Twenty-ninth Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND AND FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 31 October 1974, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)

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 /24/ (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 /27/ (continued)

- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /28/ (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 /29/ (continued)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be distributed as soon as possible.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent in quadruplicate within three working days to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room LX-2332, and incorporated in a copy of the record.


The co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.

74-71114/A
- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3079 (XXVIII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco): report of the Secretary-General [30] (continued)

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean [31] (continued)

- World Disarmament Conference: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference [34] (continued)

- General and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament [35] (continued)

- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 2286 (XXII) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) [100] (continued)

- Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East [101] (continued)

- 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 [103] (continued)

- Declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia [107] (continued)
AGENDA ITEMS 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 100, 101, 103 and 107 (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 (A/9726)

CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS: REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT (A/9708)

URGENT NEED FOR CESSION 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 (A/9593, A/9650, A/9698, A/9708)


WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE (A/9590, A/9628, A/9636)

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT: REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT (A/9698, A/9708)

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 2286 (XXIII) CONCERNING THE SIGNATURE AND RATIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL I OF THE TREATY FOR THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN LATIN AMERICA (TREATY OF Tlatelolco) (A/9692)

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST (A/9693 and Add.1-3)

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 (A/9702 and Corr.1; A/C.1/L.675)

DECLARATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA (A/9706)
Mr. CLARK (Nigeria): We meet at a time when, more than ever before, international attention is being focused on the triple task of decolonization, development and disarmament. These three issues, which have occupied the centre of the stage in the affairs of the United Nations since its inception, no longer look so formidable as they did even a year ago. Colonialism is no longer on its last legs. It is dead. Killed by a single courageous act by Portugal. No greater proof of this fact and the consequent reconciliation between the world and Portugal could be found than the presence with you, Sir, among the highly respected officers of this Committee, of our Rapporteur, Mr. Costa Lobo of Portugal. I congratulate him, albeit belatedly, on his election, as a symbol of the new friendship between Africa and his country.

Because we meet at a turning-point of history, there is a disposition to focus attention on the role of the United Nations in world affairs. And so, as we put colonialism behind us and proceed to tackle the problem of inaugurating a fair and just international economic system, the issue of disarmament offers us a challenge that we must confront energetically. We have a unique opportunity to deal, under your able leadership, Sir, with the subject which was unanimously described in 1959 by the United Nations in resolution 1378 (XIV) as "the most important one facing the world today".

Nigeria deeply regrets that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has made no substantive progress in its work in the past year. Its report (CCD/445) of 22 August 1974 shows that the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and the prohibition of chemical weapons were areas in which some progress was expected.

The Committee, you may recall, Sir, met against the background of the euphoria of détente between the two super-Powers. The Soviet-United States Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) to ensure that an essential equivalence was maintained between the strategic forces of the two super-Powers were well on their way. In fact there were reports that they had reached agreement to limit strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (ABMs) to deployment to protect their cities and missile sites, thereby restoring the status quo of their so-called balance of terror. The Geneva Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Vienna Negotiations on the Mutual Reduction of Forces and
Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe were progressing in good spirit. The Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts had just concluded the first phase of its work aimed at moderating the violence and destructiveness of armed conflicts. In sum, the political climate could not have been better. The time was ripe for constructive action to convince the world that détente meant what it said -- a relaxation of tensions that should lead to friendship and co-operation.
A comprehensive test-ban treaty was therefore not only possible but also an urgent necessity. The question of verification was no longer a serious and scientific issue. To put it in American slang, it had been licked. As the statement issued by the Pugwash Committee at its twenty-first session held at Sinaia, Romania, from 26 to 31 August 1971 confirmed, inter alia:

"Progress in the development of the means for detecting possible violation has effectively removed the obstacles which once blocked the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. These means include not only seismic methods for detection and identification of nuclear explosions but also satellites and other unilateral means for collecting information. The combination of all these techniques now makes it practically impossible to conduct meaningful nuclear tests without detection."

Yet, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament did not even seriously consider a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Could it be that the super-Powers still lack the means to achieve their national security? Is that why they must continue underground tests and intensify the arms race? No one will fail to be impressed -- I was going to say horrified -- by the stockpile of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons of the United States, as reported to us on Monday, 21 October 1974, by Mr. Symington of the United States. According to him, the arsenal of nuclear weapons of the United States of America is equivalent to 615,335 Hiroshima bombs, one of which is capable of killing some 100,000 persons. If our information on SALT is correct, Soviet military might cannot be behind this formidable capacity. Added to these sombre statistics is the Senator's assertion that

"...since the signing of the SALT agreement in 1972, it should be pointed out that the two so-called super-Powers have been adding nuclear weapons to their stockpiles each day of the year" (1998th meeting, p. 23) -- and these of course include multiple targeted warheads.

Against the background of the recent World Population Conference, held last August in Bucharest, and of the current World Food Conference being held in Rome and of the starvation in the Sahelian region of Africa and of the ferocious ravages of poverty among the developing countries of the world, can one ask whether the super-Powers need all the military hardware they possess today? Do their new weapons add to their security in the context of the balance
of terror? Are they making wise and proper use of their human and material resources? Are they more interested in prestige than in prosperity? In the decade of the 1960s, world armament expenditure reached a total of $1,870,000 million. In the 1970s, which have been designated by the United Nations as the Disarmament and Development Decade, these figures have reached $240,000 million annually. In this connexion let us not forget that 70 per cent of this enormous amount is spent by four of the nuclear-weapon States alone. Military expenditures now run at thirty times more than all official economic aid granted by developed countries to the developing countries. As a matter of interest, it is worth noting that a mere 5 per cent shift of current expenditures from arms to development would bring within reach the assistance target set for the Second United Nations Development Decade. Various studies by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and the United Nations indicate that the total annual world armament expenditure is equal to the combined incomes of all the developing countries or the total public spending of all countries, both developed and developing, on education and health. And this is at a time of striking changes on the international economic scene which, according to Mr. Robert S. McNamara, President of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association, in his address to the Economic and Social Council on 18 October 1974, is characterized by the deterioration in the terms of world trade and by world-wide inflation, with consequent effects on some developing countries that are near disaster. Rather than attribute the current economic crisis in the world to the rise of prices of petroleum and other primary commodities -- an allegation which has convincingly been disproved by Mr. McNamara because the precipitate acceleration in the rate of inflation in the developed countries long preceded the rise in the price of oil -- would it not be more correct to attribute it largely to the military budgets of the nuclear-weapon States?

