involvement of the United Nations in inquiries of this sort".

(Ibid.)

Some of the other sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 expressed similar views. With their proposal to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 clearly expressed their determination to institutionalize investigative machinery that is tantamount to an illegal revision of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The Committee cannot allow the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 to carry out such a highly damaging manoeuvre.

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

Fourthly, resolution 35/144 C has created a very serious precedent since it enables certain Powers, in particular the United States, to drag the United Nations into inquiries on the basis of unverified data and unproven accusations against Member States concerning the alleged violation of international agreements in the field of arms control and disarmament, and thereby to engage in intervention and interference contrary to the Charter and prejudicial to co-operation among States and to the role and prestige of the United Nations in the eyes of Member States.

There are many ironical situations in the present-day world. However, the irony that has been imposed on our Committee at the previous and current sessions of the General Assembly is unique and beyond comprehension. At a time when, in this very forum, the representatives of a Power guilty of having engaged in the greatest chemical war in the history of mankind and of cynical violations of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 are playing with their close allies the role of champion and protector of human lives against the horrors of chemical weapons, millions of Vietnamese and hundreds of thousands of American veterans, as well as their progeny, are suffering the horrible consequences of United States chemical warfare in Viet Nam.

The monthly magazine Life, which I have in front of me and which no one could suspect of engaging in anti-American propaganda, has just published in its December 1981 issue photographs of eight American veterans and their children, victims of poisonous chemical agents. In order not to take up too much time of the Committee, I shall show members only one of those eight photographs. Here is the picture of Mr. Dan Jordan, who returned from Viet Nam in 1969, suffering from the effects of chemical agents - Bell's palsy, loss of sensation in his head and arms, and rectal bleeding. Both his sons were born with deformed hands and one boy is partially deaf. In this photograph members can see Mr. Jordan and his son embracing, the latter with tears in his eyes. There is a commentary, which states:

(spoke in English)

"Certainly no one in the Veteran's Administration was telling him about thousands of other men with eerily similar complaints - and worse ones like cancer and liver failure."

(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

(continued in French)

Those are the true horrors of the use of chemical weapons. The United States and its close allies should stop playing this dismal comedy of an inquiry which is nothing but a slanderous campaign they have trumped up. Let them stop slandering others and accusing them of doing what they themselves have done and are still doing. Let them withdraw their draft resolution and account for the horrors of the real chemical war waged by the United States in Viet Nam and in other countries of Indo-China.

For all those reasons, my delegation requests categorically that an end be put to the implementation of resolution 35/144 C and that the Group of Experts be dissolved forthwith. My delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54.

Mr. MARTIN (New Zealand): There is not a great deal that I want to say but there are a few points that, it seems to me, need to be made in the light of some of the comments that have been made by delegations that spoke earlier.

First, the investigations into allegations of chemical weapons use that were reported in document A/36/613 was undertaken at the request of the General Assembly, not of the United States. That the United States brought the report to the attention of the United Nations is beyond question. But it was clearly the view of most delegations that the allegations that had been made about possible use of chemical warfare should be investigated. Those are the facts, and to imply that the Assembly is the tool of one country is surely to question the integrity of this Organization.

Secondly, it appears from some of the statements we have heard that some delegations are under the impression that the Group of Experts was appointed in order to reach certain definite conclusions. Others have said that it has not reached the conclusions that the initiators of last year's resolution expected of it and intended it to reach. I find it very difficult to understand that attitude and impossible to accept it. Delegations will recall that when the issue was under consideration last year, the co-sponsors made their approach

(Mr. Martin, New Zealand)

to the investigation clear beyond doubt. It was that whenever serious allegations of the use of chemical weapons were made or it was believed that the Protocol of 1925 had been or could have been flouted the international community had a clear duty to mobilize the moral and political authority of the United Nations to heighten respect for the rules.

(Mr. Martin, New Zealand)

Accordingly, because there had been reports of the alleged use of chemical weapons, we, the sponsors, believed that the international community had an obligation to try to ascertain the facts. Moreover, it seemed to us important that any investigation to be carried out should be structured to ensure impartiality, not a particular result. That was why we proposed that the Secretary-General should be requested to carry out an impartial investigation with the assistance of up to five qualified medical and technical experts, drawn preferably from neutral or non-aligned countries. That is what was done, and that is the assurance that we all have that the investigation was not designed to serve any one delegation or the interests of a group of delegations and that the results of the investigation would be thoroughly impartial.

I might add that the approach that the sponsors suggested last year was one that was shared by an expert who has been quoted by a number of delegations today: Dr. Meselson. In speaking at hearings before two Sub-Committees of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the United States Congress last year, Dr. Meselson referred to the desirability of establishing international procedures for dealing with allegations of the sort that had been made in the past few years. He said that various international organizations could be considered for this purpose, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations General Assembly or some other United Nations body. Alternatively, he suggested, procedures could be established under the auspices of the parties to an appropriate international agreement. Such procedures, he said, could include the formation of an international group qualified to seek and evaluate relevant statements from individuals and from governments. It should, Dr. Meselson went on, include persons with pertinent scientific knowledge and provisions for appropriate medical examination of individuals claiming to be victims. The very existence of such a body or provisions could have, Dr. Meselson suggested, a deterrent effect on potential violators. It could also discourage the making of ill-founded or malicious allegations. Such an approach, Dr. Meselson concluded, should be given serious consideration for possible use in the present situation -

(Mr. Martin, New Zealand)

that is, if I may interpolate, the situation with which the Assembly was in fact faced at the thirty-fifth session - and for future contingencies.

Thirdly, it has been suggested that the Group has completed its work and that no extension of its mandate is, therefore, necessary. However, that is at variance with the report of the Group of Experts itself. In several places in the report, the experts make it clear that there are aspects of their work that remain to be concluded. They have clearly indicated the areas in which further work is needed to fulfil the mandate given them in resolution 35/144 C. Those areas are identified in the report, especially in paragraphs 77, 82, 97 and 98, all of which have been quoted from today.

Fourthly, it has been suggested that the sponsors want to divert attention from the urgent need for the concluding of an agreement to prohibit chemical weapon manufacture and stockpiling. I am not sure how those who have made that suggestion think that the current investigation of allegations of use could possibly serve that purpose; but nothing could be further from the intentions of the sponsors, all of whom are totally committed to the earliest possible conclusion of just such a convention.

I do not want to become involved in a discussion of the substance of the report. A good many delegations have referred to the fact that the Group was unable to reach any firm conclusions. Some have referred to shortcomings and uncertainties in the evidence, and others have suggested that if there had been any evidence it would have been obvious and could not have been overlooked. The Group of Experts, of course, has commented on this matter in its report. It noted in paragraph 98:

"Any investigation designed to lead to definitive conclusions regarding the alleged use of chemical weapons and to an assessment of the extent of the damage caused by such chemical weapons would require timely access to the areas of alleged use of chemical warfare agents in order to establish the true facts. Such an exercise has so far not been possible." (A/36/613, annex, para. 98)

(Mr. Martin, New Zealand)

That comment is entirely consistent with the report recently circulated to missions by the Permanent Mission of Finland. That report, which is entitled "Trace analysis of chemical warfare agents", notes:

"Where on-site inspection to investigate allegations of use of chemical weapons is not permitted, possibilities for verification are presently very small."

It further states:

"If on-site inspection with sample collection is allowed immediately after the alleged chemical attack or other dissemination of an agent, correct sample collection and immediate trace analysis will usually be sufficient unambiguously to settle the claim."

Regrettably, that has so far not been possible for the Group of Experts to do. However, it is not my intention to express any views on the subject of whether or not there have been chemical-weapon attacks or what the balance of the comments contained in the report might suggest. Responsibility for making judgements in this regard has been assigned by the Assembly to the Group of Experts. That is the task that, in the draft resolution (A/C.1/36/L.54) before us, we are now asking the Group to complete to the best of its ability. The Group of Experts has undertaken its task so far conscientiously and with integrity. We have no doubt that it will finish the job in the same spirit.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): The question of chemical weapons is one of the outstanding issues which has yet to find a proper solution. To the great disappointment of the international community, all efforts, bilateral or multilateral, towards concluding an international convention on this subject have failed to produce any tangible results. The reasons for such a failure are to be found in the intransigent stand of the United States Government.

