VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany)
(Vice-Chairman)

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Pham Ngoc (Viet Nam)
Mr. Martynenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)
Mr. Salazar (Costa Rica)
Mr. Imai (Japan)
The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 65 AND 142 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. PHAM NGAC (Viet Nam): The general debate at this thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly and the first week of the debate in this Committee have made one point perfectly clear: all countries have expressed an overriding concern about the danger of nuclear war, which, to our despair, is looming ever greater. All delegations share the view that the nuclear arms race must be curbed and that all nuclear weapons must eventually be eliminated. My delegation has also noticed that people in this room, as well as people outside, have one thing in common: they want to make this planet, our only home, safe from the catastrophe of a nuclear conflagration.

There exist, however, different views on why the arms race could continue, who is responsible for it and how we could stop it. My delegation would like first to share our views on this point.

If we take a long hard look at the history of the arms race since the appearance of nuclear weapons - and since the foundation of this world body - we shall have a clearer picture and may draw some conclusions.

First, the arms race has taken root from the policy of relying on the force of arms, whether that is described as a policy of strength or as military superiority.
Secondly, it takes one country to start the race, producing one new weapon after another, and consequently another country for its own defence trying to catch up.

Thirdly, it takes two countries to negotiate and any agreement must be based on equality and equal security.

In the light of the past 40 years of relations between States, it is clear to my delegation, as it is clear to others, that East-West relations based on peaceful co-existence have become a matter of fact. One may want to go against the tide but cannot turn it backward.

The United States was the first to develop the atomic bomb and also the first to use it. Ever since, it has made use of its superiority in economic development and in science and technology to take the lead in the arms race. At present, the United States has in its arsenals all kinds of weapons of mass destruction capable of killing the whole of mankind many times over.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, for reasons known to all, has had to protect its security and defend world peace. The arms race is indeed imposed on the Soviet Union - which is a heavy burden for its economy. But the record is clear that the Soviet Union is determined to achieve parity with the United States.

Now, after long decades, the two major Powers, which played a decisive role in bringing the Second World War to a victorious end and helping in the foundation of the United Nations, have maintained an overall rough parity. One Power - the Soviet Union - has proposed a freeze in nuclear arms. It is logical that once a freeze was in effect the arms race could be stopped; it would be fair to all and every nation could benefit from it.

The Heads of State or Government of India, the United Republic of Tanzania, Argentina, Mexico, Greece and Sweden have in a Joint Declaration addressed to nuclear-weapon States expressed the desire of peoples of all continents for a halt in the nuclear-arms race, and the reduction and eventual destruction of all nuclear weapons. The Joint Declaration received a positive response from the Soviet Union. It is now up to the United States and other nuclear Powers to give a similar response. The Joint Declaration is most warmly welcomed by the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries.
It is true that the proposed freeze could become an asset to all peoples. It enjoys wide support and is gaining momentum. However, any attempt to launch a new round of the arms race or to deploy new nuclear weapons destroying the present parity in nuclear military power could deal a fatal blow to the common efforts. This concern is well-founded, for it is evident that the United States is going ahead with its plan to upset the present balance in strategic weapons with the Soviet Union. It has begun its plan with MX missiles, Trident submarines and B.IB bombers. It continues its plan for the militarization of outer space, which would not only constitute a permanent threat to life on earth but also frustrate all attempts to ensure the peaceful use of outer space. It has deployed Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe, with their accuracy and flight time constituting a first-strike force against the Soviet Union.

All this makes it clear that the United States is seeking negotiations from a position of strength. However, four decades of the arms race have furnished us with clear examples that the United States cannot for long maintain a monopoly of any new kind of weapons. It can only step up the arms race and bring about greater danger for itself and the world.

Disarmament, and nuclear disarmament in particular, is the only alternative to pave the way to peace. And if peaceful co-existence is accepted as a principle in relations between States of different social and political régimes, it must be honoured by all without seeking advantages in military superiority.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that on our planet all countries - big and small - share the same concern for nuclear disarmament because they will share the same fate if they fail to prevent a nuclear war, and they will enjoy a lasting peace if they can together outlaw the use of nuclear weapons and finally destroy them.

While the major nuclear Powers should accept primary responsibility, other nuclear-weapon States should also be held responsible for the arms race. Vertical as well as horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons is equally dangerous for mankind. Certain United Nations statements and resolutions have sounded the alarm at the capability of nuclear weapons to destabilize forces in different parts of the world.
Efforts have been made to establish zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones. My delegation supports the establishment of such zones on the basis of agreement among the States of the region.

As a country situated in South-East Asia, Viet Nam takes great interest in the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific. We support the proposal, since it comes from the people in the region that wish to see a peaceful environment for their own as well as for neighbouring countries. There is no doubt that the establishment of such a zone would be an important contribution to peace in the region and world peace as a whole.