It is in the light of the foregoing that my delegation would like to plead for the urgent cessation of all nuclear and thermonuclear tests and for the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. When Nigeria signed and ratified the Moscow Treaty of 1963, we had hoped, indeed expected, that it would act as a brake on the nuclear arms race. As reaffirmed in our enthusiastic
acceptance of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we believed that the cessation of the nuclear arms race would soon take place and that it would be followed by effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament. Rather, we regret to note that nuclear-weapon testing since 1963 has gone on at a much faster pace than before the two Treaties which I mentioned.

Nigeria's abhorrence of atomic tests did not date from these two Treaties. We proudly recall our stand -- even as an infant State in 1960 -- when France conducted its first nuclear test explosion in the Sahara. Even though we had cordial and friendly relations with France, and in spite of our tenderfoot position as a newly independent country, we took the exceptional step of breaking diplomatic relations with France.

In fact, one of our first acts of sovereignty in December 1960 was to co-sponsor a resolution with our sister States of Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Sudan and Egypt, which asked the General Assembly to request all States to desist from carrying out nuclear tests in Africa and to eliminate, and refrain from creating, bases and launching sites in Africa that could be used in testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons. Thus we called upon all States to regard and respect our continent, which was then recovering its dignity and independence, as a nuclear-free zone. Subsequently, on 24 November 1961, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 1652 (XVI), which called upon Member States

"(a) To refrain from carrying out or continuing to carry out in Africa nuclear tests in any form;

"(b) To refrain from using the territory, territorial waters or air space of Africa for testing, storing or transporting nuclear weapons;

"(c) To consider and respect the continent of Africa as a denuclearized zone."

When in May 1963 the Organization of African Unity was established in Addis Ababa, one of the first resolutions of the Summit Conference of the independent African States was on general disarmament. Our Heads of State or Government resolved then "to affirm and respect the principle of declaring Africa a denuclearized zone; to oppose all nuclear and thermonuclear tests, as well as the manufacture of nuclear weapons; and to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy."
Our consistency in opposing all nuclear tests can be matched only by the credit we must claim for pioneering the idea that the establishment of nuclear-free zones in parts of the world is a legitimate and legal first step towards non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We knew that that first step must first be taken by the countries concerned.
But if geography divides territories, the fear of nuclear warfare unites all mankind and all humanity. Hence we brought our case to the United Nations. We need the United Nations to assist us to translate into reality and legal form the various declarations on the denuclearization of Africa. We need the United Nations to secure support and acceptance by the Powers, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, outside Africa, of our determination to prohibit nuclear weapons in Africa. We already have General Assembly resolution 2035 (XX) of 3 December 1965 as an enabling act. That resolution, which was adopted by 105 votes to none, with only 3 abstentions, echoed the solemn declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Cairo in July 1964, expressing their readiness to undertake, in an international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, to make Africa a nuclear-free zone. That declaration on the denuclearization of Africa was also endorsed by the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries in their Declaration issued on 10 October 1964 after their conference in Cairo.

Resolution 2035 (XX) reaffirmed the United Nations call to all States to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone. Inter alia, it also requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to extend to the Organization of African Unity "... such facilities and assistance as may be requested in order to achieve the aims ..."

of the resolution.

If since December 1965 we have not taken further steps to implement the declaration, it is because of other more pressing claims on our time and resources. In any case, Africa has continued to abide by the spirit and letter of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty envisaged by the declaration. Twenty seven African States are already Parties to the Treaty and four more have signed it. Recent events, however, have brought the matter to the fore.

The success of the Latin American Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America; the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace; the new agenda item proposed by Iran and Egypt on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East; the proposal by Pakistan on the declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in
South Asia; the continuing arms race between the two super-Powers which has defeated the purposes of both the Moscow Treaty of 1965 and the non-proliferation Treaty of 1968; and the strategic rivalries between the nuclear-weapon States in the oceans surrounding Africa, have all conspired to make my delegation draw attention at this session to our declaration which has been before the United Nations since 1961. More especially, because of the increasingly intense collaboration and co-operation between some Western nuclear Powers and South Africa in the field of enriched uranium and plutonium, the possible military use of which must be expected, we have become alert to the imminent threat of a nuclear encirclement of Africa.

As South Africa panics under pressure from world public opinion to mend its ways, we expect that Africa will soon become a veritable arena for nuclear blackmail. According to The Times of London of 12 July 1974 South Africa has the capability to produce a nuclear bomb and the expertise to extract and enrich uranium. Dr. Louw Alberts, Vice-President of the Atomic Energy Board of South Africa, is quoted by the aforementioned Times of London as saying that:

"Any third-year student in physics has the know-how to make the atom bomb and a fourth-year student can do it better. Obviously, any nuclear research body here" --

and he is referring to South Africa --

"or elsewhere will be able to do it even better than a fourth-year student."