The United States is the only one among the major Powers that, for half a century, had stubbornly refused to ratify the Geneva Protocol of 1925. This delay is not without its effects: during the dirty imperialist war against heroic Viet Nam, more than 36 million tons of chemical agents were dropped on the territory of Viet Nam, covering approximately 44 per cent of its entire forest area and murdering several thousands of innocent Vietnamese civilians.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

It was only after shameful defeat in Viet Nam that the United States ratified the Protocol in 1975 and yet with numerous reservations, for example, reserving the right to use chemical weapons in "rescue operations" or in "protection of motorized columns in the rear". It also reserved for itself the right to use chemical weapons as a retaliatory measure. Maybe in this context the United States would like to try to explain the appearance in Afghanistan of United States-made chemical weapons, and the use of bacteriological weapons against Cuba.

Let us examine how United States accusations of the use of chemical weapons stand in the face of facts: for years now the United States Government has been trying to amass evidence of germ warfare allegedly used by the Soviet Union and Viet Nam.

Linda Garmon of Science News said on 17 October 1981 that it was only after more than a year of Washington's propaganda charges that the administration could not resist the pressure to provide some sort of proof.

A few weeks ago, the United States announced that it had finally procured firm physical evidence. And what is this "substantial", "compelling" and "overwhelming" evidence? A single leaf, supposedly taken from the Thai-Kampuchean border and supposedly containing a high level of nevalenol-deoxynevalenol and T-2 toxin.

The Washington Post in one of its issues last week admitted that whatever the results of the tests, they will not prove anything since it cannot be proven where the samples came from. According to Dr. James R. Banburg, a Colorado State University researcher who did his Ph.D. dissertation on fungus poisons and named the T-2 fungus toxin:

"the 'sample' leaf and stem contaminated with T-2 from Kampuchea could have been dusted anywhere between harvest and the laboratory."

As far as the allegations concerning Afghanistan are concerned, the story broke at about the same time that it was revealed that the Carter State Department was disseminating rumours as official policy of the

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Government. This was revealed in an article in the New York Times of 26 January 1980 entitled "U.S. Accuracy Rules Relaxed Over Kabul."

The Daily News of 5 April 1980 reported that:

"Government specialists were skeptical of reports that the Russians had used lethal nerve gas against the Afghans."

The magazine Science of 30 May 1980 quoted a spokesperson of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as saying:

"There is no firm evidence that /Soviet troops/ used lethal gas."

According to Dr. Matthew Meselson of Harvard University, highly-publicized stories about a "yellow rain" of toxic substances allegedly used against counter-revolutionary armed groups in Afghanistan and Laos are deeply suspicious and unconvincing.

For a decade, Dr. Meselson was chief adviser to the Pentagon on scientific aspects of chemical and biological warfare, as well as adviser on chemical and biological warfare for the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Complaining about the heavy reliance of United States allegations on mere reports, Dr. Meselson states, in the magazine Science News of 17 October 1981:

"It would be quite improper for the State Department of a great Power to hinge for its support on non-scientific journalists... This is not a joke", he continues, "this is not something that should be approached in a sophomoric manner." He concludes, "Maybe it brewed around and somebody cooked up a scheme."

The correspondent in Pakistan of the leading Swiss newspaper Basler Zeitung reported in early October that:

"there is simply no evidence or even a pretext for charging the Soviet Union with the use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan."

He quoted I.M. Monod, Director of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Pakistan as saying the United States charges were "mere prattling."

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

Dr. Edgar Frei, of the International Committee of the Red Cross, a surgeon from Zurich, who works in Red Cross hospitals in Pakistan, said that there has been not one single case of chemical poisoning among Afghan "rebels" based in Pakistan. ICRC Director, Dr. Monod, strongly confirmed this statement. The Basler Zeitung correspondent added that he had talked to Pakistani Government officials, ringleaders of the Afghan counter-revolutionaries, and the medical staff and administrations of all hospitals in the North-West Frontier Province, and none could produce any evidence of "Soviet chemical weapons" used in Afghanistan. This appeared in the Daily World of 2 October 1981.

Reuter correspondents in Pakistan and all other Western newsmen have been repeating the stories about the alleged use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan. However, according to the Korea Herald of 20 June 1981, they all admit that "none of their sources could offer concrete evidence."

Lee Ulian, an American journalist, stated in Workers World on 8 September 1981 that:

"There is no evidence whatever for CIA 'rumours' and Pentagon 'suspicions' that the Soviet Union is deploying any offensive chemical weapons.

"The Soviet nerve gas story was raised not merely to whip up anti-communism, however, it also served to run through Congress an appropriation to manufacture binary nerve gas weapons at the Pine Bluffs Arsenal in Arkansas, a project that will cost \$10 billion over the next five years".

He continued that:

"United States charges against the Soviet Union are also a smoke-screen to hide the sordid history of chemical and biological warfare by the U.S. Government."

The present figures about the chemical weapons stockpiles of the United States army are shocking. Its arsenal contains almost 400,000 tons of lethal poisonous substances of sarin, nerve gas, and yperite: that is, almost three

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

million artillery shells, several thousand aerial bombs, hundreds of thousands of mines and 1,500 aerial sprayers, each with the capacity of 160 gallons of VX agent.

The poisonous paralyzing nerve agents stored in the army depot of Utah alone, would be enough to annihilate mankind several thousand times over. This can be easily understood in the light of the fact that only one litre of sarin would be enough to destroy one million people. The United States has stocked hundreds of "Wet-Eye" bombs, each containing 156 litres of sarin, that is to say, each single bomb has the capacity to kill 156 million human beings.

And yet all that seems to be insufficient for the Pentagon. Extra funds are being appropriated and new research projects are being launched, to perfect the death capacity of United State chemical weapons and to modernize and increase their present stockpiles. For research in this field alone, the Pentagon has allocated \$2.5 billion. More than 1,400 high calibre specialists are involved in carrying out experiments in the United States Army laboratory in Maryland. More than 5,000 synthesized toxic substances are tested annually and the most lethal forms of those substances are selected.

Work has been speeded up on the building of new installations for the production of the binary chemical weapons. According to Reuter, one Pentagon official said that.

"binary weapons contain only a non-lethal agent until they are ready for firing. A second chemical -- also non-toxic -- is then inserted and the two mix in flight to form deadly sprays or gases."

Apart from the serious problem that arises from the production of binary weapons in connexion with the international agreements on prohibition of chemical weapons, that would make it extremely difficult to devise control measures, the combined substances of binary weapons are more lethal, hence only one milligram of this agent is enough to kill a person. The United States is now completing the work of supplying its main artillery

(Mr. Zarf, Afghanistan)

systems, aerial chemical bombs, Lance missiles, cruise missiles and others with howitzer shells fitted with binary weapons.

To overcome legislative difficulties in the Congress, to prepare United States allies for the prospect of the possible deployment of such weapons in Europe, and to circumvent United States public opinion, the United States Government has had to resort to the myth of a "Soviet chemical threat" and charges of use of chemical weapons by the Soviet Union in some parts of the world.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

On the other hand, the facts about the use of United-States-made chemical weapons by bandits and mercenaries against the Afghan people are overwhelming.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has in its possession irrefutable and material evidence that prove beyond any doubt the source of chemical weapons used in Afghanistan. The weapons captured from uprooted mercenaries included, inter alia, United States-made ammunition marked "112" with the inscription: "Caution. Poison. Do not touch. Gives off poisonous gases"; chemical grenades marked "46.036", with the inscription "Made in U.S.A."; chemical anti-tank, United States-made grenades, with the marking "PKT 83 m.m. - m.12"; and chemical bombs marked "C-S-517", bearing the inscription "Made in U.S.A.".

The inscriptions on those and some other weapons even mention that they were made at a federal laboratory in Salisbury, Pennsylvania, in 1978. Those weapons, with all their specifics, were displayed at a press conference on 11 April 1980 and were shown on Democratic Republic of Afghanistan television. As recently as 5 November of this year, the Afghan security forces captured additional quantities of United States-made chemical weapons from a hideout of uprooted mercenaries.

