Twenty-ninth Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSANDTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 25 October 1974, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)
later: Mr. NEUGERAUER (Vice-President) (German Democratic Republic)
Rapporteur: Mr. COSTA LOBO (Portugal)

- Reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries \[247\] (continued)

  (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Distribution of the Funds Released as a Result of the Reduction of Military Budgets;

  (b) Report of the Secretary-General

- Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: report of the Secretary-General \[277\] (continued)

- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament \[287\] (continued)

- Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament \[297\] (continued)

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The co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.
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DECLARATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA (A/9706)
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): The 2000th meeting of the First Committee is called to order. Under so suspicious a number and in continuation of our general debate, I am now pleased to call on the representative of Sweden, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Mrs. Inga Thorsson.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): This year the First Committee meets at a time when the need for substantial progress in arms regulation and disarmament is perhaps more compelling than it has ever been. Are then the prospects for such progress rising or declining? Let me, at the outset, express sincere hope that they are rising and that responsible people everywhere will make full use of any opportunity that is offered them to promote progress. The continuing movement away from the cold war is an exceptionally important international development which must be translated into a lasting and universal détente through meaningful arms-limitation agreements and disarmament. The current détente has survived several international crises, but only disarmament can secure the peace for years to come.

The First Committee is not a negotiating forum, but the debates here and the General Assembly resolutions to which they give rise should guide the negotiators in the various important talks, bilateral as well as multilateral, that are currently taking place.

I must emphasize this point, because the variety of activities under way in the disarmament field might be considered more encouraging if the results had only been more commensurate with the number of sessions and the number of statements of good intentions. The main multilateral negotiations in the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament have not produced any concrete results since 1971. The bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on limiting strategic armaments have led to certain agreements, some of which, admittedly, do indeed have substantive importance. However, although formal commitments have been made to follow up partial arms-limitation agreements already reached with more comprehensive agreements, the nuclear arms race between the two parties just continues, unhampered by any such "in good faith" commitment. The scepticism about the readiness of the super-Powers to curb their own bilateral competition is undiminished. The alleged need for "bargaining chips" in SALT rather seems to be an extra incentive for new developments in the strategic field. The talks between
NATO and the Warsaw Pact on reducing troop and arms levels in Central Europe have recently resumed amid deepening pessimism about the chances for an agreement in the foreseeable future. The European Security Conference, which has worked for over a year, is moving forward at a snail's pace, and the efforts to achieve some confidence-building measures in the military field have so far resulted in only slight progress.

This gloomy picture, further darkened by the nuclear explosions which six countries have carried out this spring and summer, must not lead to despair and paralysis.

Our debate takes place at a time when the unparalleled upward spiral of armaments costs -- and we shall never forget that 70 per cent of these costs, now estimated at from $240,000 million to $275,000 million at current (1973) prices, are spent in the United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and France -- is put in the perspective of poverty, starvation, suffering and destitution among the majority of mankind. Our debate takes place at a time when what the self-perpetuating arms race represents in frightening -- I would almost say disgusting -- misuse of resources is put in the perspective of existing or approaching scarcities. Our debate takes place at a time when the desire is for the present international economic order, of which the armaments race is such a glaring example, to give way to a new international economic order characterized by justice and equity.

Surely this is the time when every opportunity to embark with vigour on a more sane course than that being followed at present must be seized, when no effort should be spared to cause this to happen. Because we seem to approach a point of no return, beyond which lies an unbridled arms competition that may well get out of hand and thus become uncontrollable for arms-regulation purposes. And let us not forget that, in technical and substantive terms, we have opportunities for disarmament which are greater today than ever before. Through the work in Geneva -- in CCD and in SALT -- the ground has been thoroughly prepared for more far-reaching arms-regulation and disarmament measures. What is needed is concerted political will and determination on the part of the strongest military Powers. We have the right to ask: Is this will, is this determination going to come forward?
A disturbing weakness in the disarmament negotiation efforts with which we have had to live through all the years in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has been that not all of the world's five nuclear-weapon States participate. This is the main reason why the Swedish Government has supported, and still supports, the proposal to hold a World Disarmament Conference with universal participation. As we are soon entering the mid-term year of this decade, the Disarmament Decade, let me express the modest hope that such a conference will be successfully held before its end.

Soon CCD will have been at work for 13 years. All this time, the priority item on the agenda has been the comprehensive test ban. Continued nuclear testing is a constant reminder of the arms race. The threshold underground test ban which was agreed upon in Moscow this summer is of very uncertain value. It is most urgent to conclude immediately the comprehensive test ban in order to halt the nuclear arms race. The General Assembly has adopted innumerable resolutions calling for an end to nuclear-weapon tests, but the testing Powers leave such appeals unanswered. The two super-Powers have moved their tests underground, and allow them to continue as they officially maintain that opposing positions on the verification issues are the real obstacles to a comprehensive test-ban. Other nuclear-weapon States have continued atmospheric testing in spite of vigorous protests from countries in the region and, again, repeated appeals from the General Assembly. Let me say in all seriousness that we find this state of things unacceptable. And by "we" I do believe I am entitled to mean the majority of mankind.

The serious problems of nuclear testing, whether in the atmosphere or underground, whether for peaceful or for military purposes, and of nuclear-weapon proliferation have become aggravated this year through the first Indian nuclear explosion and through the rapidly accelerating world production of plutonium in connexion with present and prospective civilian uses of nuclear energy.
The Swedish Government continues to support strongly the purpose of the non-proliferation Treaty. We have always stressed that the continuing testing by the five nuclear-weapon Powers seriously endangers the non-proliferation Treaty. Any nuclear explosion by a new country obviously increases this risk. The Indian Government has therefore taken upon itself a very grave responsibility. On behalf of my Government, I again urge India to place all its nuclear activities under international safeguards. At the same time, I want again to emphasize that the nuclear-weapon Powers -- and particularly the two super-Powers -- will have to take their share of responsibility for developments in this field as long as they do not show convincingly their will to implement article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

My Government intends to participate actively in next year's non-proliferation Treaty review conference and will add its voice to others demanding that the obligations towards nuclear disarmament undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States be fully carried out. Furthermore, the urgency of getting more universal adherence to the Treaty, by nuclear as well as non-nuclear States, should be obvious to anyone. Several industrially important States are moving closer to final acceptance of the Treaty. We welcome the announcement yesterday by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that his country has now concluded ratification procedures and that his Government wants to participate in the non-proliferation Treaty review conference. We sincerely hope that there will be many more ratifications in time for the conference.

I have referred to the nuclear explosion carried out by India on 18 May this year. The value and practicability of peaceful nuclear explosions are the subject of considerable controversy. Basing itself on the obvious fact that there is no difference between a nuclear explosive for peaceful or for military purposes except the declared intent, the Swedish Government firmly supports the pursuance of proposals for international consideration of this entire issue. All divergent views on the political, technical, safety and
economic problems involved must be fully discussed. The mechanisms for such a survey already exist. The Swedish Government has consistently argued that if or when peaceful nuclear explosions are considered feasible and desirable, they should be carried out under international observation and, preferably, under an international régime. In the light of article V of the non-proliferation Treaty, this will be one of the important issues for the forthcoming non-proliferation Treaty review conference. Many of these questions are also being discussed and studied within the International Atomic Energy Agency. In the view of my Government, the General Assembly should at this session provide the IAEA with a new mandate to consider this complex issue. In view of the urgency of the problem, the Agency should be asked to report to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly in order to enable the Assembly to discuss, in the light of such a report, the necessary further steps, which very probably will have to be taken. This continuous follow-up by the General Assembly is of the utmost importance, as problems connected with peaceful nuclear explosions have become primarily a political issue.