This reckless and irresponsible statement by the South African spokesman assumes truly ominous significance when we recall that South Africa has vast uranium reserves; that many Western Powers are anxiously falling head over heels in a competition to improve their balance of payments by selling massive nuclear reactors to South Africa that are not needed for its energy purposes; that South Africa has not yet signed the partial test ban Treaty, nor has it signed the non-proliferation Treaty; and that South Africa has not yet accepted, under any binding legal régime, the IAEA safeguards for its nuclear activities even though South Africa is a permanent member of the Board of Governors of IAEA.
In spite of all I have said about South Africa, our move to give concrete form to our declaration on the denuclearization of Africa will not be directed against South Africa. It will, of course, take into account the existence of South Africa in these matters. Nor will it hinder the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for development purposes in Africa. It is just another, indeed the next, phase of our continental endeavour after decolonization. It is a move by Africa to outlaw nuclear weapons, so as to ensure international peace and security. That is why my delegation welcomes the Finnish proposal of 29 October 1974 that a comprehensive study of the question and concept of nuclear-free zones should be made expeditiously. The work will, we hope, provide information and appropriate documentation that will enable regions such as Africa to embark on the preparatory work of making them truly and legally nuclear-free zones.

There are several other items on our agenda of interest and concern to my delegation. My delegation reserves its right to intervene again in the debate, particularly in order to express its support for items such as those relating to the world disarmament conference and 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.

Mr. TAITTINGER (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, first I should like to congratulate you and to tell you again how pleased we are to see you as Chairman of our Committee. We admire your qualities, your competence and the firm grasp of the problems of disarmament which you have so often demonstrated. For those reasons, we are pleased to be working under your guidance. We are convinced that you will bring your personality to bear and will make a great contribution to the success of our work.

Twelve items on the agenda of the General Assembly this year are devoted to the problems of disarmament. We would be the first to welcome this interest in one of the most important -- if not the most important -- areas of our work because international security and world peace depend on this, if we were convinced that it involved a reasoned effort to solve real problems and was not just a symptom of a wild proliferation of useless projects happening in the area that concerns us, as it is happening elsewhere.
Our Organization has made disarmament one of its main goals. That objective, defined in Article 11, paragraph 1, of the Charter and in innumerable resolutions, obviously means general and complete disarmament. It requires the implementation of some strategy of disarmament. All strategy has its rules, one of the most basic of which is to bring the means and the ends into line with each other and to find and use forces capable of attaining the objectives. With these thoughts in mind, I should like to make a few preliminary comments which should help us better to understand the scope of the items which will be considered in the course of our work.
If disarmament is our aim we must first have a clear and precise idea of the position today in the matter of weapons and the relative danger being posed by weapons of various kinds to world peace and security. We believe that the present world situation concerning weapons is characterized by a number of basic trends. I do not intend here to make a value judgement on the policies of the Powers concerned; I do not intend to judge their reasons for choosing to equip themselves with one form of weapon or another. I shall confine myself to the facts.

The first threat to the world is that posed by nuclear weapons. Our Organization, reflecting a universal view on the subject, has found this to be a matter of primary importance. For years references have been made to the dangers of mankind of the uncontrolled development of nuclear weapons. More than 98 per cent of those weapons are in the possession of the two major Powers. Great hopes were placed in the first agreements, concluded in 1972, on the limitation of strategic weapons, which at times were presented as significant agreements on disarmament, but those hopes proved in vain. Quantitative limits were agreed on at levels which did not in fact lead to a decrease in existing weapons and there was a great change in the area of technology, leading to a five- to ten-fold increase in the destructive capability of the arsenals of States. That led to the use of multiple warheads, then to independently-guided and multiple warheads and perhaps tomorrow we shall have devices controllable during their trajectory. One of the great theoreticians of disarmament, Ambassador Garcia Robles, the permanent representative of Mexico, dealt this year in striking terms with the subject in a document intended for the Committee in Geneva and recently distributed in New York. He said that the nuclear warheads with which the intercontinental projectiles of the two super-Powers are equipped can always be launched from the ground, from submarines or from long-range bombers, and that at the time of signature of the Non-proliferation Treaty in 1968 there were 5,700 such warheads, a figure expected to increase by 1975 to about 15,000.

To this quantitative increase in threats -- for obviously what matters in the nuclear spectrum is not the number of launchers but the number of warheads likely to reach the target territory -- must be added the qualitative factor: these weapons have become more and more accurate and sophisticated, and they may upset the fragile nuclear balance existing between the two major Powers. Talks between the United States and the Soviet Union on the
limitation of strategic weapons have, of course, resumed, and we hope they will lead to positive results, at least in the area of détente. But even on this optimistic assumption, one which will require the solving of considerable difficulties, who can deny that we shall still be faced with a very grave threat to the world.

In the area of conventional weapons as well, the level of weaponry has been maintained at giddy heights, involving gigantic expenses at a time when the world is experiencing its most serious economic difficulties since the beginning of the industrial era. Soaring military expenditures are, of course, partly due to a steady increase in prices brought about by inflation. The fact is that the budgets of the military Powers have hit a ceiling over the past few years. The manufacture of armament seems to have reached its peak but is not slowing down, and weapons are now at levels entirely incompatible with the policies of peace those Powers intend to pursue. Furthermore, as far as conventional and nuclear weapons are concerned, technological progress continues to increase their destructive potential, and that qualitative acceleration seems to be unlimited. Finally, whereas in the area of conventional weapons the two most powerful armies alone possess two thirds of all weapons, in various areas of the world new armed forces are emerging and are sometimes threatening each other.

Is there a third kind of threat? There has been much talk here of nuclear-weapons systems that have not been used. Much has been made of new ways of waging war that have not yet been employed but could be used some day. Of course, where disarmament is concerned, no threat should be neglected, but is it not obvious that the gravest, most immediate threats should be considered first as a matter of urgency?

Let us for a moment consider how this year the Organization intends to find answers to the problems of disarmament and face the threats I have dealt with briefly.