Viet Nam wishes also to see similar efforts made by countries in South-East Asia. Viet Nam and Laos have proposed the agenda item "Question of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia". We also know of the concept of a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality proposed by other countries in the region. If it is the common desire of the countries in the region, such a zone of peace could be established through negotiations. Forty years of continuous war in the region have taught us the lesson: in order to maintain peace, countries in the region should decide their own destiny without interference by outside Powers.

We are shortly to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of our Organization. It is the sincere belief of my delegation and, I am sure, also of many others that the best way to mark this anniversary is to make every effort possible to ensure the successful conclusion of our work in this Committee. Surely it requires the contribution of all countries, and first and foremost political will in nuclear disarmament, the primary preoccupation in the mind of every one of us, and indeed of the whole of mankind.

In this spirit, I assure you, Mr. Chairman, and the other officers of the Committee of the full co-operation of my delegation.
Mr. MARTYNENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, first of all, allow me to congratulate you on your appointment to that responsible post. I wish you success in the discharge of your duties.

The fundamental question of our age — namely, whether mankind will succeed in preventing a nuclear catastrophe and keeping peace on Earth is — of grave concern today to all level-headed people. The existence of a dangerous trend towards a further aggravation of the international atmosphere and the heightened threat to world peace causes us all a legitimate sense of alarm and make us constantly ponder why mankind now finds itself on the brink of a nuclear disaster.

In this respect my delegation emphasized in the general debate that the main reason for such a dangerous situation lies in the aggressive policy of the imperialist circles, particularly the United States, and in their attempts to attain military and strategic supremacy. The fact that those countries have stepped up the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, has aggravated political instability in the world, increased the danger of nuclear war and jeopardizes the very existence of mankind. The deployment in a number of Western European countries of American first-strike nuclear weapons has even further aggravated the military danger and opened up a new particularly dangerous phase in the nuclear arms race.

Immediately after the beginning of the deployment on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany of what amounted in essence to American first-strike strategic weapons aimed at the Soviet Union and its allies, the Federal Republic of Germany was given an opportunity to establish and deploy its own long-range offensive armaments capable of threatening the security not only of neighbouring States but also of States remote from the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Soviet Union has countered the dangerous militaristic policy of the United States and its allies by a persistent, determined and constructive policy designed to prevent nuclear war, curb the arms race and achieve genuinely tangible results in the sphere of arms limitation and disarmament.

The Soviet Union has proposed a concrete programme of measures to eliminate the nuclear threat by means of a radical reduction and limitation of nuclear weapons up to and including their complete elimination. The Soviet Union was compelled, in response to the build-up of nuclear armaments by the United States,
to establish its own corresponding capability. But the Soviet Union at the same time has taken upon itself the obligation not to make the first use of nuclear weapons. It has undertaken generally not to use such weapons against those countries on whose territory there are no nuclear weapons, either their own or other people's.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Mr. Konstantin Chernenko, stated in this respect:

"Our highest interest is to curtail the arms race, particularly, of course, the nuclear arms race. We are prepared to go our part of the way right up to the full elimination of weapons of mass destruction, if the other side takes a constructive position and accepts the principle of equality and identical security."

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR hopes that the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, despite the considerable deterioration of the international situation, will prove able, as it should, to give a new impulse to collective efforts to avert the danger of a nuclear war.

It is well known that the best way to rid mankind of the nuclear danger and improve the international situation is to curb the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, and to reduce existing arsenals to very much lower levels. We are firmly convinced that a practical basis for the solution of this cardinal task of our age is provided by the broad set of peaceful initiatives advanced by the Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist community. These initiatives are designed to bring about a reduction in the level of military confrontation and a decisive, radical limitation and reduction of the arms race and the prohibition and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the solution of questions of war and peace and the prevention of the nuclear threat, the policy of nuclear-weapon States takes on a special significance. Washington's policy of deliberately pursuing confrontation and imposing its diktat and its espousal of aggressive doctrines and concepts, the substance of which is that by using nuclear weapons first they might hope to win a nuclear war, are dangerous illusions, because a nuclear conflict of any kind could not fail to spread and become a catastrophe that would destroy everything. It is important that those who nurture such illusions should renounce them. It is even
more important that relations between States with nuclear weapons should be
governed by definite standards which they could agree to recognize and which would
be binding.

This was the purpose of the set of standards for mutual relations between
nuclear-weapon States proposed by Mr. Chernenko in March. In accordance with these
standards, all nuclear Powers would consider the prevention of nuclear war as the
main purpose of their foreign policy and would renounce propaganda for nuclear war
in whatever form. They would undertake not to use nuclear weapons first.