In this connexion, it is important to remember that a comprehensive test ban treaty would have to deal with the problems of peaceful nuclear explosions. Whatever procedures are elaborated must be non-discriminatory and apply equally to nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. This is the type of international agreement which would best fulfil the aims of article V of the non-proliferation Treaty and which non-nuclear-weapon States can expect as a compensation for their undertaking not to develop nuclear explosive devices. Since bilateral negotiations seem to be in the offing regarding peaceful nuclear explosions as a follow-up to the Moscow threshold test ban, the two main nuclear Powers now have a good opportunity to make some initial progress towards this goal through providing for international observation of their peaceful nuclear explosions and, thereby, also taking some first steps towards eliminating the discriminatory elements in the present situation.
I have already referred in passing to the serious problems raised by the projected world-wide expansion of nuclear power generation as countries find themselves in the midst of a short-term energy crisis and facing a long-term crisis.

It is our convinced view that the international community must take a hard look, now, at these problems; for let us not close our eyes to the effects of national efforts towards energy self-sufficiency through, inter alia, rapidly growing nuclear power programmes. One such effect is, as we all know, the ensuing and awesome increase in plutonium production, creating nuclear explosive capabilities with the spread of nuclear technology, and opening possibilities for nuclear blackmail and nuclear violence.

We would be seriously and probably calamitously lacking in responsibility towards the peoples of the world, both present and future generations, if we did not make every effort to check and control nuclear explosive technology as well as to prevent the many obvious dangers to the environment that accompany an increase in the stocks of plutonium.

We are fully aware that the task is enormous. We are fully aware of the difficulties when it comes to devising concrete measures to deal with these dangers. Consequently, we must apply different time scales when proposing various measures. Certain types of action could and should be taken immediately. To this group belong, in our view, increased pressure on States to adhere to the non-proliferation Treaty, making it more effective, and the related international safeguards system considerably strengthened. The time for such measures is now, and at the review conference.

In a somewhat longer perspective, we shall have to look to agreements on, for instance, minimum standards for physical protection of nuclear plants and fissile material or research efforts concerning the future utilization of plutonium. In the long-term perspective, we see the need for some system of international management of fissile material, as in the future no exclusively national solutions to this management problem will be adequate and satisfactory. We do not under-estimate the difficulties in elaborating such a system and achieving its general acceptance by States, but the direction of our work should be made clear now. We face here a tremendous challenge in the task to
capture the nuclear genie in the bottle and there to control it effectively. If we should ever be able to protect this and coming generations from nuclear holocaust, it is a challenge that we shall have to live up to by using our imagination and our political will power in a true expression of international solidarity.

I have only indicated some trends in our thinking in this regard, and I intend to revert to this issue in some detail at a later stage of the deliberations of this Committee. May I say a few additional words only on one important issue at this year's Assembly in the field of nuclear disarmament, namely the question of nuclear-free zones. As foreseen in article VII of the non-proliferation Treaty, the creation of a nuclear-free zone would constitute a higher level of ambition on the part of the participating States, even though applied only to a limited region. If a group of States agrees to declare their joint territories as a nuclear-free zone, Sweden would welcome such a measure. We would stress, however, that the creation of such zones must not be an excuse on the part of the participating States to abstain from adhering to the non-proliferation Treaty. In particular, agreements on such zones should not permit activities that are forbidden by the non-proliferation Treaty -- that is, the acquisition by non-nuclear-weapon States of nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes in other ways than those prescribed in article V of the Treaty.
I have already voiced complaints about the lack of results in the work of CCD in recent years. One field where results are conspicuously lacking is that of chemical weapons. The Conference has spent its main efforts in the last three years on the prohibition of the possession of chemical weapons, but without the commensurate progress. A number of concrete proposals have been presented, but substantive negotiations have not started and no decision has been taken even on the type of agreement to be negotiated. The United States and the USSR have expressed the intention to consider a joint initiative in the CCD. It is to be hoped that this initiative will be presented at the earliest possible time next year so that the deadlock may come to an end.

The delegation of Japan has put forward a draft convention which has been welcomed by many, including the Swedish delegation, as an interesting potential basis for negotiations. It sets as the goal the comprehensive prohibition of all chemical weapons and all activities connected therewith; but, in order to achieve an important first step now, it allows for temporary exemptions. Until we know what those exemptions would cover, it may be too early to assess the significance of such a treaty. The Conference should, however, continue its work along the lines of the Japanese proposal, which we believe offers good possibilities for results acceptable to all States.

I should like to say a few words about another item to which the Swedish Government attaches great importance — namely, the prohibition or restriction of the use of certain conventional weapons that may be deemed to be excessively cruel or to have indiscriminate effects, that is, napalm and other incendiary weapons. My delegation is glad to note that this item is beginning to receive the attention it deserves. As intergovernmental attention has long been focused intensively on the ABC-weapons, we have tended to ignore the terrifying developments in the sphere of conventional weapons. It is our firm conviction that just as the humanitarian-motivated bans on the use of the dumdum bullet, on poison and on chemical and bacteriological weapons have, on the whole, proved viable and successful, it should be feasible today to add to the laws of war bans on the use of certain conventional weapons which are excessively cruel or apt to be indiscriminate.
The diplomatic conference in Geneva on confirmation and development of the international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts has offered an opportunity to discuss proposals for such bans and our knowledge in this field has recently been improved by the four-week conference of government experts held in Lucerne under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The Swedish Government, which, together with the Governments of Egypt, Mexico, Norway, Sudan, Switzerland and Yugoslavia, has submitted a working paper to the diplomatic conference with proposals on the weapons issue, is satisfied that broader co-operation is emerging on the issue. There is, moreover, hope that this will eventually result in general agreement on important matters. We attach signal importance to this issue and we shall revert to it during the course of this Committee's work on disarmament.

In discussing the arms race, armament costs, arms control and disarmament it is, of course, not possible to refrain from giving some thoughts to the consequence in monetary terms of the misuse of resources for armaments, that is, the military budgets. A group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General has produced the report requested by the General Assembly last year on the important question of the reduction of military budgets. It is pointed out in the report that the history of efforts to freeze or reduce military budgets goes a long way back, but that none of the numerous proposals made has been put into action as the conditions for success simply were not present. In the view of the experts, the conditions are now more propitious. They explain that what is needed is a sufficient degree of trust between nations and a sufficient supply of information.

The Swedish delegation would welcome any proposal on reductions of military expenditure, particularly on the part of the main spenders -- that is, States having large military budgets. In order to contribute towards creating the necessary conditions for such reductions, we have already presented concrete proposals in CCD aimed at greater openness in regard to actual defence expenditure and thereby also at creating greater confidence among States. We are convinced that the security of all States could be increased by releasing some of the information which is now being kept secret, just as international security could be maintained with far lower levels of world military expenditure. The general international climate would be improved and the likelihood of military conflicts would decrease, if military budgets were reduced. This item on our agenda is therefore of utmost
importance and we intend to keep it under continuous observation.

I should now like to turn to the interesting and thought-provoking proposal of the delegation of the USSR on the "prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health". There is no doubt in our minds that the international community has to deal with the issues brought up by the Soviet delegation. We have ourselves discussed half a year ago in CCD the possibility of measures against meteorological warfare. The strong and positive interest of the Swedish Government in these issues has also been demonstrated by its efforts in other international forums. Taking this general and firmly positive attitude of my delegation into account, I am sure that nobody will take amiss a few critical comments on the USSR proposal at this preliminary stage.

The proposed draft convention raises several difficult problems of interpretation which need to be considered carefully. The distinction between military and civilian action seems to be one such important question. The intended relationship between several proposed measures and on-going activities in the same general field in the United Nations system and elsewhere is also somewhat unclear to my delegation and merits further study. It must, of course, be of fundamental interest for the General Assembly when dealing with the present proposal to avoid any negative influences on those efforts.

This is again a matter to which I intend to come back in more detail later. I am also looking forward to hearing, in the course of this debate, the views of other delegations on this highly interesting issue.