We do not think it accidental that those weapons are of United States manufacture. Neither do we think that those weapons could be obtained on the so-called free market. Of course, the fact that those weapons had to find their way to Afghanistan through the territory of a third country cannot be overlooked either.

Instead of dragging the Committee into opening a Pandora's box, the United States should be called upon immediately to start bilateral talks with the Soviet Union and to stop blocking the multilateral discussions on this subject in the Committee on Disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54. This draft resolution has administrative and financial implications, as set out in document A/C.1/36/L.62, and observations by the Committee on Conferences are contained in document A/C.1/36/L.62/Add.1.

(The Chairman)

The pertinent documents before the members of the Committee, therefore, are A/C.1/36/L.54, A/C.1/36/L.62 and A/C.1/36/L.62/Add.1, all relating to agenda item 42, entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons".

Draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 has eight sponsors - Australia, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand and Spain - and was introduced by the delegation of New Zealand at the 44th meeting of the First Committee on 25 November 1981. A recorded vote has been requested.

I shall now call on those delegations which wish to explain their vote before the vote.

Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia): Last year my delegation abstained in the vote on the resolution on the question to which the draft resolution before us is related. On that occasion we explained the reasons that led us to take such a stand. I should like to draw attention to some of them.

Yugoslavia is a party to the Geneva Protocol signed in 1925, which prohibits the use for military purposes of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases and all analogous liquid materials and devices. My country is also a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Consequently, our position regarding the use of such weapons is precisely defined and unequivocal. We resolutely urge the prohibition of the use and the destruction of all chemical, bacteriological (biological) and other toxin weapons. We condemn most emphatically the use of such weapons by any side whatsoever.

We are in favour of an effective system of verification and control of the implementation of international agreements on disarmament. We believe that such a system should, among other things, aim at strengthening confidence and promoting co-operation among States parties to disarmament agreements so as to ensure the consistent implementation of the obligations assumed. We hold that the application of the system of verification and control must be universal, not selective. It must be based on authentic facts and sources; otherwise there is the danger of its being misused and of its not being motivated by the objectives that it purports to pursue.

(Mr. Djokic, Yugoslavia)

Bearing in mind that last year's resolution, in our view, contained one-sided and selective elements, we were not in a position to support it. Since the draft resolution before us advocates the further continuation of the action begun last year, for the same reasons my delegation is not in a position, this year either, to support it and, therefore, will abstain.

Mr. LIANG YUFAN (China)(interpretation from Chinese): In accordance with resolution 35/144 C adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a Group of Experts, carried out an investigation on the use of chemical weapons and also submitted a report to this session of the General Assembly. The Chinese delegation wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts that they have made.

We notice that, because of the lack of time and other factors, the Group of Experts has not been able to carry out on-site investigation in certain areas. At the same time, the constant flow of information regarding the use of chemical weapons in those areas has aroused the serious concern of the peoples of the world. In our view, if no investigation or verification of those situations is made, some countries will in a more flagrant manner engage in activities in contravention of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out international investigations of cases of the use of chemical weapons, and that should receive broad support.

That some people should use all kinds of pretexts to obstruct an investigation could only demonstrate their guilty conscience.

(Mr. Liang Yufan, China)

The Chinese delegation is in favour of requesting the Secretary-General to continue his investigations, with the assistance of the Group of Experts, and we will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54.

Mr. SYLLA (Senegal)(interpretation from French): My delegation holds a fundamental position of principle on this matter. We are among those delegations which voted in favour, last year, of resolution 35/144 C, which requested the Secretary-General to set up a group of experts to study the question of allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons in certain parts of the world, and, more specifically, in the Asian region. It is only logical, therefore, in the light of the report submitted to us by the Group of Experts, which clearly establishes that that Group did not have sufficient time to complete its mandate, that we should request that that Group be given more time to discharge once and for all the mandate which we ourselves had entrusted to it. Obviously, this in no way commits us to the question of substance.

At this stage, my delegation would voice the hope that all those who today requested an outright cancellation of the Group's mandate will have the courage, were the Group to present a final report stating that all these allegations are false and unfounded, to remain silent and not shout "hurrah" at the conclusions of the Group's work. By the same token, we hope that all delegations that today requested a renewal of the Group's mandate, would, for their part, then have the courage publicly to acknowledge that all those allegations were indeed false and unfounded.

Therefore, on the basis of a position of principle, and since we had voted in favour of the resolution which originally set up the Working Group, and also in view of the fact that the Working Group tells us in its report that it did not have enough time to complete its work, my delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution, which is in fact procedural in nature since it simply requests the renewal of the Group's mandate.

(Mr. Sylla, Senegal)

In any event, I would stress the fact that, while pressing for renewal of the Group's mandate, if the Group were to report here at the thirty-seventh session to the effect that the allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons were false, my delegation would be the first to acknowledge the truth of those facts.

I simply hope that all those delegations that have spoken with such passion on this matter will have the courage to behave in the same way. Consequently, my delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution so that the Group of Experts may continue to discharge its mandate.

Mr. ZARIF (Afghanistan): The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan last year voted against a resolution on this subject and will do likewise on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.54.

For us, the whole campaign initially launched by the United States is quite clear: it is designed to cover up the United States plans to develop, produce and stockpile new types of chemical and biological weapons. To secure the necessary funds for its expensive projects and to divert public opinion, the United States Administration had to create an atmosphere of hysteria about the made-up so-called Soviet chemical threat, and with no grounds whatsoever it claimed that chemical weapons were being used in combat militarily in Afghanistan.

None of the United States Administration officials have been able to produce a single definite fact -- a single bit of evidence -- to back up that preposterous accusation. However, the actual facts about the use of chemical weapons, or the bands of hired mercenaries in Afghanistan, are well known. We have repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the facts regarding the provision of chemical weapons and ammunition of United States manufacture to subversive terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

In this connexion, I should like to mention the statement of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, contained in document A/35/430, of 4 September 1980, and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan statement of 20 September 1981, which contain convincing accounts and details about the criminal use of United States-made chemical weapons in Afghanistan.

(Mr. Zarif, Afghanistan)

We heard one delegation ask why the Group of Experts should not be given time to continue its work. My delegation would like to ask: why should the United Nations have to investigate the fate of charges lodged by only one Member - namely, the United States? Why should United Nations Members have to shoulder the financial burdens of attempts to prove the United States allegations? Why should the Expert Group continue its work when it failed to provide any definite conclusions supporting the United States' slanderous accusations regarding the use of chemical weapons? And, finally, why should the Member States be forced into a malicious and unholy campaign against the progress of countries?

In conclusion, my delegation would like to make it perfectly clear that we have no doubt regarding the insincerity of this unworthy exercise which was originally master-minded by United States imperialism.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform the members of the Committee that Turkey has joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54,

Mr. OSAH (Nigeria): As delegations will recall, Nigeria abstained in the voting on resolution 35/144 C, which requested the Secretary-General to carry out impartial investigations with the assistance of qualified medical and technical experts to ascertain the facts pertaining to the report of alleged use of chemical and bacteriological weapons, in violation of the 1925 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. In casting our abstention vote, we indicated that we were doing so because of the apparent lack of consensus among the membership of the General Assembly and the parties to the 1925 Protocol. It was our view that any impartial investigation into the alleged violation would require the full co-operation of all those concerned if any useful result was to be achieved.

(Mr. Osah, Nigeria)

However, resolution A/35/144 C was adopted, and the Secretary-General did carry out the impartial investigation, with the assistance of impartial medical and technical experts. The report of that group, as contained in document A/36/613, has shed some light on the allegations. The Group noted, in paragraph 98, that its report is inconclusive, and remarked that:

"Any investigation designed to lead to definitive conclusions regarding the alleged use of chemical weapons and to an assessment of the expense of the damage caused by such chemical weapons would require timely access to the areas of alleged use of chemical warfare agents in order to establish the true facts."

(A/36/613, Annex, para. 98)

(Mr. Osah, Nigeria)

In keeping with the practice of the United Nations, therefore, we hold the view that the Group of Experts, having been established, should be enabled to complete its work. Consequently, we will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54, which is a procedural one. In so doing, we have taken into consideration the interim report of the Group of Experts which is, in our opinion, fair and balanced. We believe that the final report of the Group of Experts will either confirm or dispel the allegations of the use of such weapons once and for all.