Abiding by these standards also means that in no circumstances would nuclear
weapons be used against non-nuclear-weapon States on whose territories there are no
such weapons. The proliferation of these weapons would not be allowed in any form
and the nuclear-arms race would not be extended into new spheres, including outer
space, and step by step on the basis of the principles of equal security, efforts
would be made to reduce nuclear armaments until they were completely eliminated in
all their forms.

My delegation shares the view expressed by many participants in the debate on
the need to reach agreement on practical measures to do away with the threat of
nuclear war. I might recall that this is what the thirty-eighth session of the
General Assembly called for. A sound basis for the discussion of this problem
could be provided by the concrete proposals made in March of this year by a group
of socialist countries at the Disarmament Conference (CD/484). Allow me to dwell
now on the principal ones among them.

First of all, the question of the renunciation by all nuclear-weapon States of
the first use of such weapons. We consider that obligations of this sort could be
assumed unilaterally, as has been done, for example, by the Soviet Union. Such a
step does not require the holding of special negotiations and the conclusion of
special agreements, but it would make it possible to strengthen trust and to lower
the level of nuclear danger.

My delegation also shares the view that the obligation of nuclear-weapon
Powers not to make the first use of nuclear weapons could also be enshrined in a
single international legal document. In practice this would mean full juridical
prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.
My delegation wishes to declare its support for the proposal for the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, with the participation of all nuclear Powers. Together with the renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons, a very effective means for averting a nuclear war could be provided by the implementation of the proposal of the socialist countries to exclude the use of force - both nuclear and non-nuclear - from international relations. At the global level this task could be resolved by the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations.

The proposal made by the socialist countries in January 1983 for the conclusion of a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force and the maintenance of peaceful relations between the States of the Warsaw Treaty and NATO has great practical significance in this respect.
The nucleus of that proposal would be the obligation of States parties to both alliances not to be the first to use either nuclear or conventional weapons against each other. One may inquire whether there is any need for such a treaty, since the Charter exists and it already obliges States not to use force. We feel that in view of the mounting threat of nuclear conflict there is a need for additional efforts by all those who seek an improvement in the political atmosphere in the world. The conclusion of the proposed treaty could promote more effective implementation of the obligations of States under the Charter with respect to the non-use of force.

Moreover, the proposal of the socialist countries relates not only to the non-use of force but also to the maintenance of peaceful relations. That would, of course, also promote the practical implementation of the aims of the Charter, taking into account the current state of affairs and, in the final analysis, would be designed to reduce the risk of nuclear war. The establishment of conditions to prevent a nuclear conflict would be greatly enhanced by the adoption by all the nuclear Powers, following the Soviet example, of the obligation not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon countries on whose territory there were no such weapons, to respect the status of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world and to encourage the establishment of new such zones.

An important role in reducing the level of nuclear confrontation and in decreasing the threat of nuclear disaster would be played by measures of a material nature designed to make it impossible to establish new types of mass destruction weapon systems under the cover of certain doctrines and concepts that would provide a basis for the unleashing of a nuclear war.

One of the most important and effective measures in this respect, which is also relatively feasible, could be a freeze on nuclear armaments, under appropriate controls, both qualitatively and quantitatively. In this connection, the Soviet Union has proposed a concrete programme of measures, including a whole set of effective and mutually complementary measures, which should be implemented by all the nuclear Powers, and primarily by the Soviet Union and the United States, on the understanding that the other nuclear States would follow their example. The Soviet Union's initiative with respect to the freeze has been supported by other socialist countries and has met with understanding among the majority of States Members of
the United Nations. That is reflected in the sentiments contained in the Joint Declaration of Heads of State or Government of Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania, which contains an appeal for the freezing of nuclear arsenals and their immediate reduction. All that shows that the need for such measures has now fully matured and is acutely felt by all those who cherish peace.

A very important practical measure in the reduction of the nuclear-arms race would be the full and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing. My delegation calls upon the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly resolutely to advocate the immediate commencement of practical negotiations towards that end and also to adopt a declaration calling for the halting of all nuclear explosions between now and the conclusion of the treaty concerned.

In July 1982, the United States Administration arbitrarily broke off the tripartite Soviet-British-American negotiations on a complete nuclear-test ban. That was done at a time when all the provisions of that treaty had been practically agreed upon. At the same time, the conclusion of an agreement on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon testing could become an important part of measures to put an end to the arms race. Such an agreement would substantially limit the possibility for the parties to engage in the qualitative improvement of existing nuclear weapons and the establishment of new types of nuclear weapons and would strengthen the non-proliferation régime. We consider that the tripartite negotiations must be renewed with a view to preparing an appropriate treaty.

At the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union submitted a proposal on the question of the immediate cessation and prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing and the basic provisions of a treaty in that respect. Those proposals took into account the level of agreement reached during the tripartite negotiations and also the considerations and wishes expressed by many States on this important question, including the question of control.