I said in the beginning that, for many obvious reasons, the need for substantial progress in arms regulation and disarmament seems to be more compelling than ever. If we do not succeed in achieving positive results soon, there will be even stronger reason behind the question which is put increasingly often: Is there hope for man? To some of us, the odds against sometimes seem overwhelming.
The global problems of our age, the problems of mass poverty, population growth, the availability and distribution of resources, including energy, the dangers to which we expose the human environment, the world monetary problems, all these global problems require the mobilization of every ounce of our intellectual, moral and political resources. The absence of real progress in the disarmament work represents a tragic diversion of these resources from the pursuit of positive and constructive ends, towards the continuation of the destructive use of resources for armament purposes. Mankind's future is inextricably linked with drastic change in resource use. We should, therefore, never be allowed to forget that the 1970s are the decade of disarmament and development. Pressure must be brought to bear on this world's big and mighty to make possible soon the easing of the burdens of armaments and thereby to brighten the human prospect.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): If I may, I should like to express to Mrs. Thorsson my satisfaction at seeing that a country like Sweden, which has done and continues to do so much for the cause of peace, is represented by a woman of such eminent abilities and competence in the tradition of her distinguished predecessor, Mrs. Alva Myrdal, the memory of whose work remains fresh in our minds.

Mr. GROZEV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, it is said that people do not like eulogies, especially when they are as well deserved as the compliments and best wishes addressed to you and the other officers of the Committee. This is why I should like to add my most sincere congratulations and wishes for complete success in the accomplishment of your difficult and responsible task. I have all the more reason to do so because the best years of your youth were spent in diplomatic activity in my country, Bulgaria.

Our Committee is again discussing the problem of disarmament, which is of deep concern to all mankind; and this is more than natural and normal because these problems have a direct bearing on the life, work and destinies of peoples.

The solution of disarmament problems is not an end in itself. Rather is it an important means to arrive at an end as defined in the United Nations Charter, namely, to guarantee peace and security for present and succeeding generations and thus to save them from the scourge of a new world war. This is why these problems, however important, cannot be considered separately or in isolation. They are most inextricably -- and I would even say organically -- linked dialectically to peace and to the problems of international détente, and to the major problems of development.
Nobody can deny the complexity of contradictions in the contemporary world. We are faced with two main socio-political groups: socialism and capitalism. The transition from capitalism to socialism is taking place on a world scale. Some States are linked by political and military agreements. Others, first and foremost the newly independent countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, pursue a policy of non-alignment. In this complex and contradictory world, international peace and security can be ensured not by confrontation but only on the basis of the principles underlying peaceful coexistence among States with different socio-political systems, through international co-operation in all areas, and particularly in the area of economic relations.

Political détente is a sine qua non to guarantee international peace and security. But alone it cannot be sufficient, much less global and lasting, if it is not followed by a military détente, by effective measures in the field of disarmament.

In conditions of a political as well as a military détente, there can be created the necessary prerequisites and material conditions for the solution of complex economic and social problems in all countries, particularly in developing countries.

Thus, if we wish to be realistic both from the political and economic standpoint, we should consider the problems of détente, disarmament and development not separately, independently of each other, but in their dialectical unity, in their reciprocal conditioning and interdependence.

It is therefore not by chance that during the recently concluded general debate at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly disarmament questions were considered particularly from the standpoint of their close links with the assessment of the international situation. It is worth recalling that most heads of delegations have not only recognized the fact that international tension has been eased but have also pinpointed the real results that have been achieved. Among the most substantive results which are at the same time proof of the existence and development of the détente process, mention has rightly been made of the improvement of relations between east and west, the various treaties between the socialist countries and the Federal Republic of Germany, the Paris Agreements to
end the war in Viet-Nam, and the agreements on Laos. In this context we should add
the negotiations, soon to enter their final stage, of the Conference on Security and
Co-operation in Europe, and the historic agreements signed between the Soviet Union
and the United States, the most important of which is the one on the
prevention of a nuclear war. We await with hope a positive result from the
continuation of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks as well as the Vienna
negotiations on the reduction of troops and armaments in central Europe. To all
this we should add the positive process that is under way aimed at the definitive
elimination of the shameful system of colonialism, racial discrimination and
apartheid. There is no doubt that the important democratic changes in Portugal
have contributed and will contribute even more to the further speeding up and
the definitive conclusion of this process.

All these facts and many others prove beyond question that the process of
détente in international relations is not an obsession existing only in the
fantastic dreams of some politicians and philosophers. Rather, it is indeed a
living and real process in full development.

Of course, the political, ideological and philosophical differences
between social systems, as well as the differences between interests
and aspirations lead inevitably to different viewpoints on the nature and trends
of this process, and this is understandable.
That is why no one can harbour the illusion that the process of détente is a calm and unhampered process without any departures from or difficulties along its path, without contradictory events and phenomena which are sometimes mutually exclusive. We all witness such events and phenomena. It is sufficient to compare the overthrow by force of the legitimate régime of President Allende and the atrocities of the fascist junta in Chile with the democratic changes and the first positive steps taken by the new Government of Portugal. Or the end of the war in Viet-Nam and in Laos with the tragic events in Cyprus, which took place as a result of foreign intervention and whose end is not yet in sight. And what is more, if we consider each of these events separately, we will be able to perceive the existing difficulties and the obstinate resistance to a final and just solution of the old complex problems as well as of new problems. This applies just as well to the implementation of the Paris Agreements on Viet-Nam as to the Middle East problem and to the problem of the total elimination of the colonial system. Everywhere and always, overtly or covertly, the forces of peace and détente continue to struggle against the forces of aggression, war and permanent tension.

It is essential that on the world scale the balance of forces should constantly change in favour of the forces of peace and progress, which have not only rendered the détente process possible, but which are also a prerequisite for its further development. At the same time we should not underestimate the forces and the potential of the militarist circles of the imperialist countries, as well as the opposition to this process by certain leftists with super-ambitious expectations. That is why, concurrently with the new democratic and progressive events and phenomena, we can expect here and there negative and reactionary events in which there is an attempt to hamper this historic development, but which ultimately can only be of a temporary nature. That is to say, the détente process will continue to develop in the future in conditions of a complex and difficult struggle, although its main characteristic and aim remains understanding and co-operation. The important thing is that this process should continue to develop and to become more complete, in order to encompass all the regions of the world and to become irreversible.
It is from this standpoint with regard to the contemporary world situation and détente that the Bulgarian delegation deems it essential to hold a thorough discussion and to achieve substantive results regarding the problems of disarmament which are before us. These problems are numerous, and I shall dwell on just a few of them. My delegation wishes to reserve its right to express its points of view again at one of the forthcoming meetings of the Committee.

I should like first of all to stress that we do not share the unfounded pessimism and negativism according to which nothing has been done so far in the area of disarmament. It is even more pointless to mention those who believe that it is not necessary, and that it is even detrimental, to consider these problems; instead of disarmament, they call for rearmament as the principal means for the solution of international problems. It is obvious that in this case it is not a matter of a lack of understanding, of a misconception, of confusion or the like; rather, this is a lucid and well-thought-out plan to oppose any attempt that might lead to a reduction in the unbridled arms race and, even more, to effective disarmament. Such results are evidently in keeping with neither the greed for super-profits of the imperialist military-industrial complex, nor the excessive ambitions of other adversaries of disarmament.

If we are realistic, we must recognize that the long bilateral and multilateral discussions on disarmament have not been in vain. In support of this view, we can mention the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons, the agreement on the prohibition of stockpiling nuclear weapons on the sea-bed and ocean floor, the well-known agreements concluded between the Soviet Union and the United States, including those concerning nuclear ballistic missiles, the limitation of underground nuclear tests and others. These are facts that no one can deny.