In the area of nuclear weapons, it must be agreed that there is no proposal likely to solve the problem as a whole. In making this point, my delegation does not wish to complain to any one party. Things are what they are. I would, however, in passing, like to say that for a number of years my country has said that it would like the nuclear Powers, which have special responsibilities
because they possess nuclear weapons, to hold discussions with a view to establishing the basis for nuclear disarmament. But what has been happening? Basically, two different sets of measures have been offered: a complete ban on nuclear tests and the creation of nuclear-free zones. Let us for a moment assume that those proposals meet with a favourable response. What will actually be the results? Will the nuclear threat be diminished? Certainly not, since the Powers which, through their experiments have mastered the technology of nuclear weapons can keep their weapons and can increase them. The only result -- which I do not wish to underrate but is quite inadequate -- would be to prohibit those countries having the means to develop these weapons from doing so.

As far as States in nuclear-free zones are concerned, they may very well have thwarted the threat of a nuclear attack from one of their number, but the threat from weapons in the hands of the nuclear Powers will continue to exist. We have seen the true value of the guarantees given by these Powers to non-nuclear States. I have in mind Security Council resolution 255 (1968). In fact, such guarantees do not counter-balance the commitments entered into by the States that have agreed not to engage in nuclear development. Should one of those States accede to the non-proliferation Treaty and agree to a nuclear-free zone, it will not be protected because there would remain the exclusive nuclear club whose members alone have the right to arm and, indeed, over-arm themselves.

After having long awaited nuclear disarmament in vain, France has seen it become an unlikely eventuality, and we have decided to equip ourselves with our own nuclear force. Our objective was and remains purely defensive. Our programme falls far short of that of the major Powers. We wish to have not an offensive force but weapons capable of deterring a potential attacker. Now, in the area of nuclear weapons that goal can be achieved with a relatively low level of power. We shall in the future maintain our nuclear weapons at the minimum level compatible with our security. We have always been and always will be prepared to limit our defensive efforts and to participate in a genuine disarmament effort if some day such an effort is undertaken.

As far as nuclear-free zones are concerned, France is, of course, not at all opposed to them, taking into account the principles of sovereignty and the independence of States. We are not at all opposed to a situation in which some States may decide to set up nuclear-free zones, and we shall not
contribute to the development of nuclear activities on the territory of those States, nor will we threaten others with our nuclear weapons. But, I repeat, we do not believe a solution to the problem of the nuclear threat can be sought along those lines.
The two sets of measures that I have just referred to are only partial applications of a principle which is uppermost in the minds of many States and which has been talked of a great deal again this year as a kind of panacea to all nuclear problems -- I am referring to non-proliferation. My country recognizes the danger of the uncontrolled dissemination of nuclear weapons. As our representative in the General Assembly stated on 12 June 1968:

"We understand perfectly well that the non-nuclear States give up the atomic option under the conditions provided by the Treaty. But at the same time the French Government believes that the nuclear States should not in any manner, directly or indirectly, favour a proliferation which would be contrary to the interests of the world as a whole." (A/PV.1672, p. 6)

and added:

"France, for its part, which will not sign the non-proliferation Treaty, will behave in the future in this field exactly as the States adhering to the Treaty." (ibid.)

We have scrupulously kept that commitment since that time.

Having said this, our reservations concerning the method adopted to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons remain valid to our way of thinking: we feel that the non-proliferation Treaty remains a discriminatory, misleading, illusory and in the end, ineffective instrument. It is discriminatory because in the nuclear field it establishes two categories of States, some with exorbitant privileges, others subject to strict limitations. It is misleading because it requires that non-nuclear Powers make renunciations in exchange for promises that the authors of the Treaty cannot keep (-- what, for example, has happened to the commitments undertaken in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on genuine disarmament?). It is illusory because it refers to vague notions and technologies that have not yet been discovered and to a guarantee of nuclear military assistance that is extremely uncertain. It is ineffective because the Treaty has not succeeded in convincing those States which needed to be convinced.
In opposition to this discriminatory concept of non-proliferation, with the intention of respecting the principle of equality among all States, the President of the Republic, during a press conference on the twenty-fourth of this month, put forward some new ideas on this subject.

Mr. Giscard d’Estaing explained how he understood the policy behind the use of the French nuclear weapon. He said:

"I believe that the French nuclear deterrent can only be used against Powers that are themselves nuclear Powers or against Powers -- and this is a scientific hypothesis, that is very unlikely, but all the possibilities must be taken into account -- which might threaten our own land. The purpose of our nuclear deterrent, which in such a case would indeed have to be used, is to confront a nuclear threat to us on the part of a nuclear Power or the threat of invasion of our country. On the other hand, as far as non-nuclear Powers are concerned, I believe that France should neither use nor even threaten to use our nuclear weapons."

Such an approach, if it were to become widespread, might be a solution to the problem of proliferation. As Mr. Giscard d’Estaing went on to say:

"One must question the motives that lead non-nuclear countries to acquire nuclear power, and one must do something about lessening the importance of those motives and perhaps even doing away with them; and that is why the position -- which naturally I will have occasion to explain elsewhere, for it is not at a press conference that one can go into detail about strategic arrangements -- the position which consists in not using our nuclear weapons against non-nuclear Powers as an instrument of pressure or threat, may be precisely one of the means preventing the proliferation of these nuclear weapons."

The President of the Republic also suggested:

"I hope that this position, little by little, will be taken by others so that the means of nuclear deterrence will be means conceived and envisaged for use against nuclear threats and not in other forms of conflict. If this approach were more generally accepted, then the problems which will be discussed in 1975, in another round of negotiations on non-proliferation would be treated in a different way because the non-nuclear States would not have the same concern or the same desire to become part of the nuclear group, if they felt that nuclear deterrents would not be used against them, if they stayed out of that group."

