Note verbale dated 11 April 1977 from the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour, with reference to General Assembly resolution 31/139 B on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which requested the views and comments of Governments on the subject, to indicate the basic considerations which the Government of Peru believes should guide the work of the special session.

The Government of Peru is deeply concerned at the continuation of the arms race, which in the years since the Second World War has not only failed to increase in the slightest the security of any country, especially the militarily strong countries, but has absorbed human and financial resources which, had they been allocated to the priority tasks of development, would by now have made it possible to meet a large part of mankind's most pressing needs.

The Government of Peru is aware that ending the arms race and initiating an effective process of disarmament is the responsibility of all countries, although it cannot, of course, fail to note the obvious fact that some bear greater responsibility than others. Accordingly, as a non-aligned and peace-loving developing country, it has spared no effort to participate in this common task to the best of its ability. Evidence of this is its active and continuing involvement in the work of the specialized organs of the United Nations in which it has the honour to participate, including the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly, together with its constant support for the most important and significant resolutions on disarmament adopted by the United Nations ever since the establishment of the Organization.

Accordingly, the Government of Peru considers it important and appropriate to hold a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament questions. It is appropriate because the levels reached by the arms race are such that, defying
all imagination, they deny mankind's basic aspiration for a minimum of security, peace and progress. It is important because, after many years and countless efforts, it has become clear that disarmament questions require a global approach covering all the varied aspects of a problem which is undeniably complex and difficult. Consideration of the topic of disarmament in the highest world forum is therefore a priority task to which the Government of Peru will contribute its best efforts.

The Government of Peru welcomes the fact that all the States Members of the United Nations will be participating on an equal footing in the special session devoted to disarmament. Moreover, the specific nature of the meeting gives reason to hope that the issue of disarmament will receive both general and in-depth treatment so that, by the end of the session, we shall have the kind of basic action guidelines for the essential dogged continuation of efforts without which the special session would become just another meeting.

By bringing together high-level political personalities, the special session could provide the opportunity for a frank and at the same time politically viable treatment of questions of general interest, while reaffirming as a priority the validity of the final objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The special session should produce substantive documents that will constitute effective guidelines for disarmament. A Declaration of Principles, a Programme of Action and guidelines for the strengthening of disarmament mechanisms having the United Nations as their focal point are essential.

Obviously, Member States must agree on a set of basic principles to guide actions in the field of disarmament. The special session should specifically consider such matters as the need to pursue general and complete disarmament, and particularly nuclear disarmament, under effective international control as a means of ensuring world peace and security; the establishment of a new international order based on respect for the principles of international law and the active continuation of disarmament measures; priority for nuclear disarmament measures; reaffirmation of the responsibilities of the United Nations in this field; full participation of all States; access to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes; balanced disarmament; the importance of verification methods; the active and increasing participation of public opinion throughout the entire process; and the final objective of eliminating conventional weapons within an international framework that would guarantee peace, security and complete disarmament.

The Programme of Action should establish priorities for the various questions involved, with emphasis on the urgency of dealing with nuclear disarmament. First priority should be given to the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests, respect for nuclear-weapon-free zones and peace zones and other appropriate measures. The Programme of Action should, of course, cover other types of weapons and, finally, the possibility of reducing military forces. These matters must be given due consideration by the special session, which should in fact indicate the concrete steps or specific questions to be included in the Programme.
so that it would constitute a substantive document for dealing, within reasonable time-limits, with the various aspects of the issue in appropriate forums or negotiations.

The special session should conduct a thorough review of United Nations disarmament machinery. It should be borne in mind that the General Assembly, at its last session, endorsed the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Review of the Role of the United Nations in the Field of Disarmament. This in itself was an important step although, of course, substantial aspects of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament must still be clarified and reaffirmed. Specifically, it is worth pointing out that the negotiating body of the United Nations, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has produced some important, although partial, results with regard to disarmament and that its organization and procedures should be reviewed in light of the principle of the legal equality of States and the need for all the nuclear Powers to join in the Conference, since no positive results can be expected unless they actively participate in the process.

The special session should be organized with an eye to the need to allow both general and specific treatment of various questions. The possibility of establishing one or more working committees for convenience and flexibility in the handling of items should be considered.

The Government of Peru takes this opportunity to reiterate its determination to participate actively in the special session, and accordingly to make every possible contribution of effort and understanding to the work of the Preparatory Committee. This attitude is in keeping with the sincere desire of the people and Government of Peru to contribute to peace, security, progress and the best possible relations with its neighbours and with all nations.