We wish to mention briefly the statement of the representative of Viet Nam, who referred with approval to a statement credited to my delegation. That statement was made last year in explanation of vote before the vote. We stand by that statement because we believe that a binding convention or treaty is the best solution. However, our affirmative vote today does not derogate from that belief. If anything, it further reinforces our commitment to that belief, namely, that obligations voluntarily assumed under the United Nations Charter and other treaty obligations should be strictly adhered to and enforced. Last year, in our explanation of vote before the vote, we noted that our delegation cannot but condemn, if proved - and I emphasize the word "proved" - the use of chemical substances in warfare. We believe that the Group of Experts, having been established, should be allowed to present us with a conclusive report. Such a report will enable us to appraise the veracity or falsity of the present allegations.

Our affirmative vote, therefore, is an indication of our desire to have the truth, and nothing but the truth.

Mr. JEICHANDE (Mozambique) (interpretation from French): My country, which has been the victim of the use of chemical weapons, is understandably opposed to the use of such weapons. However, after reading the report contained in document A/36/613, the delegation of Mozambique has come to the conclusion that the Group of Experts should not have its mandate extended, bearing in mind that

(Mr. Jeichande, Mozambique)

the experts themselves have clearly stated that they had found no evidence of the use of chemical agents. For that reason, my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54.

For two years now, much has been said about the use of chemical weapons in South-East Asia and Afghanistan, and yet there is no proof of this. A sum in excess of \$300,000 is being requested, however, to continue investigations. I recall that three years ago, the General Assembly established a Group of Experts to investigate South Africa's nuclear explosion. Yet when we asked that the mandate of that Group of Experts be renewed, we did not, unfortunately, obtain it in order that the Group in question could continue its investigation of South Africa's explosion. Such morality! Such human feelings! We shall vote against the present draft resolution, for we see that it has the clear objective of calling into question a group of countries.

Mr. AKHTAR (Bangladesh): Bangladesh is constitutionally committed to the concept of general and complete disarmament. In the past, we have expressed our views in all forums, both within and outside of the United Nations, and we have always supported all attempts or efforts towards the achievement of the goal of arms control and disarmament.

The draft resolution before us pertains to an impartial investigation to help to ascertain the alleged use of chemical weapons and to assess the extent of the damage caused by the use of such weapons. Since the work of the Group of Experts has been inconclusive, we shall vote in favour of the draft resolution, which is procedural in nature, in the hope that during the time provided to the Group of Experts, a more comprehensive report can be prepared and presented to the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. JITOKO (Fiji): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution for many reasons, chief amongst which is the one that has been advanced by those who have expressed reservations with regard to it.

The climate of international suspicion must be cleared, and here is an opportunity to do so. We have talked and expressed our disappointment at the deterioration of international relations in the world, particularly the relations between those who hold, as it were, the future of the world in their hands. Small countries like my own, therefore, cannot be indifferent to current or alleged occurrences or events in any part of the world that will ultimately affect the future of humanity.

Be they alleged or real, the horrors for the lives of the peoples affected or in danger of being affected by the use of such weapons are so overwhelming in themselves that it is imperative that such an allegation be thoroughly investigated and cleared.

We are bent to a massive and, it seems at times, an insurmountable task, that of putting the priorities in human endeavours into their proper perspective, of reducing expenditures on military budgets in favour of increasing economic aid to developing countries, of prohibiting the further vertical or horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, of encouraging peaceful coexistence among States and of achieving comprehensive and complete disarmament in order to build a world free from wars, tensions and conflicts.

My delegation is therefore of the humble opinion that if the international community is to remain forever vigilant and responsive to the objectives of this Committee and this Organization, it is incumbent upon its members to seek to minimize areas of contention and to work within a definitive framework in order to achieve constructive results.

It is in that light that my delegation supports the extension of the mandate of the Group of Experts.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no other delegations that wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, the Committee will now proceed to vote upon draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54. I shall ask the Secretary of the Committee to read the list of sponsors of the draft resolution and to guide the Committee through the vote.

Mr. RATHORE (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/35/L.54 has nine sponsors: Australia, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Spain and Turkey.

The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54, entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons."

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Kampuchea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, France, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Zaire, Zambia

Against: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Mozambique, Poland, Romania, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam

Abstaining: Argentina, Bahrain, Bhutan, Brazil, Burma, Burundi, Cape Verde, Finland, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Nepal, Peru, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia

Draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.54 was adopted by 74 votes to 18, with 30 abstentions.

The CHAIRMAN. I shall now call on those delegations which wish to explain their vote after the vote.

Mr. DE LA FUENTE (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Peru was obliged to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.54, as it did last year, because we note with regret yet again that the treatment of certain delicate matters in the disarmament context is imbued with a kind of marked ideological confrontation which my country rejects, because this does not help to solve the basic that is, the question of general and complete disarmament.

However, my delegation has the greatest respect for the important work done by the Group of Experts appointed last year by the Secretary-General to investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons and our abstention cannot therefore be in any way construed as a criticism of the group's effectiveness and impartiality.

Mr. HELLER (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Mexico abstained in the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.54 for the same reasons that were amply explained at the meeting of 26 November 1980 in the First Committee.

Mr. GARBA (Niger) (interpretation from French): My delegation regards the draft resolution just adopted as a procedural one whose purpose is essentially to make it possible for a Group of Experts which had already been set up to complete the task it has begun.

My delegation cannot confuse accusations and guilt. We believe that the best way to remove any possible ambiguity from this question is to make it possible for the Group of Experts to continue its investigation.

In supporting this draft resolution, my delegation does not involve itself in any propaganda campaign. Its concern above all is to help the United Nations to dissipate confusion in such a sensitive area. A complete report on this matter will, in the opinion of my delegation, be a determining factor in searching for the truth.

Mr. DABO (Guinea) (interpretation from Spanish): As my delegation had occasion to state in its intervention of 3 November last, we are opposed to the use of chemical weapons. We can say this with no ulterior motive or in no spirit of revenge. We abstained in the vote because yesterday, on a proposal of the non-aligned countries asking for prohibition of intervention in the internal affairs of States. The sponsors of the draft resolution we just voted on today voted against that draft resolution of yesterday. We believe that, rather than calling in the fireman it is better to prevent the fire

Mr. SANGARET (Ivory Coast) (interpretation from French): The delegation of the Ivory Coast voted in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.54, as we did last year in the case of resolution 35/144 C, since we have always been in favour of holding investigations on a purely scientific basis which are intended to shed light on very serious and controversial matters.

In casting this vote, my delegation would like to make it clear that we are in favour of the principles contained in the 1925 Geneva Protocol. In other words, this positive vote should not in any way be construed as approval of or any blind rejection of certain allegations, but, rather, as evidence of a desire to act as an upholder of justice in helping the judges to shed light on this matter, because this is the best way of preventing the innocent from being unjustly condemned or the guilty party from escaping justice. In this case justice would entail condemnation by world public opinion.

AGENDA ITEM 55 (continued)

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

(j) STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS (A/C.1/35/8, 11, 14· A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1)

The CHAIRMAN: The draft resolution on this item, in document A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1, has 12 sponsors and was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the 33rd meeting of the First Committee on 18 November.

The sponsors are: Algeria, Argentina, Congo, Cuba, Bangladesh, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Romania, Sweden and Yugoslavia.

The sponsors have suggested that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 be adopted without vote. Before we proceed to a decision, I shall call on the representative of Mexico.

Mr. HELLER (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The purpose of my statement is to announce to the members of the Committee that, after some consultations with a number of delegations, we wish to make a change in operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, where mention is made of negotiations between "representatives of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on nuclear-arms control". The revision is to delete the word "control" so that the text will read as follows:

...between representatives of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on nuclear arms..."

The CHAIRMAN: There being no delegation wishing to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 before a decision is taken, I take it that we can proceed to a decision and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 without vote.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on delegations which wish to explain their position on the decision just taken.

Mr. PROKOFIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connexion with the First Committee's adoption of the draft resolution on the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks contained in document A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1, the Soviet delegation wishes to state the following.