However, we should recognize that the results obtained so far in the area of disarmament are not proportionate to the efforts made or to the long negotiations conducted, and even less to public expectations.
While we discuss disarmament, the frenzied arms race continues, arriving at the astronomical figure of $250,000 million spent annually, not to produce goods to improve the living conditions of the workers, but to manufacture the means of threat and death. The burden of this frenzied race in the production of these means of destruction falls exclusively on the shoulders of the working masses. This is the source of super-profits for those who manufacture the means of war.

Those who in certain capitalist countries oppose a halt to the manufacture of arms, pretending to be concerned about the fate of millions of workers, are only in fact thinking about their own super-profits.

Who needs this enormous accumulation of conventional and nuclear weapons and for what purpose? It is necessary only for the aggressive imperialist circles which have not yet renounced their old habits and their new intentions of conquering the lands of others, dominating other people and imposing their will in international relations from a position of strength.
The socialist countries and the other peace-loving countries are thus constrained to arm also, so that they may be able to defend themselves in the case of aggression and teach a well-deserved lesson to the aggressor. The ruling circles of the military-industrial complex and their accomplices constantly insist on an increase in the military budget and unceasingly accumulate and stockpile new arms, justifying all this by the argument that their adversaries have up-to-date weapons and a large army. This action is in turn followed by a corresponding reaction, and it is thus that we arrive at the vicious circle of a permanent arms race. It is high time to break this vicious circle and to undertake decisive measures aimed at disarmament. However, it is necessary to stress again, to put an end to all speculation, that this does not in any way concern those peoples that are forced to take up arms and fight for their national freedom and independence.

We have all witnessed the efforts made by the socialist countries in the course of many years, and particularly the efforts of the Soviet Union, in the United Nations as well as outside it, to implement such measures. This is confirmed by the many Soviet initiatives at every General Assembly session, as well as in other international forums.

First and foremost, we should refer to the initiative regarding the convening of a world disarmament conference. This initiative has won the approval of an overwhelming majority of Member countries of the United Nations, of five consecutive conferences of the non-aligned countries, of many other governmental and non-governmental organizations and of all peace-loving mankind.

The Ad Hoc Committee set up in that regard by the decision of the General Assembly has this year accomplished a considerable amount of useful work, particularly regarding the study of the points of view of different Governments, most of which have spoken in favour of better preparation and of convening the conference as soon as possible. It is well known what difficulties and obstacles have been put in the way of the work of the Committee, and by whom, particularly with regard to the convening of the conference itself. Two States permanent members of the Security Council, having conspired together, are holding aloof, creating obstructions, posing conditions and hampering the preparations for the conference. If these countries are not really against the conference, their place is among those who are making sincere efforts to prepare for its convening.
The Bulgarian delegation would once again like to emphasize its position, namely, that the General Assembly at this twenty-ninth session should broaden the mandate of the Special Committee and entrust to it the task of preparing for the discussion of the practical questions relating to the convening of the conference, particularly the agenda, the time and place, procedural matters and others.

The decision adopted on the initiative of the Soviet Union on the non-resort to force in international relations and the permanent prohibition of the utilization of nuclear weapons has taken on exclusive importance. The Security Council must adopt appropriate measures to give mandatory force to the provisions of that resolution; but time is passing, and the resolution has not yet been put into effect. Because of the well-known forces which are obstructing this process, the Council is not taking the necessary steps. The same is true of the resolution adopted at the last session in connexion with the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries. That important decision of the General Assembly has not been implemented by reason of the refusal of the Western countries to co-operate in carrying out the pertinent provisions of the resolution, which was adopted by a large majority at the twenty-eighth session. In the meantime it is precisely the military budgets of those self-same countries which have increased, whereas the peoples that have been stricken by drought and other natural calamities suffer cruelly from famine and sickness and are still waiting for help. The important decisions of the sixth special session of the General Assembly cannot be translated into action since the necessary funds are not available.

Does all this not show in a striking way who is really in favour of disarmament, who are the friends of the developing countries, and who are content with simply uttering hollow slogans about assistance? However, these peoples do not want mere slogans and attractive promises; they want concrete actions and real assistance, which, above all, could derive from a reduction of the military expenditure and the carrying out of effective disarmament.
The Soviet proposal that is before us this year, namely, that entitled "Prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health", is further evidence of the concern of the Soviet Government to limit the fields in which military weapons can be used and to ensure for peoples a peaceful and happy future. The reasons for this new-Soviet initiative have been clearly explained by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko:

(continued in Russian)

"The achievements of scientific and technological progress have expanded the possibilities of influencing nature and the climate of the globe and, in a certain sense, of controlling the complex and powerful processes involved. Unfortunately, the latest discoveries can be used not only for creative, but also for military, purposes with extremely destructive consequences for mankind. These are not the conjectures of science fiction writers, but an actual threat that is assuming an ever-more realistic shape. It is in the interests of all peoples to nip this threat in the bud."

(continued in French)

I should like to emphasize this last-mentioned idea, that is, that this danger should be nipped in the bud. I emphasize it because I should like to recall that the socialist countries proposed and insisted while there was still time that it should be precisely the embryonic beginnings of atomic and thermonuclear weapons which should be prohibited, as well as putting an end to the perfecting of means designed to carry out bacteriological or biological and chemical warfare and so on. The rejection of these proposals has resulted in the stockpiling of arms of a frightening potency whose utilization could lead to the destruction of life on our planet.
We should like to think that the bitter experiences of recent history may prompt us this time to take steps properly to eliminate those new dangers.

Much information published in recent years shows that the performance of modern science regarding the possibility of directly influencing the climate and various natural phenomena for peaceful purposes is important.

A number of natural physical processes are stimulated in order to accelerate the formation of water drops in clouds and to bring about rainfall.

Methods are also used in order to speed up the process of the growth and precipitation of ice particles for seeding in fog for the purpose of dispersing it.

Hail is avoided by using methods of seeding agents which hold up or accelerate the process of hail formation. Such methods are also used in Bulgaria, and those agents are transmitted with the help of rockets or artillery shells.

In 1969 a special meteorological squad from the United States attacked hurricane "Debbie" in the air and succeeded in reducing its speed by a factor of three. Certain natural phenomena also possess great energy. Thus the energy of cyclones is calculated in terms which are equivalent to the energy of thousands of millions of tons of TNT, that is, the power of thermonuclear bombs of several megatons. Even more powerful are the phenomena such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. The destructive force of floods and the tsunami and other tidal waves, is also extremely great.

Up to now, man has not been in a position to master those phenomena or to harness their energy, but we cannot doubt that the day is not far off when that will all be possible. However, even now the world is aware of actions in the sphere of meteorological warfare. It is well known that tests have been carried out in order to start artificial cloud-bursts which flatten everything in their path. Landslides have also been brought about artificially in order to destroy bridges and to inundate vast regions. Woodlands have also been destroyed by using herbicides and defoliants. The tactic of using an artificially-produced "fire storm" has also been practised. Clouds and fog have been dispersed in order to improve the visibility of military targets, and so on.
According to information published in the press, research is being carried out in order to create new and powerful means of producing a "super weapon" for conducting meteorological warfare. For example, it would be possible to destroy, in specific regions of the earth the ozone layer which extends 15 to 40 kilometres above the earth's surface. This would allow the poisonous element of ultra-violet rays to reach the earth, causing the destruction of all forms of life.

The possibility of creating "guided tsunamis" by causing a landslide of a considerable part of the continental shelf at specific points in the ocean has become real and may prove catastrophic for certain coastal States.