(Mr. Taittinger, France)
If we turn now to the problems of disarmament in the area of conventional weapons, we find ourselves obliged to observe that, mutatis mutandis, the proposals which have been submitted for consideration in our Organization deal only with partial or marginal aspects of the subject and that the solutions do not really match the problems posed.

So as not to tax the patience of the members of the Committee and since we have in past years explained our position on this, I will be as brief as I can.

The Soviet Union has proposed a reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent -- that is item 24 on the agenda. That proposal might be interesting, if it did not come up against practically insurmountable difficulties with regard to the comparison and verification of military budgets: the conclusions of the report submitted by the Secretary-General are hardly encouraging in this respect.

We understand the feelings of those countries which wish to establish a zone of peace in a part of the world in which they have a particular interest. But is it by partial, limited measures of this kind, contrary to international practice with regard to the law of the sea, and, what is more, discriminatory vis-à-vis certain Powers, that we can hope to solve the real problems of disarmament? Those problems, unfortunately, are of another scale altogether and the most powerful military forces would not be affected by those measures and would maintain their power to intervene if they felt that it was necessary.

Item 28 of our agenda deals with napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use. My delegation will explain its position on this, as on other matters, in more detail and will make certain observations at the appropriate time. Today though I should like to confine myself to saying that the manner in which this matter was considered at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly seemed to us an actual denial of constructive effort: while in the area of conventional disarmament it is acceptable to progress by partial and limited measures, applying to certain types of weapons, there is no point in assigning a task of this kind to a humanitarian organization, in this case an international diplomatic conference. Certainly the control of the use of certain weapons considered as particularly cruel has humanitarian aspects, but in this matter it is the political aspects that are decisive, because the political aspects here relate to the defence of States and their security. Our
Organization we believe, by referring this problem to another body has
demonstrated a failure to recognize its own responsibilities and in fact has
yielded to discouragement.

Item 29 of the agenda deals with chemical weapons. The Conference of the
Committee on Disarmament, which had been charged by our Organization with the
consideration of this problem as a matter of the utmost urgency, for the fourth
consecutive year had nothing to say on the subject. I shall say no more, but one
must conclude that here again we are marking time.
Finally, may I turn to the problem of measures to prevent new forms of conflict, to prevent the establishment of new weapon systems which do not yet exist but which might exist in the more or less distant future. That is an area where it must be recognized, some success has been achieved: for example, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Treaty on the Antarctic. France has become a party to a number of those conventions. Today we have before us a proposal relating to 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. That is an interesting proposal to which the French Government intends to give consideration. But is it not paradoxical to try to lay down rules and regulations in an area which remains one of hypothetical danger while at the same time doing nothing in the area of the immediate, terrifying, apocalyptic threat posed by nuclear weapons? Is this not a reversal of priorities? Or does it mean that our Organization is so keenly aware of the futility of its efforts in the primary area of nuclear weapons that it has resigned itself to concentrating attention on preventing dangers which we hope will never actually exist?

Members of the Committee may have noted that in reviewing the various items on our agenda I have said nothing about item 35, which relates to the proposed world disarmament conference. That is not a question which relates to specific aspects of disarmament; it has to do with the organization of our general strategy. Here the French Government has not changed its position. It continues to feel that in order to give new momentum to work on disarmament, to make it possible to give proper attention to fundamental questions which our Organization has either not wanted or not been able to take up, in order to move forward from dead centre in the area covered by the Geneva Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, a special meeting of government representatives is necessary to consider all disarmament problems; and, of course, I am referring to genuine disarmament and the action which might be taken to solve those problems. A world disarmament conference would meet our wishes, but for it to be successful not only must it be properly prepared but also the Powers
having special responsibility in this field because they possess weapons of mass destruction must agree to participate and must in one way or another be associated in fact with the preparatory work, which in this particular area is of fundamental importance.

In the circumstances, the effective co-operation of the French Government can be pledged. It is our hope that the draft resolution which will be submitted to us for the fourth consecutive year will represent further progress in the direction we should all like to take. Finally, we hope it will bring a ray of hope in the midst of the threats under which we are living, threats we should no longer resign ourselves to accepting.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of France for the kind words which he addressed to me.

Mr. SHEVEL (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Since I am speaking for the first time this year in this Committee, permit me, Mr. Chairman, to associate myself with previous speakers in extending to you congratulations on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee, one of great importance in the United Nations. We should like also to express the hope that the officers of the Committee who have been elected will be able, under your leadership, to work in such a way that the Committee will play its part in the noble cause of strengthening international peace and security and in the expansion and intensification of the easing of tension.

The general debate at this session of the General Assembly has most convincingly demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of Members of the United Nations have welcomed the positive changes which have occurred in recent years in the international atmosphere, and that voices which would deny or cast doubt on the effectiveness of those changes are becoming ever more isolated and rare. The easing of international tension is ever more determining the development of contemporary international relations and is becoming an ever more typical feature of the political life of the seventies of our century. The perceptible positive changes which have occurred in the
international political climate are having a favourable effect on all areas of international intercourse and co-operation. Those changes have permitted an expansion of the search for solutions to such extremely complex and many-faceted questions as the limitation of the arms race and disarmament. In individual areas, that search has been successful. One might refer to such important international agreements as the Moscow Treaty banning nuclear-weapon testing in the three environments, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, and other agreements.

That success has been demonstrated by the recent Soviet-American agreement on preventing nuclear war, limiting strategic weapons and limiting nuclear-weapon testing.