The object of the Soviet-American talks that began on 13 November 1981 on the question of the limitation of nuclear weapons in Europe, which are welcomed in this draft resolution, is to be medium-range missiles in Europe, including forward-based analogous American missiles. The Soviet Union favours the immediate renewal of talks with the United States of America on strategic arms limitation, which should be based on everything constructive and positive that has already been achieved in this area.

Mr. van NELLE (Federal Republic of Germany): The draft resolution that we have just adopted is in the view of the Federal Republic of Germany of great importance and has been put forward at a particularly pertinent moment. The process of the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), as they are now known, to which reference is made in operative paragraph 2, has indeed, at the beginning of this week, received further substantial impetus. I am referring to the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation and reduction of intermediate nuclear forces, which started in Geneva on Monday last.

With their readiness to commence the negotiations, both sides have demonstrated that they regard dialogue and co-operation on vital security issues as a prime political goal. My Government, which did its best to help bring about these negotiations, expressly welcomes this development.

I should like to use this occasion to recall the constructive and success-oriented proposals contained in the important statement of President Reagan of 18 November 1981. We feel that this clarification of the position of the United States, which Chancellor Schmidt pertinently called a comprehensive strategy for peace, can greatly contribute to progress in these and other negotiations. President Reagan has addressed four aspects: first, the reduction of intermediate-range land-based nuclear missiles; secondly, the early continuation of the SALT, or START, negotiations; thirdly,

(Mr. van Well, Federal
Republic of Germany)

the mutual and balanced reduction of conventional forces in Europe; and, fourthly, the project of a conference on disarmament in Europe, for which the Western participants at the Madrid CSCE follow-up meeting have proposed a precise mandate.

The United States concept outlined in President Reagan's speech, in which he suggested, inter alia, that all intermediate range land-based nuclear missiles be dispensed with, underlines the determination of the Government of the United States to achieve long-lasting peace and to offer concrete and tangible proposals in line with the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament.

The recent visit of General Secretary Brezhnev to my country constituted another positive development, which should not fail to have an impact on the Geneva negotiations. My Government has once more pointed out to the Soviet leadership that the American side is determined to achieve early and tangible results and that we are likewise convinced that the Soviet side also is entering the talks in good faith.

We hope that effective agreements will be achieved by the autumn of 1983 -- that is, before Western intermediate land-based nuclear missiles can, for the first time since the early 1960s, be deployed at all. If, however, in spite of all efforts, no agreement should be reached by that time, my country will honour its commitment under the so-called two-track decision of December 1979 to take the measures necessary in the interests of its own security and that of the defence alliance of which it is a member. It is in this spirit that we have joined in the consensus on operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution just voted upon.

Let me conclude by expressing my country's sincere wish that 30 November 1981, a day which Federal Foreign Minister Genscher described as a day of hope, will have been the starting-point of a series of negotiations within the START framework and in other forums which will lead to the comprehensive security partnership which is required if a genuine and lasting peace is to be ensured.

Mr. BALETA (Albania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, you have just announced that draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 has been adopted without vote. The Albanian delegation wishes to dissociate itself from that consensus. We did not find it absolutely necessary to request a vote because we have presented our views on other occasions.

I would, for example, recall that in 1978 we voted against the adoption of resolution 34/91 C, whose essence is reflected in the present draft resolution. By way of explaining our position, which opposes the apparent consensus that just emerged on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1, my delegation wishes to share with the Committee the following thoughts and considerations.

The Albanian delegation affirmed at the time of the adoption of resolution 34/91 C and reaffirmed at the time of the adoption of resolution 35/154 of 12 December 1980 - and would repeat now, after the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 - that as far as we are concerned there can never be any question of noting with satisfaction the demagogic declarations of the heads of the two imperialist super-Powers in connexion with strategic arms limitation.

In view of the events that have occurred since the adoption of resolution 34/91 C in connexion with the strategic weapons of the super-Powers, we are very pleased that we took that position and expressed our views on the misleading nature of the declarations made by the imperialist super-Powers. The United States of America and the Soviet Union have done exactly the opposite of what they declared in connexion with strategic arms limitation and what they were requested to do in the resolutions to which I have referred. The two super-Powers have continued their arms race in all fields.

The draft resolution that has just been adopted, despite the new evidence provided by the development of events, which shows the bad faith of the super-Powers and their obstinate desire to continue their efforts in strategic armament, reproduces the evaluations, wishes and hopes expressed in the two previous resolutions. We cannot agree with that. We are more than ever convinced that the two imperialist super-Powers are acting in bad faith

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

in this field. We still believe that the SALT negotiations, whether SALT I or SALT II, have never been conceived or utilized to bring about a real reduction of strategic weapons or to promote the cause of disarmament in general.

These negotiations have been initiated by the United States and the Soviet Union for a completely opposite reason - in order to bargain and better to programme their own armament efforts.

We have repeated what we said last year in connexion with SALT II. Whether SALT II is ratified or not and whether we witness its ratification or its failure will depend on the plans being prepared by the United States and the Soviet Union to intensify their rivalry and their collaboration in order to establish world hegemony and domination.

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

Neither the ratification nor the rejection of those agreements will bring any changes in the aggressive designs of the two imperialist super-Powers. The agreements have not been ratified, and the two super-Powers have made a great deal of noise in that regard. The Soviet Union criticizes the American attitude and demands ratification; the United States returns the anathema, saying that the Soviet Union has not acted in good faith in negotiating and implementing the SALT agreements and demands their revision. The arms race continues and it will continue anyway even if ratification of SALT takes place with new accolades between the Americans and the Soviets.

From this we conclude that there is no reason to urge the United States and the Soviet Union to return to the spirit of the SALT agreements.

Operative paragraph 5 of the resolution contains a new provision, which welcomes the commencement of negotiations in Geneva between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of medium-range nuclear weapons in the European theatre. We cannot share or accept that idea. The American-Soviet decision to begin those negotiations on 30 November of this year and the opening of those negotiations augur nothing good. It is a double-edged manoeuvre. Each party needs some activities of that kind to support its propaganda campaign and both parties are interested in sitting down at the table to see how far their arms race has gone and to programme either together or separately what their next steps will be.

Europe has been and continues to be threatened by United States and Soviet missiles. That threat will not diminish, even after the commencement of negotiations on 30 November. The leaders of United States and Soviet imperialism have, recently and even in the last few days, made and are probably preparing to make further demagogic statements about war, nuclear weapons and so forth. But nothing will change in the strategy of the United States and the Soviet Union, either in their rivalry or in their collaboration.

(Mr. Baleta, Albania)

The Albanian delegation believes that the anxiety caused by the increased American Soviet rivalry, which will continue and have serious consequences in international relations, are well-founded, because it has always been that way, but the danger will not be reduced, even if the present phase of aggravation between the two super-Powers leads to a period of more tranquil relations and to new arrangements between them. For the peoples of Europe and of the whole world the designs of the Soviet Union and the United States will remain threatening and dangerous, despite the beginning of American-Soviet negotiations in Geneva.

It is for those reasons that the Albanian delegation states that it dissociates itself from the consensus.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): My delegation is pleased to have just joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1, dealing with strategic arms limitation talks. This is an issue of great importance to the United States. I can state categorically that the United States Government is firmly committed to pursuing meaningful strategic arms control as a means of establishing and maintaining peace and avoiding nuclear war.

Resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1 properly places emphasis not only on the substantial progress already made during the years of the SALT process, but also looks towards the future. The United States is, of course, a party to SALT I, and is voluntarily abiding by the provisions of article VI of SALT II. We must now look forward - forward to negotiations that will result in substantial and militarily significant reductions in strategic arms - which is why we have given these negotiations the acronym START rather than SALT, which focussed on the limitation of strategic arms.

President Reagan's speech last month committed the United States to renewed efforts to negotiate, with the Soviet Union, arms-control agreements on strategic nuclear weapons as well as on intermediate-range nuclear forces and conventional military forces in Europe. The negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces opened this past Monday, and we propose to open negotiations on strategic arms as soon as possible next year. President Reagan stated:

"There is no reason why people in any part of the world should have to live in permanent fear of war or its spectre. I believe the time has come for all nations to act in a responsible spirit that does not threaten other States. I believe the time is right to move forward on arms control and the resolution of critical regional disputes at the conference table. Nothing will have a higher priority for me and for the American people over the coming months and years."