One of the most acute international problems today is the need to prevent the militarization of outer space. The acute nature of this question is due to the fact that the nuclear-arms race threatens to spread into space. There can be no doubt that a direct consequence of the militarization of space would be a new round in the nuclear-arms race in other spheres and also at a much higher level. The opening of space to such weapons would not just set up a new channel for the arms
race, but would undermine ways of ending it. No arguments concerning defence and
no "peace-loving" rhetoric can be used to justify the projects sponsored by the
United States for the militarization of outer space by creating certain
anti-ballistic missile systems. There can be no doubt that the deployment of such
weapons would not only destabilize the situation but would also increase the danger
of the sudden outbreak or emergence of a conflict as a result of an accident or
miscalculation. Confidence and trust in relations between the nuclear Powers would
be further weakened and the risk of the outbreak of nuclear war, particularly in
situations of conflict, would be greatly increased.

We cannot fail to agree with the view of those delegations that see in the
plans for the militarization of outer space an insuperable barrier to international
coopération for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of
all mankind. The ways of preventing the militarization of outer space have been
clearly set forth in the initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist
countries and supported by relevant resolutions of the General Assembly adopted by
an overwhelming majority.

However, their practical implementation is directly met by the stubborn
resistance of the United States, which has set as its goal the attainment by all
means of superiority in space armaments in order to turn space into a beachhead for
aggression and war. Because of the obstructionist policy of the United States
there has been practically no start on the preparation of a treaty on the
prohibition of the deployment in outer space of weapons of any sort, as proposed by
the Soviet Union as far back as 1981. For the same reason, nothing has been done
to follow up the Soviet proposal on the conclusion of an agreement on the
prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against earth, which
was submitted to the last session of the General Assembly. Members of the Assembly
will no doubt recall that there were 147 votes in favour of that resolution and
only one against, that of the United States.

The obstructionist policy of the United States was further continued at the
Conference on Disarmament this year. Instead of joining efforts with other States
in order to reach a reasonable compromise, the United States delegation in fact
virtually blocked the establishment of a special organ which, in accordance with
the aforementioned resolution, would have worked on the preparation of agreements
on this important and urgent question.
The unwillingness of the United States to resolve questions related to the prevention of the militarization of outer space is also demonstrated by Washington's position with regard to the Soviet proposal on the holding of bilateral negotiations on this problem. The well-known declaration of the Soviet Government with its proposal to the Government of the United States to start negotiations on the prevention of the militarization of space by establishing a moratorium on the use and deployment of offensive space-based weapons gave rise to a positive response and to considerable hope throughout the world. The substance of the Soviet proposal is to prevent, by joint efforts, new types of weapons from being developed, to prevent the development of offensive space weapons and, in particular, any anti-satellite weapons systems based in space or orbiting weapons to strike from space against targets on earth, at sea or in the air, in other words, so that the use of force in space and from space against earth and also from earth against objects in space would be prohibited for ever.
However, Washington again answered no, and it did so not directly, but by engaging in clumsy attempts to evade consideration of the substance of the problem. My delegation considers that at the thirty-ninth session the General Assembly must make a substantial contribution towards prevention of the militarization of outer space and its transformation into a sphere of peaceful co-operation among States.

A genuine desire to guarantee the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit, not to the detriment, of mankind motivates the Soviet proposal that has been submitted to the First Committee: the proposal for a radical settlement of the question of the prevention of the militarization of outer space and the prohibition and elimination of space-based armaments and also all types of air-based, sea-based and land-based weapons designed to strike at targets in outer space. This is the only way to guarantee the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind and to establish, in the foreseeable future, a world organization on the use of outer space. We express the hope that the United States will respond in a serious and responsible manner to the Soviet proposal for negotiations in this field.

It will be possible to halt the world's slide towards the edge of the nuclear abyss and return international relations to the road of détente and co-operation only through the collective efforts of all States which are aware of their responsibility for the maintenance of life on earth. The Ukrainian delegation advocates urgent and determined action to achieve that end. We feel that the world has now reached the stage where the time has come to move on to specific action through constructive negotiations on these important problems with a view to concluding appropriate international agreements. We hope that at the present session the General Assembly will give a new impetus to that process and make a worthy contribution to carrying out the vitally important task of the prevention of nuclear war.

Mr. SALAZAR (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation would like to associate itself with the congratulations that have been addressed to Ambassador Souza e Silva of Brazil on his election as Chairman of this Committee, and we shall give him our support in the fulfilment of the delicate tasks entrusted to him.

Disarmament has been one of the main objectives of the United Nations since its inception. As early as 1959 the General Assembly declared that the issue of
general and complete disarmament was the most vital in the world. Although the 1970s were declared the Disarmament Decade, that objective does not seem to be near achievement.

Countries arm for various reasons. Some see armament as the only way of ensuring their own security, in a world in which threats against the integrity of States have not ceased. Others find in arms an assurance of the preservation of their political systems, and they are not prepared to give up that support.