In other areas it has sometimes been necessary to make major efforts to work out the most appropriate approach to successful progress in the complex and delicate negotiations on disarmament. However, with regard to the positive aspects of the present world climate we should not forget that the arms race, which absorbs fabulous sums of money and is a tremendous burden on peoples, still continues. The danger of the arms race, apart from anything else, lies not only in the accumulation of vast arsenals but also in that it is leading to a search for, and in the final analysis the creation of, new, terrifying, lethal weapons and to their use for military and destructive purposes in new ways of waging war. The tremendous progress in the development of science and technology, the staggering results of the contemporary scientific and technological revolution, is placing into the hands of men almost inexhaustible opportunities not only for identifying the laws of the development of the human environment and the processes occurring within it but also for active intervention in affecting those laws and processes.

Natural phenomena, meteorological, geophysical, and climatic processes which occur on our planet have a substantial effect on the life and work of men. Cyclones, tornados, storms, hurricanes, earthquakes, the eruption of volcanos, floods and drought all do tremendous harm to man. In spite of all their power, mankind is still unable to harness
those frightening forces. There is thus a natural desire to understand the forces of nature and to try to prevent, or at least to reduce, their harmful effects.

I must say that in this area initial encouraging results have been achieved. One might refer to the experience of our own Republic. For example, in the Ukrainian region of the Crimea, for many years now teams combating hail have been successfully at work. Hail, as is well known, does tremendous harm to agriculture. Using special artillery shells, those teams are destroying storm clouds and in that way protecting 100,000 hectares of valuable farm land. There has been effective employment also of the method of artificially inducing rainfall for extinguishing forest fires.

However, the results achieved and the opportunities created for possibly influencing the natural environment and the climate can be used not only for the benefit of people but also to harm them; they can be used not only in the interests of peace but also as weapons of war.
And indeed there have already been cases of the useful military purposes of the discoveries of science in affecting the natural environment. It is well known that in the course of the Viet-Nam war the United States Air Force used, on a large scale, chemical substances, herbicides, defoliants and desiccants to destroy forests and food crops. According to information from the press, about 15 per cent of the whole territory of South Viet-Nam was affected by such chemicals. This would include about 2 million hectares of valuable timberland. About 120,000 hectares of coastal forest areas were literally wiped from the face of the earth, and about 200,000 hectares of grain crops were also destroyed. In Indo-China methods of influencing the natural climate and environment were used, such as the artificial induction of rain in order to wipe away roads, access roads and fords. All this led to very serious ecological consequences.

We might also refer to the attempts made in the woods of Viet-Nam to use such a terrifying weapon as artificially induced firestorms. It is well known that firestorms, in the form of a mass of fire speeding across the sky at speeds of 160 kilometres an hour, can not only set fire to woods and buildings, for in the region of firestorms there is intensive oxygen combustion and all living things perish, if not from the fire itself at least from suffocation.

In the Sub-Committee on Oceans and International Environment of the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in January and March of this year, facts were presented about experiments which have been carried out in order artificially to induce earthquakes. In connexion with this, certain scientists have expressed their apprehensions that these artificial earthquakes might turn into regional or even global tectonic activity on a scale comparable with that known by our planet at the very dawn of its existence.

We could give other examples, too, but even without these examples it is obvious that the use of geophysical and meteorological methods of warfare is no longer just a remote threat. We could add to this that research and experiments in this area are swallowing up vast sums of money and raising the figures of military budgets which are astronomical in any case.
Thus, the question of prohibiting action to influence the natural environment and climate is not merely of academic interest. It is an urgent, imperative, immediate political task, something which must be faced right now by mankind, and this task must be undertaken as soon as possible, without delay. We can be sure that geophysical war would lead to wholesale destruction of the achievements of contemporary civilization. It could threaten not only the life and health of this generation, but also might do incalculable harm to future generations. Methods of geophysical warfare are anti-humanitarian and inhumane because they can do tremendous harm and cause tremendous suffering to the peaceful inhabitants of the world.

Of course, the working out of methods and ways of waging geophysical and meteorological warfare is still at an early stage. But this is precisely something which can serve as an extra reason in favour of the earliest possible conclusion of an agreement prohibiting action to influence the natural environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the interests of international security, human well-being and health. It is quite obvious -- and something which is so convincingly demonstrated by the history of all the talks on arms limitation and disarmament -- that it is considerably easier to achieve agreement when a given form of weaponry or means of waging war has not yet been created or is not yet very widespread. A mutual decision of this kind to renounce the production and use of new forms of weapons and means of warfare would have a restraining effect on the further development of the arms race in a new sphere, in the field of controlling natural processes.

In the actual practice of disarmament measures, there already have been cases where potentially dangerous areas have been excluded from the arms race, areas in which there was a threat to produce and start a race in new forms of armaments. These purposes were served by the Treaty on outer space and the Treaty on the sea-bed, which have played, and continue to play, an important restraining role on the arms race. Of considerable importance, too, is the fact that the prohibition of action to influence the environment for military purposes would be in accordance with the principle of mutual and equal security for all parties, for no one would be threatened by the use of these forces of nature, and all the nations of the world, great and small, economically developed and developing, would stand to gain by this.
There is one further aspect to this proposal which should be borne in mind. We are living at a time when the preservation and protection of the human environment has become one of the problems which is most common to all mankind; and the successful solution to this problem, it would be no exaggeration to state, will determine the future fate of contemporary civilization. The proposal of the Soviet Union, if it is adopted, will be an important means of protecting the human environment and for the preservation of nature. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.675 should not and cannot, in our view, give rise to objections. Indeed, the draft resolution, in essence, contains two fundamental and, in our view, quite uncontroversial points: firstly, approval of the idea of the need to adopt effective measures to conclude an international convention prohibiting action to influence the natural environment and climate for military and other purposes; and, secondly, referring such a draft convention submitted by the USSR, and also other proposals on this matter, to the Geneva Committee on Disarmament with a request for early consideration.