(Mr. Fields, United States)

He went on to state:

"But we cannot reduce arms unilaterally. Success can only come if the Soviet Union will share our commitment: if it will demonstrate that its often-repeated professions of concern for peace will be matched by positive action."

The President's words speak for themselves. They offer hope for an anxious world through this new initiative to achieve substantial reductions in existing nuclear arsenals, rather than simply placing limits on their levels. The United States is committed to negotiating an equitable start agreement, and we will call upon the Soviet Union to join us in what President Reagan described as this "giant step for mankind".

Finally, I should like to express my gratitude to the sponsors for producing this year a draft resolution which is forward-looking and which will surely further our important work. In particular, I wish to note the efforts of our distinguished and esteemed colleague, Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, who was instrumental in consulting tirelessly with numerous delegations to achieve this consensus text.

CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The CHAIRMAN: We have now concluded our action on draft resolution A/C.1/36/L.42/Rev.1, as orally revised, and consequently we have concluded the consideration of the items on our agenda.

As is customary, I should like to ask the indulgence of members of the Committee in order to make some observations on our work during the last two months.

We are being in the end zone now and there being time for everything, this is the time to look back and to make an honest appraisal of what we have done. Have we at this Assembly brought closer a world with less arms and more security, of more independence, less use of force and less infringements on the sovereignty, independence and freedom of the peoples and countries? After all, that was our task and that was our business at a time when so many visualize the possibility of the world going up in flames like a paper lantern.

Colonialism being close to final elimination, disarmament and strengthening of international security along with global negotiations on international economic problems remain the great tasks of the 1980s. Of the three, this Committee devoted itself to the first two.

(The Chairman)

Opening the general debate on 19 October, I noted that the Committee was embarking on its work under the shadow of a continuous deterioration of the international situation, that bloc rivalries had brought the process of détente to a dismal state and had spread crises and conflicts all over the world. In commenting on the tasks before the Committee, I suggested that we should not limit ourselves to the assessment that the situation was bad and simply watch it getting worse, but we should rather do everything possible to re-open the windows of negotiations and thus contribute to the improvement of the situation.

(The Chairman)

In spite of differences on substantive problems, the members of the Committee did their utmost to ensure that the Committee would properly discharge its functions. I believe the issues are clearer now, as a result of frank and forthright debate. Little heat was generated, but a good deal more light was shed on the issues. Disappointment has been expressed over the situation, and expectations and hopes for better results in the future have been voiced. There has been remarkable unanimity on the fact that, if peace is to be saved, disarmament is indispensable.

Debate has certainly proved worthwhile, though it has again covered ground that is only too familiar in its specifics to the experts and more and more threateningly clear in its consequences to the general public. At future sessions there should be a greater determination to widen the area that is of legitimate concern to the international community in disarmament. I would submit that in the quest for disarmament repetition is necessary, but breaking new ground is indispensable.

The exchange of views has certainly helped us all to understand better the divergent positions and in quite a few instances, whenever possible, to make common approaches which at first might have seemed impossible. The fact that we have been able to deal with all the questions referred to us by the General Assembly should be credited to the membership of this Committee.

Contrasting differences remain concerning the causes of the worsening of the international situation and concerning the ways and means of dealing with the arms race. These differences obviously run too deep to permit the consensus necessary to give impetus to progress in disarmament. The need to remove the obstacles to understanding and to create the indispensable political conditions for the continuation and the launching of abroad process of negotiations on disarmament has been strongly emphasized.

Meaningful consideration of questions related to nuclear disarmament continues to be made impossible because of divergent approaches. The majority of Members of the United Nations continue to press for an early result in the field of nuclear disarmament. Popular demands in this sense are increasing.

(The Chairman)

Those who are governed appear to be more aware of the urgency of coming to grips with nuclear disarmament than many of those who are governing and controlling the awesome destructive potential.

There is no doubt whatsoever that there is room -- and crying need -- to do more with regard to disarmament. There seem to be grounds for hope. The two super-Powers are just beginning to be engaged in negotiations. In a wider sense they are talking about the future of Europe and that of the world. Whether there is success or failure, it should be borne in mind that the result will have a direct bearing on the lives of nations that are not but should be kept informed.

In the course of the past 20 years non-alignment has nurtured interest, and increased knowledge, and stimulated on every governing number of non-aligned countries to come forward with their views and press for progress.

Disarmament and security are no longer a subject for the privileged few. This is good, since lack of knowledge breeds an environment for manipulation.

There has also been wide agreement in this Committee on the need for a stronger role for the United Nations in the disarmament field.

There is an obvious need for better information of the general public. The invaluable interest and vigorous activities of various non-governmental organizations, which we appreciate so much, are indispensable in this sense for the future. Perhaps it should be repeated at this time that all nations have the right to know and to be informed, in order to be able to influence their destiny.

They do have the right to know what a veritable plague the spending of enormous amounts of money on the arms race is. They do have the right to know that so many countries are hostages to an arms race, as a way of thinking and a way of life, that is without parallel in the history of mankind. They do have the right to know that there shall be no return from where the arms race is taking all of us, the right to know how much better off all nations would be in a world of true independence, true equality, peace and security.

(The Chairman)

The studies that have been made, particularly some of them, for example, on the relationship of disarmament and development and of that of disarmament and international security, contained valuable recommendations. They have been and remain an important source of knowledge and information.

Looking back at the work we have carried out, we note that the Committee was entrusted with 22 major items and held 53 meetings. The Committee adopted 48 draft resolutions on disarmament and 4 on international security. The trend of constant increase in the number of decisions taken annually has been continued. Some satisfaction can be derived from the fact that regard to a significant number of draft resolutions there was no need to resort to a vote: of 48 on disarmament and 4 on international security, 19 were adopted without vote.

In dealing in detail with all the questions considered, one runs the danger of not doing justice to all the efforts made by the members to bring the deliberations of the Committee to a successful conclusion. However, it would be worth singling out the fact that we have decided to continue the preparations for the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in a spirit of consensus. The first special session, its Final Document and its Programme of Action, will continue to be an outstanding achievement in the history of war or peace. There is every reason to hope that the second special session on disarmament will maintain the spirit of the first one. The comprehensive programme of disarmament being elaborated under the able chairmanship of Mr. Gracia Robles, Ambassador Emeritus of Mexico, may be the most important single item resulting from the second special session on disarmament and it would make it another milestone.

Listening to the debate on international security, one comes to the conclusion that world affairs, the use of force, interventions, conflicts and hotbeds of crisis around the globe should rather be dealt with from the point of view of our common interest in strengthening peace and security and not that of selfish individual positions of the moment. The basis for solutions can be sought only within the United Nations, not outside it.

(The Chairman)

Some of the draft resolutions adopted have not obtained the support of all Member States. They have their value, nevertheless, since they contain recommendations of substantive political significance and with a substantive political message.

Intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States were particularly emphasized in the debate. Non-aligned countries have introduced a draft declaration on the inadmissibility of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States. Irrespective of the result of the vote, it is to be hoped that this declaration will serve many countries not as a sword but as a shield, as Ambassador Scotland of Guyana so ably put it.

It is worth noting the call addressed to all Members to prevent the use of force and not to recognize situations brought about by the use of force in international relations.

I certainly owe a debt of gratitude to Ambassador Pastinen of Finland, Ambassador Hepburn of the Bahamas and Ambassador Naik of Pakistan, who so generously shared with me the experience they have gained while serving as Chairmen of the Committee. Some of them have suggested that the Committee should examine its methods of work.

(The Chairman)

I find it true that as the number of resolutions increases each year, it seems that it may be advisable to consider, in the near future, arrangements to ensure that more consultations can be held in the Committee during its regular sessions. No one doubts that the deliberative character of the Committee is essential for the effective performance of its responsibilities. However, it seems to me that intermittent periods of consultation and debate are indispensable to ensure that international consensus could emerge on a number of critical issues. As I have said earlier, consensus lasts longest.