All weapons have the same purpose. They have not really become more harmful today than in the past. The difference between conventional and nuclear weapons lies in the extent of annihilation. The destructive power of nuclear weapons is unlimited; and a nuclear war would threaten the entire human species and the physical environment of the world.

It is sufficiently well known that the world Powers that produce nuclear weapons, especially the super-Powers, have long since exceeded the bounds of rationality. In this world forum, cries of alarm have been raised repeatedly. Let it be recalled that in the General Assembly's first resolution, in January 1946, the objective of the elimination of all atomic weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction had already been set forth as one of the highest priorities of the international community. Nevertheless, the nuclear armament stampede that has gone on since that time, unrestrained because of the lack of political will to contain it, reveals to us that there has been a dialogue of the deaf on this issue.

The rivalry between the super-Powers has quickened the arms race in two ways: one emerges from within the super-Powers themselves, which, because of their defence and security interests, have engaged in the fastest arms race in history, with the development and deployment of nuclear weapons whose destructive power goes beyond all imagination; and another may be seen in what are termed the "zones of influence", where the super-Powers are competing to gain power, basically following policies of the sale and transfer of conventional weapons.

In any event, in view of all the sizeable economic, technological and human resources that it devours, the arms race is the worst scourge of mankind, even in times of peace, because it is not necessary to witness hostilities to perceive its harmful and disruptive effects. It strikes a blow every day at the economic development of the neediest peoples of the world and it constantly confronts us with the threat of war, because weapons are not harmless instruments but may be used at any moment by those possessing them for the purpose for which they were designed: to bring about death and destruction.
We cannot stand idly by in the face of the threat of nuclear war looming over us. We must give attention to the production and deployment of weapons which might bring it about. It would be short-sighted to deny legitimate concern about the unbridled surge of nuclear weapons. Nations like my own are deeply concerned about this matter.

In view of the incontrovertible link between the security interests of States and the arms race, we cannot be so naive as to call upon any nation to carry out comprehensive or partial reductions of armaments without first resolving issues of international security. In the first report on the work of the Organization submitted by Mr. Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General, to the General Assembly, he made the following observation:

"Governments in fact need more than ever a workable system of collective security in which they can have real confidence. Without such a system, Governments will feel it necessary to arm themselves beyond their means for their own security, thereby increasing the general insecurity." (A/37/1, P. 2)

Therefore we must recognize the reality that each State has duties and values that resist any attempt to reduce them to international agreements liable somehow to threaten its security interests. Indeed, the arms race is being pursued in the very name of security. No one can deny the need for security; no one can challenge the premise already expressed that the arms race stems from a problem of security - a problem which, unfortunately, mankind has not been able to solve by means of the necessary guarantees that would relieve each State of the pressing need to ensure its own security.
We have not structured a reliable and effective system for the maintenance of international peace and security that can guarantee to States that their legitimate security interests will be met in a disarmed world, even though the United Nations was organized to serve that very purpose. World disarmament presupposes the structuring of an international community with a reliable system of collective security, and any international policy designed to achieve that aim must take into account the reality I have described.

In short, for some time now States have had sufficient military means and armament to safeguard their security. Yet they continue insatiably to pursue the arms race. The Powers producing nuclear weapons have built up arsenals that exceed their security needs, and we are discouraged to see that agreements to halt the production of new and more destructive nuclear weapons or at least to limit the weapons already in their possession are not being concluded.

Whatever the reasons put forward for not halting the arms race, which is a danger to the world, and for not moving closer to the ideal of disarmament, my delegation feels a moral obligation to issue an appeal to the international community as represented here to give more thought to this vast problem, that is restricting our chances of achieving the peace and security which the world demands.

My delegation represents a nation that decided nearly four decades ago to remain apart from the arms race. In 1948 Costa Rica decided to entrust its security to the international bodies established by the treaties to which it is a party, despite our conviction that there are no totally reliable means of providing absolute security guarantees. We did this because our profound conviction of the need to respect the desire for peace and the rule of law.

Therefore it is with the authority derived from our actions that we are now urging countries to put an end to the dangerous, threatening arms race. No nation could be justified in ignoring this appeal. We are of course, aware of our own limitations as regards the responsibilities that fall for the most part upon the most powerful, but the world belongs to all of us, and we know how beneficial the support of the majority of nations can be at the present time in reducing the regional tensions that play a major role in the differences between the great Powers.
Disarmament efforts fall into two categories. Those of the great Powers that produce and deploy nuclear weapons are outside our purview as far as negotiations are concerned, despite the fact that in a nuclear war we should all be victims. We cannot therefore remain indifferent to the outcome of negotiations designed to bring about the reduction, limitation or prohibition of nuclear weapons. We feel an obligation to encourage contacts between the super-Powers to create a climate propitious for the conclusion of disarmament agreements. On the other hand, where regional conflicts are concerned, in which the weight of conventional weapons may be felt, the responsibility of the parties concerned and of the other countries in the region is the determining factor in achieving specific disarmament goals.