These and other possibilities of this nature call for vigilance. International conferences and governmental institutions which speak with the voice of authority, and a number of politicians and scientists, have issued warnings of the dangers inherent in the consequences of meteorological warfare, and rightly so. Humanity now has to face the danger of the development of the arms race in a completely new sphere which is fraught with dangerous consequences, the disruption of the world climatic cycle, the destruction of the balance of nature, the destruction of the environment: all this implies serious danger to the life of mankind, and no one should close his eyes to that danger. The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, adopted recommendation 70, which contains a warning against the possible dangers inherent in arbitrary actions in the field of changes in the climate.

A group of scientists from 40 countries reached the same conclusion as far back as 1971. I am referring to the report on the study of man's interference with the climate, which was published by the MIT press agency in 1971.

The representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States, who held their 7th meeting in Dortmund in December 1972, came out in favour of prohibiting the influencing of the environment for military purposes, and also spoke in favour of concluding an agreement on the subject as soon as possible.
In the agreements concluded this year between the Soviet Union and the United States, major attention has been given to this matter, and it is stipulated that the two countries will consider the possibility of concluding an agreement for this purpose.

We have before us a draft convention on this subject, tabled by the Soviet Union, as well as a draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.675, of which Bulgaria is one of the sponsors. I should like to express the conviction of my delegation that this draft resolution will win the full support of our Committee and of the General Assembly. We shall thus have laid the foundation for the drawing up and adoption of an over-all agreement, a detailed convention on the prevention of the use of the environment and the climate for military purposes.

Before concluding, I should like to note that the Bulgarian Government is in principle in favour of the idea of setting up nuclear-free zones, provided that the commitments genuinely apply to all countries in the respective area, and that no country under any pretext whatsoever is authorized to maintain in that zone bases or fleets equipped with nuclear arms. That is why my country warmly supports the idea of transforming the Mediterranean and the Balkans into a denuclearized zone, accompanied by the simultaneous withdrawal from the Mediterranean of all Soviet and United States vessels and submarines equipped with nuclear weapons.

This is fully consistent with Bulgaria's peaceful policy, one which it has unswervingly been practising for more than 30 years, ever since its liberation.*

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* Mr. Neugebauer (German Democratic Republic) took the Chair.
Having participated in the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament since its establishment, as well as in the Conference on questions of co-operation in Europe and the Vienna talks on the reduction of arms and armed forces in Central Europe, the People's Republic of Bulgaria is doing and will do its utmost to transform our world into a world without war, a world of peace, security and co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Grozév for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. BARTON (Canada): I do not know whether my predecessor in this Committee paid a tribute to the election of Mr. de Rozas as Chairman, and to the other officers of the Committee, but I have no intention of passing up the opportunity, especially in the context of Mr. de Rozas' position as a member of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. We are delighted to have the privilege of working under his direction.

This is the third year in which I have participated in the annual debate on disarmament. It will come as no surprise to those who have been around for a much longer period that, so far as the substance of many of the issues which confront us is concerned, I find I could repeat the statement of last year, or the year before that, with scarcely a word changed. But even if our discussion here sounds repetitious, and even if the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament appears to be making no headway, this annual debate is important. It is the single most effective and reliable forum for reminding mankind of the stupidity of throwing its resources into the mire of self-destruction, and the moral bankruptcy of a situation whereby nations may unilaterally jeopardize our common future by developing and deploying ever larger arsenals.

Without wishing in any way to down-grade the importance of other matters before this Committee, I wish today to focus entirely on the issue which seems to Canadians at this time to be of overriding importance, namely, the rapidly escalating danger of nuclear proliferation and the consequent escalation of the risks of nuclear war. Proliferation, in our view, encompasses both the
increase in the lethality of the nuclear arsenals of the great Powers and any increase in the number of countries possessing nuclear weapons.

Ever since its founding, this Organization has been preoccupied with the conundrum of how to achieve the peaceful use of the atom without at the same time sowing the dragon-teeth of nuclear proliferation throughout the world. The initial bold vision of the Lilienthal and Baruch plans whereby control of the atom would be invested in an international trust has long since faded; and, as we have successively debated a series of disarmament plans, we have seen the number of nuclear-weapon Powers grow from one to two, to three, to four, and then to five, almost as if the status of permanent member of the Security Council carried with it an automatic requirement to possess such weapons -- a sort of twentieth-century version of the divine right of kings.

Despite the pleas, demands and appeals to reason by the vast majority of the Members of this Organization, and despite the fact that over the years the energies, abilities and imaginations of literally thousands of dedicated men and women have been devoted to the search for an acceptable disarmament plan, we find that in the thirtieth year of the nuclear age the great Powers are busier than ever, amassing over-kill capacity and developing new refinements in their already deadly hardware.

There is a glimmer of hope that the continued escalation of the nuclear arsenals of the great Powers may be halted by the SALT negotiations. If they are successful they will be a restraining influence. But the fact remains that for the foreseeable future the world is faced with the reality that any one of the nuclear-weapon Powers, acting on its unilateral assessment of purely national interests, has the capacity to trigger a conflict which could gravely imperil civilization.

Of course, each of the nations possessing these weapons asserts that it has taken the nuclear route only in fulfilment of its responsibility to its own people, its neighbours and allies, and to the peace of the world at large. But such assertions invite the rejoinder: If five, why not 10, why not 20, or more?
I suggest that the fact that so far it has stopped at five is attributable primarily to the recognition by most Governments of one or more of these hard facts:

First, if the number of nations possessing nuclear weapons were to increase the danger of nuclear war would be vastly compounded, particularly if these weapons were to be introduced into regions of active hostility. This consideration is, of course, of fundamental and critical importance. I think it can be said that all Governments recognize its validity and most Governments -- unfortunately not all -- recognize that if such a situation is to be avoided they have a responsibility not to contribute to it.

Secondly, the stature of a nation, its health and prosperity and its capacity to defend its interests and safeguard its people is dependent on a host of factors, but the nature of nuclear weapons and the terrible consequences of their use is such that it has become even more evident that their possession would not really contribute to the attainment of such national goals. On the contrary, any idea that their possession would convey real power and influence has been demonstrated to be illusory.
Thirdly, nuclear-weapon systems require a heavy investment of capital and of scientific and industrial resources and skilled personnel, not only for the weapons themselves but also for their delivery systems. This would represent a serious diversion of resources from meeting productive needs to a non-productive activity.

But the deterrent effect of these "hard facts" is limited. At any moment a Government or Governments could decide, as others have before, that irrespective of the consequences of contributing to the further proliferation of nuclear weapons and their high cost, the predominant national interest demands that they obtain them. Moreover, as we move into an era when nuclear-power generation facilities will be commonplace, the weapons option could loom as a possibility to many countries which up to now have not had access to fissile materials.

Faced with this situation and anxious to make possible the dissemination of the benefits of nuclear energy without at the same time contributing to the spread of nuclear weapons, over 80 nations, of which I am proud to say Canada is one, have banded together in a solemn undertaking aimed at helping to achieve these ends by adhering to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Next spring, five years after the Treaty will have been in force, a review conference is to be held, in the words of the Treaty, "with a view to assuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized". But let us call a spade a spade: our real task is to make one more desperate effort to get the world to face up to the catastrophic consequences which nuclear proliferation could bring, so that Governments will adopt the hard decisions required to avoid this course.

We shall not be going to this review conference starry-eyed. We all know that the non-proliferation Treaty, as it exists, is an imperfect instrument imperfectly executed: despite its provisions, nuclear testing continues unabated; despite its provisions, the nuclear arsenals of the super-Powers continue to grow and negotiations to seek the limitation and reduction of strategic arms move extremely slowly.
Despite its provisions, and despite the good work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the world still lacks a comprehensive system of safeguards to ensure that the by-products of the peaceful use of nuclear energy will not contribute to the production of nuclear weapons and their acquisition by countries other than those now possessing them.

Despite the obvious danger of proliferation, some Governments purport to find the provisions of the Treaty too discriminatory to be acceptable.