I should like to refer to the cogent remarks made by Ambassador Zenon Rossides of Cyprus on the number of meetings dedicated to disarmament and on the number of those dedicated to international security. Some adjustments may certainly be in order at the next General Assembly.

I address my sincere expressions of gratitude and appreciation to the two Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Ambassador Alejandro D. Yango of Philippines, and Ambassador Mario Carias of Honduras, as well as to the Rapporteur, Mr. Alemayehu Makonnen of Ethiopia. Their invaluable co-operation with and assistance to the Chair have been part and parcel of the functioning of the First Committee.

I am also grateful to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Vyacheslav Ustinov; the Assistant Secretary-General for the Centre of Disarmament, Mr. Jan Martenson; the Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Rikhi Jaipal and, last but not least - and I am sure that you all share my opinion - to the able and competent Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Naeem Rathore. He and Mr. Sattar and Miss Patil, as well as the other officers of the Secretariat rendered valuable assistance, based upon their experience and knowledge of the functioning of the United Nations.

I thank the interpreters, translators, verbatim and DPI reporters, conference and document officers, the sound engineer, as well as all the technical staff for their exceptionally hard work and proper understanding of their duties.

(The Chairman)

The Chair and the other officers remain indebted to the membership of the Committee. Your active involvement and understanding have greatly facilitated the performance of the duties entrusted to me and to them.

I should like to express appreciation to the numerous participants in our debates, sponsors of resolutions, as well as to those whose efforts so smoothly affected the negotiating and resolution-making process. I am grateful to all for the co-operation extended to me and to the other officers, and for the courtesy so generously bestowed upon me by members of the Committee.

Well, I do hope that later in the afternoon of our lives when the shadows grow longer and the lights and colours become softer we shall all remember each other and the time we spent in this Committee as something worth remembering.

Mr. NAIK (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, it is a matter of great pleasure for me to offer a brief comment on the proceedings of the First Committee during the current session under your very distinguished and able chairmanship. You have guided the work of this important Committee with great dispatch and distinction which speaks of your vast diplomatic skill, your wisdom and your wide-ranging experience in disarmament matters. But this is a Committee known for its sober temperament, its sense of responsibility and its commitment to an objective which is of supreme concern to the entire international community. Your election to this Committee was not only a token of our respect for your personal qualities, but a tribute to your great country which is in the forefront of the struggle of the developing countries to strengthen international peace and security and to ensure the cause of socio-economic development of all nations.

When we started our work, the Committee had a heavy agenda. There were numerous outstanding disarmament matters which have been on the agenda of the United Nations for many years. In addition, there were new problems

(Mr. Naik, Pakistan)

which have resulted from the recent crises in various parts of the world. We have consequently reiterated many of our earlier decisions and have adopted new draft resolutions, underlining the concern of the international community on the subject of disarmament and international security.

It is in the nature of disarmament issues that we do not expect dramatic developments. While a favourable world opinion is building up, the necessary political will is still lacking for substantial and practical results in the pursuit of the objectives of disarmament. Nevertheless, our efforts for disarmament, however philosophical and academic in character, reflect a deep concern and a moral pressure to save the world from a possible holocaust, and to divert human energies and resources to welfare and economic development instead of manufacturing weapons of death and destruction. We hope that this moral pressure will soon mature into a political will on the part of all nations, and that endeavours towards this objective will be maintained and strengthened.

In this context, we feel that the deliberations of the First Committee this year have been successful and salutary. Despite the deteriorating international political climate and the prospects of a new spiral in the arms race, the outlook in the Committee by and large has remained optimistic and positive. The general debate in the Committee and the discussion of specific issues has served to stimulate a heightened consciousness of the imperative need for progress in the sphere of disarmament. A special feature has been the growing and more active role of the third world countries in carrying forward the work of disarmament, which was evident from the numerous draft resolutions sponsored by those countries. We are convinced that a sustained endeavour in this important Committee, as well as in other international forums, will bring about a qualitatively new situation in which the aspirations of the entire international community for disarmament will be fully realized.

I do not wish to go into the details of the many important decisions we have adopted under your chairmanship, nor am I in a position to speculate about their positive impact on our future efforts for disarmament. But in all sincerity, we believe that this session has been constructive and fruitful.

(Mr. Naik, Pakistan)

Despite difficulties, it has been able to sustain and indeed enhance the hopes and optimism that we need in our future work. Much of this success goes to your dedicated efforts, personal commitment and the excellent manner in which you have guided our proceedings.

For this successful outcome, I must also express our gratitude to the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Ambassador Yango of the Philippines and Ambassador Mario Carias of Honduras, and the Rapporteur, Mr. Makonnen of Ethiopia.

I wish also to pay a tribute to the hard work and expertise of the members of the Secretariat, especially to Under-Secretary-General Mr. Vyacheslav Ustinov, Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Martenson, Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Ricki Jaipal, and Committee Secretary Mr. Nacem Rathore, whose contributions to facilitating and advancing the Committee's work merit our full commendation and praise.

We are about to bring to a close the proceedings of the First Committee for this session. Let me then welcome you, Mr. Chairman, to the membership of a very distinguished and privileged group of personalities who have served in the same capacity as Chairmen of the First Committee. Like them, you now belong to history.

May I conclude by wishing you, Mr. Chairman, all my colleagues in the First Committee and all the members of the Secretariat a very merry Christmas and a happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Mr. HEPBURN (Bahamas): I am put in a very difficult position having listened to you, Mr. Chairman, and to my colleague, the Ambassador of Pakistan, in terms of finding something different to say. However, as you come to the end of a perfect day and you sit alone with your thoughts, I can well understand that you may not wish to hear any long speeches. But I should like to make some very brief comments.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

As a former Chairman of this Committee, I do not believe that I am being presumptuous in diagnosing your feelings at this moment. It is one of ambivalence, perhaps not unlike post-partum depression or the sensation of the presence of a lost organ - neither of which, I trust, you will ever experience.

On the one hand, there is a sense of relief that the doubts and uncertainties of your role, the fear of falling asleep and so on while in the Chair are now history. On the other hand, there is the wish that the challenge could go on a while longer. There will always be that subconscious desire of wanting to handle yet another crisis, even though were it given to you you might renege.

We have adopted many draft resolutions under your benign leadership, and my delegation hopes that despite the redundancy of the language in many of them that progress towards implementation will be seen in the very near future. Your statistics show fewer meetings held under your guidance than at previous sessions. You have accomplished as much as or even more than many of us. This may be a trend for us all to follow.

I have had the chance to share my thoughts with you on varied matters and I have found that besides your patience, your vast international experience, knowledge of languages and skill in negotiations, you possess as a diplomat a unique sense of humour, which is always an asset in dealing with international politics, particularly disarmament. The aforementioned, to name a few, are the qualities which assured the smooth functioning of your chairmanship.

In this regard, I know that you will agree when I say that the success of your performance was enhanced by the able assistance of the other officials of the Committee, co-operation from the Centre for Disarmament and the wise guidance from the Secretary of the Committee and his staff. Last, but not least, my delegation is convinced that the Committee would have suffered mayhem were it not for the prompt and efficient services of the officers responsible for documents and interpretation.

(Mr. Hepburn, Bahamas)

As you make your exit, Sir, and join the ranks of the growing number of ex-Chairmen you should carry one thought with you: you came, you saw, you conquered. You represented your country well, and though you may not see the fruits of your labour in the immediate future your efforts will be listed among those who were instrumental in saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

I wish you, Sir, my colleagues, the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat staff a merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Mr. KARUHIJE (Rwanda) (interpretation from French): At this time as we approach the end of our work my delegation, is very honoured briefly to address you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of all the delegations from the continent of Africa in the First Committee. Our congratulations and thanks are due to you for the work that has been accomplished in the Committee under your leadership.

You deserve our commendation in many ways. You are a personal friend of most of us; we have known you for some time now and have had numerous opportunities to value your talents and broad experience. A citizen of a non-aligned country, you were the best choice to direct the First Committee's work just before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Lastly, the courteous good humour and at the same time the firmness that you have demonstrated in guiding us have imbued all the Committee's work. The result is that the Committee has concluded its work in record time, a few hours before the time-limit while avoiding night meetings.