Costa Rica believes that a good example of this latter position can be seen in the Central American conflict, which we observe with great concern, although we are not one of the belligerents. We live in an area that is being consumed by violence and war, but in which, we may say without boasting, our firm policy of neutrality and peace has been a decisive factor in working towards a peaceful agreement of major importance, namely, the Contadora Act, which has received the support and praise of the international community. The Contadora Act sets important guidelines for the achievement of the longed-for peace in Central America, but, above all, it entails an arms limitation agreement designed to be verifiable. It is clear that no peace agreement can be lasting and deserving of the confidence of the parties if it fails to address the substantive issue, which is closely linked to disarmament in the region. Perhaps the most striking feature of the Contadora Act resides in that, along with obligations in the political and social spheres, it commits the parties to undertake action in the sphere of arms control, without which the ending of war and violence in the region will be an illusion.

My delegation wishes to stress that it took nearly two years of negotiations to achieve the Contadora Act, the substantive obligations of which Costa Rica has accepted in full, because we are already fulfilling those obligations. We are a country which, by its own decision, is already disarmed. We do not have problems of internal violence, nor are we a belligerent party in the political-military problems of the region. The political régime of Costa Rica is based on a firm tradition of democracy and peace, and, despite the economic crisis we are facing,
the social advances of our country are among the most soundly based in Latin America. Fortunately, this situation enables us to accept the commitments of States parties to the Contadora Act.

Events in Central America, if the Contadora peace process which Costa Rica supports, comes to fruition, will show how sources of world tension can be reduced if regional conflicts are dealt with by agreements between the parties involved, with the support of neighbouring States. It will also confirm that it is possible to guarantee conditions of security that will slow down the arms race, which is the only way to achieve peace.

Mr. IMAI (Japan): I would like to begin by welcoming you, Sir, to the chairmanship of the First Committee for this session. Your diplomatic skill, experience and leadership in the field of disarmament and international security are so well known and have been so well demonstrated that all I would like to say now is that we consider ourselves very fortunate to work under your chairmanship and that you can count on the full co-operation of my delegation in the discharge of your very important responsibilities.

I would also like to extend my congratulations to the other officers of the Committee, including the two very capable Vice-Chairmen.

Never has the question of peace and disarmament reached so serious a dimension as it has today for the entire people of the world. The international situation, and in particular East-West relations, continues to be very tense, while there exists on earth a large accumulation of weapons, both nuclear and conventional, which are sufficient to annihilate mankind probably several times over. In this situation the most crucial and urgent issue facing the international community is that of how to promote disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and to pass on intact to our posterity peace and prosperity.

Many of the general statements by the various world leaders at this session of the General Assembly have called for a relaxation in international tensions and expressed a fervent desire for progress in disarmament between the United States and the Soviet Union. For its part the Japanese Government, through its Foreign Minister, Mr. Shintaro Abe, both at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva last June and here at this session of the General Assembly, have clearly enunciated Japan's resolve to work strenuously for peace and nuclear disarmament as its basic foreign policy.
Unfortunately, in spite of the strong wish of the people of the world for peace and disarmament, the tense international situation does not seem to be conducive to substantial progress in disarmament. Instead, we find ourselves in a vicious circle in which weapons technology is ever advancing, thereby making the road to arms control and disarmament ever more complicated. Given this situation, the most practical - indeed, the only possible - way, although it may appear circular and roundabout, is to pay due regard to the two realities, namely, international politics and the advances in weapons technology, and untiringly, step by step, to build up feasible and concrete measures of arms control and disarmament.

When one looks at the realities of the present international situation and its difficulties, one cannot fail to notice that the background to them is a strong feeling of distrust between States - in particular, between the United States and the Soviet Union. In this sense, we consider that the first meaningful step towards realization of arms control and disarmament is to develop real trust in international relations, especially between East and West.

To this end, many things are possible, including confidence-building measures. Whatever measures may be adopted, it is imperative that nations with different views and positions should have an accurate understanding of the views and positions of the others. Then an approach of solving international problems through reasoned and rational dialogue and negotiations is of paramount importance. In reality, however, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) negotiations and the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union have been in a state of suspension since the end of last year. Everyone is aware that these two sets of negotiations have an extremely important role in the determination of future world arms control and disarmament negotiations and thus of the international situation in general. It is more than simply unfortunate that almost a year has passed without any sign of their possible resumption.