This catalogue of shortcomings and problems is, of course, not all-inclusive, and no doubt every delegation here today could come up with additions. But this having been said, the Canadian delegation remains of the view that until we can perfect a better instrument that will find at least as wide acceptability, the non-proliferation Treaty must serve as the basis of a non-proliferation structure upon which we can build. It is our hope that the review conference will enable us to make real progress in resolving these problems and thus give additional substance to our affirmation of the principles of the Treaty.

This leads me to the main problem associated with the Treaty, namely, that a number of nations which occupy an important place in the field of nuclear energy have not yet adhered to it. These nations are, of course, guided by their own assessments of the best course of action for them, and in that sense my comments may be gratuitous. But the reasons why my delegation believes that their hesitations or opposition are misplaced are fundamental to our support for the Treaty, so I should like to speak briefly to this point.

First, there is a group of nations which, by signing the Treaty, have indicated general support for the objectives of the non-proliferation Treaty, but which for one reason or another have not yet ratified it. For some, this is simply a question of the time-consuming complications of the ratification procedure, and we look forward to their early adherence to the Treaty. For some others, there would appear to be hesitations: would the Treaty obligations restrict the economic benefit to be derived from atomic energy? To this I would say that Canada's experience justifies the response: not in the slightest. Another question: Is the Treaty going to be able to fulfil the expectations
expressed five years ago when it came into effect, or is it, as some heralds of doom and gloom have said, a dead-letter? Our response to this is that the imperative need to prevent proliferation is demonstrably greater than ever. The ability of the non-proliferation Treaty to further this goal is, of course, in direct relationship to the number of countries adhering to it. With over 80 nations already committed, including three of the nuclear Powers, there is a strong base. But it can and will be made even stronger by the adherence of the remaining signatories. A wait-and-see argument, on the other hand, would simply be the old chicken-or-egg debate in another form.

Finally, among the signatories there are those that have not ratified for reasons of national defence, because some other nation or nations in their respective regions have refused to become party to the Treaty. These reasons are understandable, but I suggest that they do not constitute necessarily the only approach. Ratification of the Treaty weakens the arguments of potential enemies in a particular region that they have reasonable justification for going nuclear, and in that sense is a deterrent to their doing so. For these reasons, we urge those nations that have not yet ratified on this account to reconsider their position.
Now let us consider the position of those Governments which have rejected the Treaty for reasons of principle and because they feel that it imposes unacceptable limitations on their freedom of action which would be detrimental to their defence arrangements or their economic development. There is some justice in their position. Measured by all the regular norms and relations between sovereign States, it cannot be disputed that the balance of obligations and rights leaves much to be desired. But individual Governments have to come to terms with the world as it is. On the one hand, we have the reality of the nuclear Powers. We may not like their self-election to a special status, and we dread the consequences of a mis-step by any one of them. But even if the nuclear weapons Powers will not themselves accept the same constraints at this time, the rest of the world must still seek to prevent the virus of nuclear proliferation from spreading further.

We believe that the development, testing and possession of nuclear explosive devices should stop with the existing nuclear Powers, in the hope that ultimately they too will see the logic of abandoning them. We believe, moreover, that to the extent that peaceful nuclear explosions turn out to be useful -- which, in our view, is a very doubtful proposition that has yet to be proven -- they should be carried out under international arrangements of the type envisaged in the non-proliferation Treaty. No matter how peaceful the intent of such nuclear explosions, there is no way at this time to distinguish between the development of nuclear explosive devices for peaceful purposes and those for military purposes; and thus, if nuclear explosions are carried out by countries not now possessing nuclear weapons, they encourage unacceptable nuclear proliferation.

We are entering an era in which the hopes for nuclear energy as a tool to aid mankind in economic and social advancement throughout the world are about to be realized. Canada, as a country in the forefront of nuclear technology and a major supplier of uranium, looks forward to assisting in this process; but in so doing we will seek to ensure that nuclear co-operation between States is devoted solely to peaceful purposes. That is why we support the non-proliferation Treaty and why we support the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It is why we have ourselves accepted the same safeguards
that we ask others to adopt. It is why we continue to urge nations to forego, in the larger interests of humanity, outmoded concepts of what constitutes State sovereignty.

In the days that lie ahead Canada will continue to follow a two-fold approach: on the one hand, we shall do all in our power to strengthen the dikes against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, through the non-proliferation Treaty, through the Atomic Energy Agency, and in bilateral arrangements we make with other Governments for the supply of nuclear materials and technology; and, on the other, we shall continue our efforts in the United Nations, in the Disarmament Committee and in any other forum that offers itself, to further détente and the limitation, reduction and ultimate abolition of nuclear weapons from the arsenals of the great Powers. We are strengthened in our resolve to pursue these goals by the knowledge that most other Members of this Organization will be doing likewise.*

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Barton of Canada for the kind words he addressed to the officers of the Committee.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): Sir, permit me first of all to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the responsible post of Chairman of the First Committee. In the past, in both the United Nations and the Geneva Committee on Disarmament and in other bodies, I have had the opportunity to witness your eminent diplomatic abilities and to see your devotion to the cause of maintaining international peace and security and, to no lesser a degree, also the cause of disarmament. That gives me every reason to hope and believe that under your guidance the Committee will make its contribution to furthering the efforts being exerted to solving the problems of disarmament.

Negotiations in various bodies, and also at the plenary of the General Assembly this year, have unambiguously indicated that, with a few exceptions, all States in the world are fundamentally interested in the problems of disarmament as one of the most important issues of the present day, whose speedy solution undoubtedly is a prerequisite for providing a bright future for mankind.

* The Chairman resumed the Chair.
Weapons a long time ago ceased to be a threat simply to one single State or group of States. Because of their quantity and the considerable diversity and variety of their forms and types, and also because of their qualities and their potential for further development, they have become a real sword of Damocles hanging over the entire world. Furthermore, the arms race, particularly in the nuclear area, absorbs large sums of money and considerable human resources which are so necessary for the peaceful development of all States, and primarily of the developing countries.

As time has passed, arms have become an integral part of all those evils which plague peoples, such as the deteriorating situation as far as the environment is concerned, the fuel and energy crisis, the lack of raw materials, and so on and so forth. Their extension and their growth, to an even greater degree, is unfortunately furthered by scientific and technological progress which, apart from its positive aspects, also brings with it some rather less pleasant concomitant phenomena and also provides further possibilities for creating new types of weapons of mass destruction and the possibility of their being used in a new environment.
Recently real possibilities have been created of affecting the environment and the climate for military purposes. For many years we considered that means of mass destruction were only nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons, which were abbreviated in the term "ABC weapons". Now we discover that there are new opportunities for creating further forms of weapons of mass destruction.

The scientific and technological progress which has been achieved has made it possible to affect natural phenomena which, until quite recently, were uncontrollable. From time immemorial man has dreamt about artificial rain which would turn deserts into fertile lands, and about mastering natural phenomena which, up to that time, had not only served him but had frequently represented a threat to him. He dreamt of how to use the sun and the wind simply to serve human society and to build for a bright future.

These dreams have turned into real aims which, in many areas, have been crowned with success. It has been possible to create artificial rain, albeit for the time being on a limited scale. It has been possible to find ways and means of artificially affecting the growth of vegetation and even living organisms with the help of artificial radiation. The possibilities have been explored of changing environmental conditions for the benefit of mankind.

Now, it is true that all this is as yet at the initial stage, but it is all the more necessary, therefore, not to allow what has happened in many other fields of scientific and technological progress to happen here and now; that is to say, that these phenomena should be used essentially to serve man and not to act against him. Thus, all these problems are part and parcel of the problems relating to disarmament, or as we call it, non-armament. At the same time, in view of the seriousness of the subject, they occupy the forefront of our considerations.