It is our firm hope that the decisions taken in this Committee after assiduous collective endeavours, inspired by your wisdom and confidence, will help to ease apprehension and engender trust among mankind.

On behalf of all those delegations which have not had an opportunity to tell you this personally, I should like once again to express our deep sympathy in connexion with the catastrophe that brought mourning to so many families in your country.

(Mr. Karuhije, Rwanda)

In conclusion, we should like to convey to you our best wishes for your personal happiness and success in your future responsibilities and, through you, we should like to convey our thanks and the same wishes to the other officers of the Committee and all those colleagues who have assisted you.

Mr. YANGO (Philippines): On behalf of the Asian Group and at the conclusion of the First Committee's work, it is my responsibility as Chairman of that Group to express to you, Mr. Chairman, our profound gratitude for the able and effective manner in which you have provided leadership and guidance to the Committee's work during this thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly. The fact that the Committee has been able to adopt 52 draft resolutions on all items on our agenda is the result of your tireless efforts and those of all concerned.

The timing and scheduling of our work was carried out smoothly, and we succeeded in meeting our deadline as requested by the General Assembly. The co-operation that you gave to the members of the Committee was invaluable; indeed, harmony was clearly indicated in preparing the day-to-day programme of work.

(Mr. Yango, Philippines)

The appreciation of the Asian Group goes also to all officers of the Committee for their useful contributions to our endeavours. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Secretary of the Committee and his indefatigable colleagues for their skillful and dedicated work, as well as that of the staff behind the scenes who made our accomplishments possible.

Mr. FLITAN (Romania) (interpretation from French): It is a great privilege and a signal honour for me to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States for the current month, our warmest congratulations on the extremely effective and outstanding manner in which you have conducted the work of the First Committee, which had items on its agenda of vital importance for international peace and security.

In our view, the debates relating to disarmament issues and the draft resolutions resolutions adopted on the subject acquired, during the current session, a special dimension, especially in the light of the forthcoming second special session devoted to disarmament, to be held next year. We express the hope that the intense activities carried out by the First Committee under your enlightened guidance will help to ensure that the special session marks a turning point in the field of disarmament negotiations.

I should also like to stress the importance we attach to the debates that took place on the question of international security, including good-neighbourliness, at a time when it is imperative to act with firmness to prevent the outbreak of a new war, and to relaunch the policy of détente, co-operation and peace.

I should not wish to conclude without emphasizing yet again the especially positive role for the smooth accomplishment of the Committee's work played by you, Mr. Chairman, with your high competence and wide experience in United Nations matters, as well as by your constant desire to create and maintain a climate propitious for constructive work in this Committee.

(Mr. Flitan, Romania)

May we also tender our congratulations and sincere gratitude to the two Vice-Chairmen of our Committee, Ambassadors Alejandro Yango of the Philippines and Mario Carias of Honduras, and to the representative of Ethiopia, the Rapporteur of our Committee, Mr. Alemayehu Makonnen.

At the same time, we extend our appreciation to Mr. Ustinov and Mr. Martenson for the contributions they have made to the work of our Committee. We are grateful also to the members of the Secretariat - particularly to Mr. Rathore, and to his colleagues in the Secretariat at every level, who, by their dedication and solicitude, contributed greatly to the accomplishment of the highly complex tasks entrusted to our Committee.

Mr. BENDAÑA RODRIGUEZ (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish):

On behalf of the Latin American Group, I have the honour to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your excellent conduct of the at times difficult work of this Committee. It is a faithful reflection of your wide experience and of the great skill of your country's diplomats.

The debates and the many new resolutions adopted at the current session bear witness to the profound concern of our countries and peoples with safeguarding mankind from disaster, while at the same time emphasizing the relationship between disarmament, on the one hand, and development, on the other. We may differ as to methods, shades of meanings and scope, but not with respect to the recognition of the imperative need for greater international security and the need to prevent a holocaust.

You, Mr. Chairman, contributed by your work to that consensus, and we know that you will continue to do so.

Allow me also to express our appreciation to the other officers of the Committee - Ambassador Yango of the Philippines and Ambassador Carias of Honduras, and Mr. Makonnen of Ethiopia.

We would also pay a tribute to the Secretariat and, in particular, to the patient documentation, interpretation and translation staff, who also contributed to that consensus. To all of them, and, I repeat, to you, Mr. Chairman, we extend the gratitude of the Latin American Group.

Mr. DE LA GORCE (France) (interpretation from French): The French delegation, as current Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States has the honour, on behalf of the delegations of that Group, to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, its sincerest congratulations on the outcome of our work. You have guided our deliberations with a great deal of authority, competence and courtesy.

Indeed, the First Committee managed to deal successfully with a particularly heavy agenda in the orderly and methodical way it did, owing, in large measure, to you, Sir, and we are most grateful to you for this.

We should like to join in the tributes justly paid to you and to your country, Yugoslavia, whose contribution to the work of international co-operation at the United Nations has been so active and so valuable. The delegations of the Group on whose behalf I have the honour to speak have done all in their power to assist the work of the First Committee in promoting the causes dear to us all: disarmament and international security. We have no doubt that our Governments will derive from the discussions we have had here under your guidance vital lessons as to how those efforts can be continued. The debates in and the conclusions reached by the First Committee have on a number of items undoubtedly made an appreciable contribution to the disarmament effort in the framework of the General Assembly as a deliberative body.

The congratulations and thanks of our respective delegations go also to the other officers of the Committee, who shared with you, Mr. Chairman, the task of guiding our debates, as well as to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Rathore, to the Vice-Chairmen, Ambassador Alejandro Yango of the Philippines, to Ambassador Mario Carias of Honduras, as well as to our Rapporteur, Mr. Makonnen of Ethiopia.

May I also extend our congratulations to Mr. Ustinov, the Assistant-Secretary-General, to Mr. Martenson, Director of the Centre for Disarmament, and to Ambassador Jaipal, personnel representative of the Secretary-General in the Disarmament Committee.

I should like, of course, to convey our thanks to all those who have lent their assistance to the work of the First Committee: the interpreters, translators and other members of the Department of Conference Services.

Mr. AL-ZAID (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): Now that we have finished our work, I believe I should dwell for a moment on the results we have achieved and review them, briefly and objectively.

Our Committee has, there can be no doubt, succeeded in overcoming a large number of difficulties, difficulties that derive from the very nature of the questions we discussed. The Committee was able to adopt a considerable number of draft resolutions, but they will not be implemented unless the prevailing situation changes and prospects for peace and security increase. None of this could have been accomplished, Mr. Chairman, without your skillful guidance. We all expressed sincere wishes at the outset of our work that your task would be crowned with success, and, indeed, we now pay a tribute to your talents.

You have conducted our work with integrity, objectivity and a wide experience. That was only natural, for you represent a friendly country that, in its foreign policy, adheres to non-alignment. The outstanding quality of your people is its perseverance in working towards the achievement of its national objectives. Indeed, your people has built your country at every level, and you, Sir, are its best exponent.

Allow me, therefore, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, to congratulate you on your success in guiding the work of our Committee, a guidance that has enabled the Committee to adopt important draft resolutions.

I would also like to thank your collaborators, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Yango and Mr. Carias, as well as Mr. Makonnen, the Rapporteur. I also wish to extend my thanks to the members of the Secretariat, translators and interpreters, for their efforts and patience over these past months. We hope that our draft resolutions will be duly implemented.

I wish you a good rest, every success and a happy New Year.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to say two things. I do deeply appreciate the kind words with which you have referred, on this occasion and throughout the meetings of this Committee, to my country, Yugoslavia, and to its place in the community of nations. I thank you.

(The Chairman)

I would also like to say that whatever we have achieved here in the First Committee this year is the product of a collective effort, for which I am most grateful to all concerned. I should like to extend to you all my sincere season's greetings and wish you much personal success and well-being in your future endeavours, as well as a happy New Year. I will take your advice to take it easy for a while, in order to recover from the enormous ego trip on which you have taken me by heaping so much praise on my shoulders that are weak from such a heavy load of praise. I thank you very much for all the friendship you have expressed to me personally.

With that, the last meeting of the First Committee during the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly is now closed, and the Committee stands adjourned. Thank you very much.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.