Statement by Yugoslavia in connexion with the completion of the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament

We have come to the end of the fifth session of the Preparatory Committee and the time has come to assess what has been achieved and what is still to be done with regard to the elaboration of the draft Final Document of the Special Session Devoted to Disarmament.

I must say, at the very outset, that my delegation has been both satisfied by the results achieved so far and concerned about the difficulties that have arisen with regard to the harmonization of positions on the remaining parts of the draft on which no agreement has been reached. We have been impressed by the active participation of a large number of delegations in the discussions on questions raised during the work of the Preparatory Committee, by their dedication and efforts to find compromise solutions - which is not always easy, by the atmosphere that has prevailed in the work of the Preparatory Committee, and by the fact that all decisions have been adopted by consensus.

However, what has been lacking is more active involvement on the part of some delegations and their failure to reply in time to a number of questions put to them during the negotiations. However, such co-operation is indispensable and is a prerequisite for laying down the foundation for the elaboration of a balanced programme to be adopted by consensus.

We welcome the increased interest shown by all countries both in the preparations for, and in participation in the work of the special session itself. All this shows that the idea of the special session has not only been accepted, but that there is also a broadly-held view that this session can and should play an important role in creating the conditions necessary for changing the existing, unsatisfactory state of affairs in the field of disarmament.

* Circulated at the request of the Chairman.
A glance at the various parts of the Final Document will show that progress has been achieved with respect to the elaboration of the draft resolution and Declaration on Disarmament. True, there are still a number of controversial formulations in the Declaration, some of them being less and others more important. I feel that - with some additional effort - most of the differences could be overcome with relative rapidity. However, what we should have avoided is putting already agreed formulations into brackets and to dilute the assessments concerning the danger posed by the very existence of nuclear weapons and the continuation of the arms race.

Some progress has also been achieved in the part of the Final Document dealing with machinery. The problems that have still remained enclosed in brackets are very important and deserve serious attention. It is essential that the special session should create all the necessary conditions that will enable the international community to have confidence in such machinery, which will confirm and promote the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and help all nuclear Powers and other militarily important countries take an active part in disarmament negotiations. Should the special session - owing to different resistances, lack of understanding or desire to perpetuate the existing privileged positions of some countries - fail to create such conditions, it would, I am certain, have a negative impact on the over-all efforts that are being exerted in the field of disarmament.

Work on the Action Programme, which expresses the broadest aspirations for setting in motion the process of disarmament, has proved to be arduous and the delegations drafting the Programme have encountered great difficulties.

We believe that it is still premature to draw definitive conclusions concerning the results achieved by the Working Group for drafting of the Action Programme. This does not prevent us, however, to make some preliminary observations, bearing in mind the fact that the special session will convene in less than in a month's time.

Although the results achieved in drafting the Action Programme should not be underestimated - all the more so as this task has not yet been completed - we are nevertheless concerned about the fact that no greater measure of agreement has been achieved both with regard to individual disarmament measures and with respect to the interdependence of such measures. Too much time has been wasted in defending the existing state of affairs and in trying to prove that it was impossible to depart from fixed positions, while very little has been devoted for finding solutions which would amount to a turning-point and provide new and fresh impulses for the adoption of genuine disarmament measures.

On the other hand, it has become apparent that, in most cases, it was not possible to find acceptable solutions because of too much insistence on adoption of detailed formulations for various disarmament measures. The elaboration of such formulations should take place at the time of concrete negotiations on various agreements.
The fact that some parts of the Action Programme are enclosed in a number of brackets and that some other parts have not been studied adequately shows that the special session will be faced with serious tasks. We believe, however, that it will be possible to find a way out of the present difficulties, provided a spirit of co-operation and understanding prevails at the special session and provided joint efforts are made in the search for the necessary solutions.