In recent years in the field of disarmament some considerable success has been scored by the adoption of specific agreements. Among them I could refer, first, to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; then the two treaties on the partial limitation of nuclear tests; the Convention on the prohibition of the utilization of bacteriological weapons; and also the very important agreements between the Soviet Union and the United States of America on the
reduction of strategic arms and the prevention of nuclear war. These and other agreements have laid the foundation for our further struggle to restrict and gradually to abolish all forms of arms, including weapons of mass destruction. The process of gradual détente in the international arena and the fact that States are now choosing to solve their conflicts peacefully -- all this creates excellent conditions for constructive talks to be held in an attempt to solve other questions relating to disarmament.

We continue to pay particular attention to the question of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, which we consider to be the key to solving the whole range of problems relating to complete disarmament. First, we should like to see some consolidation of the system of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the comprehensive prohibition of all nuclear tests by all States, the complete prohibition of the use of all types and forms of chemical weapons, and a provision for all States to initiate discussions in order to solve the problems of disarmament. For that reason, we support the convening in the near future of a world disarmament conference, which will make it possible for all States to make their contribution to the solution of these important problems. To this subject and to other basic problems pertaining to disarmament, the Czechoslovak delegation intends to revert subsequently.

The rest of our statement today will be devoted to a most important and urgent problem, that is, the prohibition of action to influence the environment and the climate for military and other purposes which are incompatible with the security, human well-being and health which, as I have already pointed out, is becoming now one of the most urgent questions relating to the restriction of armaments at the present time. Thanks to the initiative of the Soviet Union, this question has been included on the agenda of our present session. The new peaceful initiative of the Soviet Union occupies an important place in the over-all process of détente in international affairs, and will contribute to spare peoples from the threat of war and annihilation. The positive solution of the problem could make a significant contribution to progress in a number of other important questions relating to disarmament. We entirely agree with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Mr. Karjalainen, who, during the general discussion at the present session of the General Assembly, stated:
"... the proposal on the prohibition of action to influence the environment and the climate for military and other purposes merits constructive discussion, as it widens the scope of disarmament efforts".

(A/PV.2239, page 87)

May I mention a few specific examples that will enable me to prove how important it is to ensure that scientific research aimed at allowing man to influence the climate and the environment should be used only for peaceful purposes and that its use for military purposes be prevented. It is obvious that this question is inextricably linked with problems of protecting the environment as a whole. This is no mere academic matter. There already exist means that can be used to influence the environment and the climate for military purposes. Meteorological and geophysical processes on our planet considerably influence the life and the activity of man. Unfavourable climatic conditions and natural disasters are harmful to both agriculture and industry. They disrupt transportation and communications and even sometimes claim human victims. The methods of artificial induction of such processes can doubtless be used to the detriment of the vital interests of some countries even in a period of apparent peace. Such activities could have dire consequences that are even difficult to foresee. It is further known that attempts have already been made to use the first successes of experimental meteorology for military purposes. Particularly, there have been floods artificially induced to destroy roads and to paralyse the life of previously stable areas. In order to destroy vast forests and all vegetation, use has been made of chemicals affecting life, such as high doses of herbicides and defoliants as well as other active biological substances. As regards other means to influence the environment and the climate for military purposes, in widened intensive use these could lead to an irreversible disruption of the ecological balance on earth and could threaten all mankind.
It is also noteworthy to mention military projects for altering the human environment on earth, which can already be implemented with present scientific and technical know-how. A number of examples can be mentioned. The possibility exists, for instance, of destroying the ozone layer -- a sort of shield -- over previously selected sectors of the earth. In this case, the penetrating hard ultra-violet radiation will turn the surface of the earth into a barren desert, and so on. In this connexion it is quite clear that the number and scope of these deadly military projects, if not stopped in time, will increase as the means to implement them develop and become more sophisticated.

Taking into account the serious danger flowing from the possibility of influencing the climate and environment for military purposes, and taking into consideration the significance of a positive solution to this question on the international level, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic favours the conclusion of an international agreement in this area as proposed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In view of the fact that the development of techniques to influence the climate for military purposes has not yet gone too far we believe that now is the most appropriate time fully to eliminate the possibility of that influence. The reality and usefulness of such an agreement were stressed in the joint Soviet-American communication of 3 July 1974 on the measures to eliminate the danger of using military means to influence the environment, which was strongly endorsed by the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

The Czechoslovak delegation expresses with a certain satisfaction its point of view on the question of prohibiting influence on the environment and climate. Over the last few years we have followed with concern information on developments in this area and, already in 1972, at the summer session of the Geneva Disarmament Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation was one of the first to draw attention to the dangers of the so-called "meteorological war", at which, at that time, certain actions of the United States in Viet-Nam were aimed.

As regards the substance of the Soviet draft resolution, as it appears in the draft convention and as was explained in detail by the representative of the USSR in this Committee, Deputy Foreign Minister Yakov Malik, we can ascertain that it is fully in keeping with the contemporary situation when the results of the scientific and technical progress can in one way or another be used against mankind, and instead of assisting development can threaten it.
The possibility of influencing the environment and climate for military purposes justifiably prompts the concern of many countries. Governmental, social and scientific organizations have lately been calling for the prohibition of such activity. As was already pointed out here, a similar call was issued by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. The Soviet proposal was supported during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly, as well as in other bodies. We are happy to see that the first reaction of the delegation of the United States, contained in Senator Symington's statement in this Committee on 21 October, was highly positive. We have also taken note of the positive comments of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany at yesterday's meeting and of the delegations of Sweden and Bulgaria at today's meeting.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic has already expressed its support of the proposal by becoming one of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.675. We hope that the draft resolution will be favourably considered by all delegations and that it will be recommended to the General Assembly for adoption. This would mean that our Committee has taken a step in the right direction.

By adopting measures contained in the draft resolution, the General Assembly would doubtlessly expand the positive contemporary processes and add détente in the military area to political détente and would promote the achievement of further specific results in the area of curbing the arms race, of interest to all peoples in the world striving to liberate themselves from the threat of war, putting an end to armaments, and thus to secure new means for the economic development of all States in the world.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia for the very kind words he addressed to me.
Her Imperial Highness Princess PAHLAVI (interpretation from French): Each year the debate on disarmament returns to this Committee and is repeated in it. However, we should not believe that this is simply a ritual, designed to appease world public opinion. In fact, this debate is part and parcel of a process, albeit a very slow one, which has made it possible in recent years to adopt various measures to bring about arms control.

However, it must be recognized that a spirit of resignation has in recent times pervaded the various discussions on disarmament. Even in limited areas, such as control, progress has been minimal.

This disquieting state of affairs is, in fact, something which depends on an essential fact of our times, and it brings to the forefront a dilemma that has long been associated with work on disarmament. In fact, how can we eliminate arms while the very roots of conflicts still subsist?

The success of a general and complete disarmament programme hinges directly on the existence of a state of trust among nations. As long as these conditions are not met and as long as there is no secure machinery to guarantee peace and international security, nations can only look to their own defence needs.

In the world of today, States cannot rely on others for their defence and must be prepared for any contingency.

In view of the dilemma to which I have just referred, our options are limited to continuing the slow process of creating confidence. In order to build peace we have to rid ourselves of past habits and act in a new spirit and with a new approach. To establish trust we have to create new structures in order to supplement and reinforce those which have proved to be ineffective.

A few weeks ago, the Shahanshah of Iran, in a message which he transmitted to the present session of the General Assembly, was referring essentially to the same question when he said:

"The principles of the Charter must take the concrete form of solid structures, which, together and combined, are likely to bring about peace".
This message was referring to a proposal to establish a demilitarized zone in the Middle Eastern region, and it is this proposal to which I should like to talk about today.

Far-reaching changes are occurring in all areas -- political, economic and social. This transformation is particularly obvious in the energy sector. Thus, petroleum, as a limited product, can no longer with impunity be burned up and wasted like any other sort of energy. It can be utilized to much more advantage in medicine, the chemical industry and various scientific areas.