As far as the Soviet draft convention prohibiting action to influence the natural environment and climate for military and other purposes is concerned, it is important to point out that it not only provides for the prohibition of the preparation of geophysical and meteorological methods of warfare and the use of such weapons, but also for the prohibition of preparations for employing such methods. The formulation on the prohibition of action to influence the natural environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the interests of international security, human well-being and health is extremely broad, and, at the same time, it does not restrict the use of the achievements of scientific and technological progress in the field of the use, preservation and improvement of the human environment for peaceful purposes. This was specially noted in article 5 of the draft convention. The merits of the draft convention lie in the fact that it includes concrete ways and means of possible action to influence the natural environment, including the weather and climate, for military and other purposes. But, at
the same time, there is the provision that this list can be supplemented or replaced depending on the progress achieved in scientific and technological research.

The Ukrainian delegation requests the inclusion of the Ukrainian SSR among the co-sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.675. We hope that this will be reflected in the draft resolution and in the relevant documents of the Committee.

We should not regard it as a mere accident that it is precisely the Soviet Union, which possesses powerful military, industrial, scientific and technological potential, which came forward in this new important initiative in the matter of the further limitation of the sphere of the arms race. It is a genuinely peace-loving State and we are proud of the fact that this State, the first socialist State in the world, the great Soviet Union founded by Lenin, is genuinely striving to achieve peace without wars and without weapons and can so consistently and so unswervingly come forward with initiatives designed to avert the threat of war and to spare mankind the horrors of new military conflict, and prevent the development of new forms and means of waging war and to create conditions for genuine disarmament.
The proposal of the Soviet Union is a concrete example of a realistic approach to the solution of important and urgent international problems arising out of the present situation. This new Soviet initiative, which we call upon all States to support, is one more eloquent proof of the concrete, businesslike and singleminded approach of the Soviet Government to the implementation of the peace programme of the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Thorough, reciprocal attention to the interests of all countries and peoples, a concern for the strengthening and developing in every possible way the positive trends of contemporary international relations by finding new spheres of possible agreement and co-operation, the combination of the question of curbing the arms race and of disarmament with that of the preservation of the human environment -- those are the typical features of the USSR proposal which should win it universal support.

The Ukrainian SSR delegation is convinced that the adoption of measures to prohibit action to influence the natural environment and climate for military and other purposes incompatible with the interests of international security, human welfare and health, could be a very important step towards a prohibition of new means of waging war, towards curbing the arms race and towards disarmament. This proposal put forward by the USSR, will without any doubt help in the elaboration of other concrete measures in the field of disarmament and, also, will promote the strengthening and further development of the process of international détente.

In conclusion, I should like to state that on other questions of disarmament, our delegation will express its views at a later stage of the work of our Committee.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the Foreign Minister of the Ukrainian SSR for the good wishes and congratulations which he was good enough to address to me. The Committee has taken due note of the fact that the delegation of the Ukrainian SSR wishes to be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.675.
Mr. FANYARACHUN (Thailand): Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Thailand does not find it possible to forgo the pleasure of expressing its congratulations to you on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Your personal attributes and your vast knowledge and wide-ranging experience in the fields of disarmament and international peace and security will no doubt prove to be of immense value to the work of our Committee. I should also like to convey our good wishes to the two Vice Chairmen and the Rapporteur who constitute a formidable supporting team.

The question of disarmament has confronted the international community for generations. The goal of general and complete disarmament, enunciated by the Soviet Union during the Assembly's session in 1959, has never been repudiated by anyone. And yet that goal, however desirable and necessary, continues to be elusive and remain out of reach. Since disarmament touches upon the most sensitive and complex questions of national security, it can be pursued only through a patient and continuing process of negotiation. Past achievements, particularly in the realm of arms control, offer a glimpse of hope, but much remains to be done before the overwhelming concern of mankind can be put to rest.

In reviewing the steps taken in both the United Nations and elsewhere, it can be seen that the main emphasis in the past has been placed on arms control measures in the nuclear field, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof; the Soviet-United States Agreements on the prevention of nuclear war and on the limitation of strategic arms. Only the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction can be said to be a real disarmament treaty, since it represents the first agreement providing for the complete destruction of all existing bacteriological and toxin weapons. Lack of progress in the substantive negotiations in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, on the prohibition of chemical weapons is a disappointment. It is our hope that further serious attempts will be made, particularly by the USSR and the United States, to achieve a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons that would be a true disarmament measure.
A greater disappointment is related to the nuclear test ban. It is estimated that more than 900 nuclear tests had been conducted by 1972. The Treaty Banning Nuclear Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, which entered into force on 10 September 1963, was an important breakthrough in almost two decades of negotiation. It brought to an end a period of massive nuclear testing in the atmosphere and thereby reduced the hazards of radioactive fall-out, but, regrettably, underground tests were not covered by the agreement. In the meantime, two nuclear Powers have not become Parties to the Treaty and continue to carry out atmospheric nuclear tests. Such activities have caused considerable concern to many countries, especially those which are geographically close to the testing areas.

So long as no agreement to stop all nuclear-weapons testing is concluded, those who continue to conduct underground tests must also bear a share of responsibility for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. The agreement on a threshold test ban, to take effect on 31 March 1976, for the Soviet Union and the United States, represents a disappointing step towards a comprehensive test ban. It can even be viewed as a backward step which appears to legitimize the very underground tests we want to suspend. The conscience of the international community demands an acceleration towards the achievement of the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time.

