"It must be noted that the efforts made in recent years to solve the problem of disarmament have been as numerous as they have proved vain. The world has never been as armed, or over-armed, as it is today. What has been lacking in so many well-intentioned attempts has been not so much sincerity as clear thinking. For that reason, France has been obliged to express reservations about some of these attempts, reservations which, it feels, have been justified by events.

It must not, however, confine itself to such a negative statement, but conclude that the time has come to seek a new and positive approach.

Such an approach is not to be found in unilateral measures: it is not by renouncing its own security that France will improve world security. Nor is it to be found in following the example of others and embarking on courses which experience has shown would lead to an impasse.

On the contrary, what is needed is a clear definition of the goal to be achieved, the obstacles to be overcome and the specific conditions of the action to be taken.

The goal cannot be the Utopia of a world totally disarmed. Nations, both large and small, like individuals, have a 'legitimate right to safeguard their security'. This right must be recognized and defined, but its limits must be established in order to avoid abuse.

The obstacles to disarmament are, in fact, the excesses resulting from the exercise of that right, whether from an excessive accumulation of armaments or from excessive disparities between the military arsenals of neighbouring States. These
Factors of instability engender distrust, the arms race and, finally, conflict. It is on these factors that efforts must focus. In order to understand them correctly, they must, however, be viewed in the proper geographic and strategic context.

The conditions of action differ profoundly from what they were 10 or 20 years ago. The world no longer follows the lead of the super-Powers or even of the military blocs surrounding them. It is both more vast and more diverse, and has both a universal and a pluralistic dimension. Neither should be ignored. The problem of nuclear weapons concerns the whole of mankind; it is not posed in the same terms in areas where nuclear weapons are an element of the over-all balance and in areas where their introduction would create a serious imbalance.

The principles of disarmament are the same everywhere. Their practical application must be adjusted to a variety of specific situations.

With an equal concern for universality and pragmatism, France will propose action at three distinct, but complementary, levels.

1. At the world-wide level

It is at this level, above all, that it is important to affirm that disarmament is a matter for all, that is to say that it must be carried out with the co-operation, under the control and for the benefit of all.

With the co-operation of all. The United Nations is the natural forum for the debates of the international community on general problems relating to disarmament. The forthcoming special session in the spring will provide an excellent opportunity for such debates. In order to produce more effective results, however, a smaller and more permanent but equally representative forum, also linked to the United Nations, is required.

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, which is currently meeting in Geneva, should be replaced by a new forum with a different membership and different procedures.

France will have proposals to make in this regard.

Under the control of all. No disarmament is possible without control, and no valid control without international supervision. In that connexion, space techniques offer hitherto unknown possibilities. They should therefore be made available to the international community.

To this end, France will propose the creation of a world observation satellite agency.

For the benefit of all. It is by providing benefits for mankind as a whole from the economies resulting from disarmament that disarmament will become meaningful and will be effectively stimulated.

/...
France will therefore propose the establishment of a special fund financed by a tax levied on excessive armaments.

2. **At the level of non-nuclear regions**

The problem here is twofold. It is important to ensure that non-nuclear areas remain so, and also that a costly and dangerous conventional arms race does not develop in those areas.

(a) **Prevention of nuclear proliferation.** The primary responsibility lies with the States in these regions, but those States have a right to be assured that, in exercising that responsibility, they will not be discriminated against from the standpoint of their own progress or from that of their own security.

- From the standpoint of their own progress. This implies the implementation of a policy of non-proliferation which is both strict and open: strict with regard to the risk of the dissemination of nuclear armaments, but open with regard to access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

  France will continue to work actively towards this end and to set an example.

- From the standpoint of their own security. This implies that the military nuclear Powers will not use their situation to seek to gain political or military advantage over non-nuclear States.

  Accordingly, France will take a positive position of principle with regard to the creation of denuclearized zones on continents or substantial portions of continents. It expresses its readiness to consider in what conditions it could enter into specific obligations in that regard.

(b) **Curbing the conventional arms race.** France hopes that States in each of the major regions of the world will take the initiative in seeking ways of curbing the conventional arms race in their region.

  For its part, France is prepared to make its contribution to that end provided that the States in the region concerned are unanimous in wishing it and that there is no discrimination among suppliers.

3. **At the level of nuclear regions**

One nuclear region, that extending from the Atlantic to the Urals, is crucial to world peace and to the security of France. Nowhere else is there such an accumulation of nuclear and conventional weapons. Nowhere is it more necessary to draw the consequences of the principles of a new approach to disarmament. In the conditions prevailing in that region, the factors of instability are to be found not in nuclear weapons in isolation, which have become an element in the over-all balance, but in the factors that might upset that balance, in other words, on the one hand, the quantitative over-stockpiling and qualitative race in the field of nuclear weapons, and, on the other, the obvious disparity in the field of conventional weapons.

...
- The quantitative over-stockpiling and qualitative race in the field of nuclear weapons.

France maintains its deterrent force at the level of credibility necessary for its security. Because of the accumulation of their nuclear resources, the responsibility for furthering progress in disarmament through a significant reduction lies with the United States and the Soviet Union. France views their current efforts favourably. It notes, however, that the level at which they propose to stabilize their nuclear arsenals would still enable them to annihilate each other several times over.

- The disparity in the field of conventional weapons.

To be effective, action should not be confined to Central Europe, but should extend to all States which might be concerned. Priority should be given to promoting trust and to reducing the more unsettling elements in the current situation. All those States which, in signing the Final Act of Helsinki, indicated their willingness to contribute to security and co-operation in Europe should, naturally, be associated with such action.

It is in this spirit and with these aims in view that France, after having made the necessary contacts, will propose the convening of a European conference on disarmament which would consider problems relating to disarmament from the Atlantic to the Urals."