Even though the positions of the two sides might be very different, accommodation of such differences can take place only when the two sides sit down at the same negotiating table. Only through such processes can trust between nations be developed. In this sense, we welcome and appreciate the statement by President Reagan of the United States in late September at the General Assembly,
where he presented several practical proposals on arms control and disarmament and at the same time called on the Soviet Union to enter into constructive talks as the only way open to the two countries. Japan takes this opportunity strongly to urge the Soviet Union to recognize its serious responsibility as a major nuclear Power and to return to the negotiating table at the earliest possible date, without pre-conditions and with serious efforts for substantial progress.

As for the INF negotiations in particular, in view of the world-wide implications of their consequences, I take this opportunity to stress again that Japan has insisted on various occasions that any solution should be global, so as to cause no detrimental effects to the security of Asia, including that of our own country.

I note that the series of high-level talks between the United States and the Soviet Union held in late September were reported to have been frank and fruitful and that such contacts are to continue in future. My country sincerely hopes that these new American-Soviet developments will lead to the earliest possible resumption or commencement of positive and definitive negotiations, leading to deeper mutual understanding and thereby creating an atmosphere conducive to the improvement of East-West relations in general.

When discussing arms control and disarmament we cannot forget the realities of international politics, one of which is the attribution of the lack of a global-scale war since the end of the Second World War to a balance of power which has been maintained by the sum total of nuclear and conventional weapons. Arms control and disarmament are inseparably linked to national security policies, and it is not possible to expect unilateral disarmament to emerge at the expense of a country's own national security.

Political decisions are undoubtedly an important element in advancing arms control and disarmament, but no country can be willingly persuaded simply by idealistic slogans or by statements of political intent alone. The various ideas and proposals on arms control and disarmament made so far can bear fruit as realistic and effective measures and lead to actual progress only through practical negotiations, which require hard work, perseverance and difficult decisions. Furthermore, such agreements must be backed up by concrete measures to secure the confidence of the parties - namely, adequate verification provisions.
(Mr. Imai, Japan)

In his annual report the Secretary-General has warned of the situation in the General Assembly, where an ever-increasing number of resolutions remain unimplemented, and has called for serious reconsideration of the matter by Member States. Unfortunately, the situation to which he refers exists in this First Committee as well, and an important cause is insufficient appreciation of the value of the gradual approach of building up concrete measures one by one.

When we consider the relationship between scientific and technological advances on the one hand and arms control and disarmament on the other, we observe rapid progress in all areas of weapons systems, including that of warheads, their means of delivery and related electronics, while remote handling, sensing and verification technologies are now in practical use. It is clear that the rapid advances in technology that we see today have wide-reaching and varied impacts on arms control and disarmament. The qualitative advance in technology has simultaneously transformed the means for realizing disarmament into an extremely complicated issue, thus emphasizing more and more the significance of the theme of adequate international control of science and technology. The rapid progress in technology brings in its wake the possibility of opening up an arms race in a completely new field, and therefore the question of how to bring the matter under control before it is too late - the question of preventive measures - has become a matter of great urgency. The prevention of an arms race in outer space is an immediate example.

Three years have passed since the General Assembly adopted the first resolution on this subject. In the meantime the Conference on Disarmament has so far, unfortunately, failed to establish an ad hoc committee to discuss the matter. Outer space science and technology are continuing to make progress, and I fear that if we are not able to hold constructive discussions on this matter now we shall see in the not-too-distant future a space arms race similar to the nuclear arms race. If we are to avoid such a situation, the Conference on Disarmament needs to reach agreement on the mandate of an ad hoc committee without delay.
At the same time, I should like to emphasize that we should carefully avoid mere abstract arguments or approaches which might prejudge the outcome of the discussions in advance. The various technologies employed in outer space are in some ways also contributing to the stability of the present strategic balance between East and West, while attempts at regulation of military activities in outer space are of a highly complicated and technical nature. It is my feeling that we should begin our discussions from a careful examination of the various activities, both actual and perceived, in outer space in order to sort out various problems facing us. To this end, the role expected of the two most advanced countries in space development, namely the United States and the Soviet Union, is of extreme importance, and we hope that they will adopt a positive approach on this matter and launch on an early commencement of outer space arms control talks, leading to productive discussions and increased stability.

I have just touched on the importance of preventive arms control in outer space. Undoubtedly, from the point of view of our basic task of preventing wars, it goes without saying that the reduction and destruction of existing weapons is of special urgency. My country considers that an early and comprehensive ban on nuclear tests is an important step for the realization of nuclear disarmament and, therefore, has constantly been opposed to any nuclear test by any country. We are all aware that a comprehensive nuclear-test ban is the most effective measure to prevent both horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. A great deal of effort has been directed to this end and there is a long history of negotiations. However, apparently a comprehensive test ban is dependent on various political, strategic, technical and other complex factors, and unfortunately its attainment is not in immediate sight.