Thus we are on the threshold of a new era where countries will more and more turn away from utilizing traditional sources of energy and towards nuclear energy. This being so, Iran, for example, although it is a main petroleum producer, has felt it necessary to embark on a vast programme to develop nuclear energy resources. This evolution, accompanied by a dissemination of scientific knowledge and the development of less costly methods of bringing about nuclear fission, has created a situation which could hardly have been conceived of at the time when the non-proliferation Treaty came into force.

Thus, while the dissemination of nuclear technology gives unprecedented form and direction to its military applications, the possibility of total war, with all its destructive potential, adds a fresh dimension to our anguish.

In view of the political and economic situation prevailing in the Middle East, which is well known to everybody, the introduction of nuclear arms in that area could mean much more than simply a burdensome arms race, which in itself would be catastrophic.

It was considerations such as these that prompted the Shahanshah to renew the proposal which he made a few years ago to set up a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East region. What we hope to achieve eventually is the final prohibition of the manufacture, acquisition, testing, stockpiling and transport of nuclear arms, all under an effective system of control. Regarding the ways and means of achieving this goal, our position is flexible and we are open to any suggestions.
The support that we have received from a number of Governments, both within and outside the region, has proved that the anxiety which inspired that proposal is justified and largely shared. The Government of a fraternal nation, Egypt, has joined us in this enterprise, and we are grateful to it. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Arab League subsequently subscribed to this proposal and supported its inclusion in the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly. Since then, a number of Governments have expressed in various ways their approval of our initiative. Clearly we have noted with interest the positive attitude to this project which originated in the Middle East, and which is in principle supported by all the States of that region. In emphasizing this, it is not my desire in any way to minimize or to oversimplify an extremely complex problem.

We are all aware here that the road still before us is a long one and that the crystallization of our ideas will not proceed without giving rise to a number of difficulties as to substance and procedure. Among the latter, undoubtedly -- and I would even say first and foremost -- would be the problem of the geographical boundaries of this area. The name that we give to our area is undoubtedly not tantamount to a definition, because even statesmen and historians have never succeeded in reaching agreement on such a definition.

It was the American, Alfred Mahon, who, I think at the beginning of this century, had the idea of calling our region the Middle East. Now where does the Middle East begin and where does it end? There has never been unanimity on that question.

I would recall that in 1948 a United Nations sub-committee had the task of shedding light on this question and came to the conclusion that it was impossible to define this area simply on the basis of geographical criteria -- due account also had to be taken particularly of ethnic, linguistic and cultural criteria.

But there is more to it than that. It is quite obvious that the essential question is not only to formulate a coherent structure from the geographical point of view, but it is also important that this structure be politically viable. Considered from these two points of view, the realization of our idea involves problems regarding the procedure to be followed. In this connexion, we think that at an initial stage the United Nations, and particularly the Secretary-General, can play an extremely useful part.
Another equally important aspect of the problem relates to the matter of guarantees. We believe that an adequate system of control is indispensable for the proper functioning of this project. We hope that this matter will receive the necessary attention when the preliminary consultations are held among the concerned nations of the region.

Since 1956 the concept of nuclear-free zones has been frequently discussed in the General Assembly as in other forums. The discussions have focused on a number of regions -- Central Europe, the Balkans, Africa, Latin America and so forth.

Quite recently Pakistan submitted a proposal for a declaration to establish a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. In the past we have supported, as we shall support in the future, all the aspirations of peoples who wish to set up a zone of peace and security in their region. It is in this spirit that we support the Pakistani initiative.

Of all those who have submitted projects to date only the Latin American countries have succeeded in giving concrete form to their plan and in establishing a nuclear-free zone. I hope that this success will be a source of inspiration for us all. We should at least derive maximum benefit from their experience.

For their part, the African countries have taken a giant stride forward in this respect by solemnly declaring Africa a demilitarized zone during the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity which was held during 1964. We hope that the implementation of our project in the Middle East will help to make the African project a complete reality.

In the historic continuum, every moment in itself is precious and unique. But there are some moments which are a beginning and mark the initiation of actions which prevent disasters and which give some form to the future. Our Organization has often witnessed such moments. To confine myself to the subject under discussion, I shall refer, for example, to the Atoms for Peace Programme, which was proposed by President Eisenhower from the rostrum of the General Assembly 21 years ago. Two years later, the International Atomic Energy Agency was created.

Once again it was in the United Nations that 15 years ago Frank Aiken, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, warned all nations about the perils and dangers inherent in the proliferation of nuclear arms and launched an appeal for an international treaty to put an end to that proliferation. Ten years later his dream became a reality.
Similarly, in 1961 the proposal of Latin America was put forward, and six years later a treaty was drawn up which embodied that project.

Thus it is from the bottom of my heart that I make an appeal that the General Assembly act on the proposal concerning the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East. I hope that the General Assembly will give us its blessing, so that we shall be in a position to lay the foundation stone on which all States in the area will be able to start to build.

The draft resolution which will shortly be presented to the Committee will not essentially go into the matters of substance involved but will simply suggest the procedure to be followed. In putting forward this proposal, we are aware of the fact that this work has only just begun. We know what tremendous challenges confront us. The road to be travelled will undoubtedly be a difficult one, but the final goal makes it worth while.

In the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, our Secretary-General, in referring to regional projects, said: "I consider that such initiatives are not only useful but a necessary part of our search for universal disarmament" (A/3601/Add.1, p. 16). We entirely agree with him, and it is for that reason that we voice the hope that the Assembly will not lose this opportunity that has been presented to it.

Let us see to it that we go forward with determination and patience to take a decisive step forward along the road to establishing a better and more secure world.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to convey to Her Imperial Highness my best wishes on the occasion of the anniversary celebrated today by her country.

I shall now call on the representative of India, who wishes to exercise the right of reply.
Mr. MISHRA (India): As usual, I listened with great attention to the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Thorsson. The sincerity of the Government of Sweden and of Mrs. Thorsson personally on the question of nuclear disarmament is so obvious that it needs no further emphasis. For this reason I was surprised that the representative of Sweden lumped together the nuclear weapon tests, some of them conducted in the atmosphere, and India's peaceful nuclear explosion experiment. India has not conducted a weapon test. This is now accepted by all, barring a few, a very few whose perpetual hostility to India blinds them to objective situations. But for Sweden and some others to confuse weapons with a peaceful nuclear explosion merely serves to divide this Assembly on the grave matter of nuclear weapon testing, a matter on which we have spoken, by and large, in a common language for over two decades.

I realize, of course, that Sweden, being a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, has accepted a world with five nuclear-weapon States which in terms of the Treaty have the right to continue to explode nuclear devices both for increasing their arsenals of nuclear weapons and for deriving economic benefits from them. India is not a party to the non-proliferation Treaty. India is not satisfied that there should be five nuclear-weapon States, much less that there should be five plus one or two or another five. India is interested in five minus five. We shall continue to work for that objective as we have in the past. But we shall not accept any proposition which seeks to limit the right to conduct peaceful nuclear explosions to five States.

This is not a position we have taken today. Throughout the years when the non-proliferation Treaty was being negotiated we have stated and restated this position. In a world crying out for the development of resources, particularly in developing countries, it is obligatory to develop new technologies to take care of our dire needs. India missed the Industrial Revolution. India has no intention of missing the technological revolution.

The representative of Sweden has urged India to place all its nuclear activities under international safeguards. As we have stated in other forums, we shall certainly consider this matter when all States -- nuclear-weapon States as well as non-nuclear-weapon States -- are ready to place all their facilities, both civil and military, under international safeguards.
The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Before we adjourn, I should like to appeal again to delegations interested in speaking in the general debate on disarmament to inscribe their names as soon as possible, so that we may be in a position to compile the list of speakers for the coming week.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.