Proposals of France for inclusion among the final draft documents (declaration, programme of action, machinery for negotiations) of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament

The special session of the General Assembly which is to meet in New York next May will be an important milestone in the efforts of the international community to make real progress towards disarmament. The many proposals before the Committee bear witness to the great interest in its preparation which is felt by all concerned.

France, for its part, intends to associate itself actively with the work of this session. It hopes that the work of the session will succeed in setting the international community on the road to genuine disarmament. The Permanent Mission of France has already had occasion to make known to the members of the Preparatory Committee the statements in which the President of the Republic indicated the essential lines of French policy on disarmament and suggested a number of initiatives which could be taken in specific fields. It would like today to submit for consideration by the Preparatory Committee a number of proposals the essential aspects of which are set forth below.

(Declaration)

France is not renouncing the ideal of general and complete disarmament, which should continue to be the ultimate goal. However, it believes that this purpose can be achieved only if the world is considered as it is and the right of each nation to security is respected. It proposes a pragmatic approach in accordance with which efforts would be focused on the factors of instability which give rise to mistrust, to the armaments race and, finally, to conflicts.

In the matter of eliminating factors of instability, it considers that the priorities are very different in the case of the zones where nuclear deterrent prevails and in other cases. The problem of nuclear weapons concerns all mankind; it does not present itself in the same terms in zones where nuclear weapons are an element of the general equilibrium and in zones where its introduction would
constitute a dramatic factor of imbalance. Therefore, while the principles of disarmament are everywhere the same, their practical application should be adapted to the diversity of specific situations and the variety of regional contexts.

Yet it is at the world level that France feels it is essential to affirm the fact that disarmament is the concern of all, in other words, that it should be achieved with the help, under the control and for the benefit of all.

In this spirit, France submits the following proposals to the Committee:

(Machinery)

A. Reform of the machinery for negotiations

The United Nations constitutes the natural framework for the debates of the international community on disarmament.

Suggestions have come from various quarters for remedying the unsuitability of the existing structures, to which the French Government has frequently drawn attention. The essential objective of a reform in this field should be to reaffirm the authority and responsibility of the United Nations and, in addition, to enable all the members of the international community to make their voices heard in the general debates on disarmament.

This means that all States Members of the United Nations should participate on a footing of equality in a deliberating body which would be the direct creation of the General Assembly. France proposes that this deliberating body should be the First Committee, sitting as a Disarmament Commission.

This presupposes, moreover, that the present CCD should be replaced by a new negotiating body responsible to the Disarmament Commission. The new body (which could be called the Disarmament Committee) would have from 30 to 40 members, including the States having a particular interest in questions of disarmament and representing in a balanced way all the regions of the world, including the countries which are members of the Security Council because of the responsibilities devolving upon that body. The Committee should have a Chairman, elected, for example, for two years from among the participating States, excluding the permanent members of the Security Council. The mandate of the Disarmament Committee, whose decisions would be taken by consensus, would include negotiating disarmament agreements stemming from the recommendations of the Disarmament Commission, to which it would report, and co-ordinating the implementation of regional measures. The States which were not members of the Committee would be admitted to participation in its deliberations as observers.

(Programme of action)

B. Establishment of an observation satellite agency

At present, two countries have military observation satellites which provide them with information gathered in the territory of all the States which are Members of the United Nations.
France considers that the international disarmament effort should benefit from the progress made in the technology of observation by satellite. Information useful for the strengthening of security and trust which can be obtained in this way should be placed at the disposal of the interested States, in accordance with political, legal and technical modalities to be agreed upon by consensus by the international community.

It therefore proposes the establishment of an International Observation Satellite Agency. The Agency, which would be directly responsible to the United Nations, would have as its task the collection (by means which it might possess in its own right as well as others), the organization and the dissemination of data obtained by satellite in fields directly affecting security and the control of disarmament agreements.

The study of the regulations, rules of operation and financing of the Agency should be carried out by the appropriate United Nations bodies.

C. Establishment of an international fund for disarmament for development

The disproportion between the sums allocated for expenditure on armaments and the sums devoted to aid to developing countries is regarded by States in general as indicative of an unacceptable situation. It can scarcely be denied that the situation in which the world finds itself today is one of over-armament. The most heavily armed States have a particular responsibility in this regard.

The desire to allocate for the economic and social development of the poorest countries at least a part of the funds spent for the acquisition of military equipment has given rise, over many years, to a variety of proposals which unfortunately have not so far been able to produce results because of the difficulty, inter alia, of determining a basis of assessment which would not be subject to challenge.

Despite these obstacles, which it does not consider insurmountable, France believes that the decision to establish a development fund, to provide for its immediate financing and to decide upon the conditions of its long-term financing would constitute an important and significant contribution of the special session devoted to disarmament.

Initially the fund could be financed to the amount, for example, of $1 billion by voluntary contributions calculated in accordance with simple criteria. The financing could be provided to the extent of 50 per cent by the nuclear-weapon countries, in proportion to the quantity of means of delivery they possess, and to the extent of 50 per cent by countries which both are rich and have large supplies of weapons, in accordance with criteria to be agreed upon. These countries would signify their willingness to devote to the purposes of peace and progress a growing proportion of the considerable resources which they have deemed it necessary to devote to military expenditures.

The next step would be to show that the process of disarmament should make it possible to achieve real economies for the benefit of all mankind and first of all the most disadvantaged States.
Contributions to the fund would be counted in calculating the 0.7 per cent of GNP fixed as the target for public aid to development.

D. **International Institute for Research on Disarmament**

France proposes the establishment of an organization whose purpose would be to make available to the international community technical studies on problems of disarmament. This body, or "International Institute for Research on Disarmament", would be responsible to the United Nations, which would nominate its Governing Council and would provide its financing, but it would have complete autonomy at the scientific level.

In submitting the proposals enumerated above for consideration by the countries which are members of the Preparatory Committee, France is seeking to provide not a disarmament "plan" but a contribution to an undertaking the scope and complexity of which it fully appreciates. It hopes that these proposals can be studied and discussed in the appropriate bodies of the Preparatory Committee, if necessary through the establishment of specialized subgroups, in the interests of the preparations for the special session.