In view of this situation, my country has, in the statement given by Foreign Minister Abe at the Conference on Disarmament last June, proposed a step-by-step formula, as a viable and realistic approach to attain a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, through a gradual lowering of the "threshold" for nuclear testing as multilateral verification capabilities are improved. It is regrettable that an ad hoc committee for a nuclear-test ban was not established at the Conference on Disarmament this year. My country wishes to request, as my Foreign Minister stated during the general debate, that the Conference on Disarmament establish an ad hoc committee early next year and that serious discussions on this and other proposals take place.
(Mr. Imai, Japan)

In this connection I should like to welcome the proposal made by the President of the United States recently at the General Assembly calling for an exchange of visits by experts of both the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the purpose of the direct measurement of the magnitude of nuclear weapons tests. Japan has been suggesting such an approach at the Conference on Disarmament and other forums because we are convinced that increased knowledge by both the United States and the Soviet Union of each other's nuclear tests will, together with the technical improvement of verification and calibration capabilities, be conducive to the realization of a favourable political climate for the attainment of a comprehensive test ban.

With regard to the technical aspect of multilateral verification capabilities, I believe that we may continue to rely on the ad hoc group of seismic experts who have already made great contributions. In this respect I wish to express the hope that the third international seismic data exchange experiment now being conducted will produce fruitful results. My country intends to present its ideas on some detailed measures for improving multilateral verification capabilities at next year's session of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will take place next year, and two meetings of the Preparatory Committee have already been held. The NPT régime is one of the most important frameworks for peace and security in the present international society. At the same time, no one should be allowed to underestimate the balance of undertakings in the NPT: the non-nuclear-weapon States will not possess nuclear weapons, while the nuclear-weapon States will pursue nuclear disarmament negotiations in good faith.

My country would be very much concerned with a possible erosion of confidence in the NPT régime and, therefore, in order to maintain and strengthen the NPT régime we again strongly urge the United States and the Soviet Union, as nuclear-weapon States having special responsibilities for nuclear disarmament, to make maximum efforts to bring about definitive and visible disarmament measures. We consider also that coming ever closer to the realization of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban is extremely important for the purpose of maintaining and strengthening the NPT régime. It is with this end in mind also that we have put forward the step-by-step proposal. Furthermore, we should like to call upon the
two nuclear-weapon States, China and France, as well as other States not yet party to the NPT, to recognize the important role of this Treaty and to take steps to accede to it.

As regards the prohibition of chemical weapons, my country appreciates the fact that the Conference on Disarmament has conducted intensive and serious discussions on the matter taking account of the various proposals put forth by many countries. Japan considers the prohibition of chemical weapons as a matter of great importance second only to nuclear disarmament, and has been calling for the early conclusion of a global and comprehensive treaty for the prohibition of chemical weapons. We have found encouragement in the discussions at the Conference on Disarmament and hope to see even more progress in future discussions.

It is true that, with the intensification of detailed examination, issues are becoming rather complex. My country would like to see at next year's session of the Conference on Disarmament further efforts by all countries to resolve such questions as definition and verification. We believe that with the combined efforts of nations it should be possible to reach an early agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons. My country will continue to take an active part in the discussions and negotiations with regard to this matter. We are especially interested in exploring further avenues contributing to an effective verification system.

Finally, I should like to touch upon the matter of conventional arms disarmament. Often this subject seems to be hidden behind more glamorous issues of nuclear disarmament. But, as is well known, the East-West imbalance in conventional forces is inseparably linked to the question of nuclear disarmament. Therefore, the realization of arms control and disarmament in the field of conventional weapons should contribute substantially to the advancement of nuclear disarmament.
In view of the fact that all conflicts that have actually arisen since the Second World War have been fought by means of conventional weapons and, as is often said, at least four fifths of world military expenditure is spent on conventional weapons, the importance of this area of disarmament should not be considered lightly. Furthermore, with the advance in precision guidance technology, we cannot overlook the fact that the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons seems to be becoming less clear in the context of some war scenarios. In this sense, my country welcomes the fact that the group of experts on conventional weapons disarmament, in which we have also taken part, has compiled its final report and we wish to express our hope that serious discussions will take place with regard to this matter.

One cannot overemphasize the importance of building up realistic and concrete measures one by one while taking into account the realities of international society. At this point, I should like to recall the fact that the United Nations, whose Charter was drawn up before the appearance of nuclear weapons, has nevertheless managed, in the maintenance of peace and security in the post-war nuclear age, to concentrate much initiative and effort on effective international control of science and technology, which have both military and peaceful applications. I should like to stress that Japan is resolved to continue to take an active part in such work, which requires quiet patience, but which is an effective means to make concrete contributions in the areas of disarmament and arms control.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to remind representatives that tomorrow morning, at 10.30 a.m., the First Committee will hold a special meeting in observance of Disarmament Week and that the Second Pledging Conference for the World Disarmament Campaign will convene tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.