This brings me to another important aspect of disarmament, namely the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which came into force on 5 March 1970, had been signed by about 100 countries and ratified by more than 80.
The Thai Government deposited its instrument of accession with the United Kingdom Government in London in December 1972. The long delay in our decision to become a party to the Treaty was caused by our unhappiness at the discriminatory nature of the agreement. However, in the end we were persuaded by the larger and more pressing interests of the world community and reached the conclusion that the non-proliferation Treaty, in spite of its imperfections and certain undesirable features, still represents the best hope for mankind in lessening the possibility of a nuclear holocaust. Thailand will support any proposal or measure designed to ensure the attainment of the objective of the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

But there are still many States, including those with a nuclear potential, which have not yet become Parties to the Treaty. The effectiveness of the agreement depends, of course, on signing and ratification by those key near-nuclear countries. My delegation shares the view that universal acceptance of the Treaty is a necessary prerequisite for any future progress in nuclear disarmament as well as an instrument for creating favourable conditions for the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In this connexion, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, in his introduction to his report on the work of the organization, stated the following:

"Recent developments have highlighted the importance of the relationship between the peaceful and military uses of nuclear explosives. Available scientific evidence shows that there is little essential difference between explosive devices for peaceful purposes and those for nuclear weapons. The conduct of peaceful nuclear explosions may in the future, become a practical means for releasing energy and resources for the benefit of mankind." (A/9601/Add.1, p. 15)

The "peaceful nuclear explosion experiment" carried out in May by India has understandably evoked widespread concern. Many Governments have taken due note of India's expressed intention not to produce nuclear weapons. The addition of India to the nuclear club has introduced a new element to the regional scene, but the statement of peaceful intention, accompanied by concrete and positive acts, should do a lot to dispel any misgivings about its future nuclear programme.
The non-proliferation Treaty enjoins the nuclear-weapon States parties to fulfill their obligation under Article VI to "... pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament ..." (General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII))

It is no secret that 10 years after the signing of the Treaty progress in this direction has been rather modest. In the absence of a comprehensive test ban and with the painfully slow progress in halting the spread of explosive capabilities and in the reduction of their own nuclear stockpiles, the nuclear-weapon States have evidently failed to practise the restraint expected of them, thus providing an excuse for non-nuclear-weapon States to pursue their nuclear policy uninhibited.

Since the Treaty's basic concepts and structure do not meet the needs of some Member States, ways and means should be found to induce those not yet Parties to see the real advantages of acceding to the Treaty. Security Council resolution 255 (1968) adopted in June 1968, and the associated declarations of intent made by the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union on security assurances, are regarded in some quarters as inadequate and of no practical value. More meaningful action should be taken by the nuclear Powers to dispel any apprehension on the part of those States that the commitments under the Treaty would weaken their national security, leaving them a prey to nuclear aggression.

As a party to the non-proliferation Treaty, Thailand has been one of the beneficiaries of preferential consideration in the donation by the United States of special nuclear materials. Plans for a nuclear reactor for power production in Thailand have also been set in motion and completion of the first nuclear power plant in my country is expected in the early 1980s. The Thai Government also concluded a safeguard agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 16 May 1974. The Government of Thailand, among others, has been invited by the IAEA to participate in a panel in Vienna in January 1975 to study projects involving the peaceful applications of nuclear explosions, such as excavation and underground engineering applications. We look forward to our participation in the panel, which is expected to study the legal, health and safety aspects, as well as the economics, of such explosions.
Such a study could result in the realization of the peaceful benefits of nuclear technology which, it is hoped, will play an increasingly important role in the developing world.

The review conference on the non-proliferation Treaty to be held in Geneva in May 1975 will examine several aspects of the Treaty: how its provisions have been implemented, whether and to what extent the obligations incumbent on nuclear-weapon States have been carried out, and what practical adjustments can be made to the present Treaty. My delegation hopes that the conference will be successful in reducing mutual distrust and strengthening the political will of all States to make the non-proliferation Treaty even more acceptable and effective than it has been hitherto.

In my statement in the First Committee last year I expressed my delegation's appreciation of the Soviet Union's initiative in proposing a disarmament item, "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". We commended the general objectives of the Soviet draft resolution, but at the same time my delegation's full support was held back by a lack of consensus among the five permanent members.

Our apprehensions about the practicability of the draft resolution have now been borne out by the note by the Secretary-General (A/9800) dated 16 October 1974. In that note, the Secretary-General explained the difficulties and obstacles which had made it impossible for the President of the General Assembly to fulfil his mandate of appointing the Special Committee as laid down in operative paragraph 4 of resolution 3093 A (XXVIII). In these circumstances, the Secretary-General concluded, there has not been any meeting of the Special Committee.

On the other hand, General Assembly resolution 3093 B (XXVIII) requested the Secretary-General, with the assistance of qualified consultant experts appointed by him, to prepare a report on the subject-matter. He accordingly submitted this report (A/9770) on 14 October 1974. Unfortunately, because of the late submission of the report, which is voluminous and deals with highly complex questions, my delegation is not yet in a position to make any comment on it.
However, we take note of the report with appreciation and hope that this expert study may help to clarify some of the issues still preventing agreement among the major Powers on the question of reductions of military budgets.

On the question of the world disarmament conference, Ambassador Hoveyda of Iran, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, on 21 October in this Committee reported eloquently on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee in the past year. My delegation fully sympathizes with his predicament in being, in his own words, "a non-chairman of a non-committee entrusted with submitting a non-report on what perhaps had not happened." (1998th meeting, p. 37) In spite of the difficulties inherent in the issue, his report on the non-progress of the Committee has fully convinced us of his personal and invaluable services. We should take note of his cautious and yet fairly optimistic concluding remarks. He said:

"We should nourish the idea gradually and let it take its slow course to maturity and ripeness. Any haste, any pressure, could have only negative repercussions affecting the fragile progress so far achieved." (ibid., p. 42)

My delegation concurs in the hope expressed by the delegation of Sweden that as we are about half way through the Disarmament Decade the world disarmament conference, in which all five nuclear-weapon States will participate, can be held before the end of this important Decade.
My delegation views with interest and understanding the proposals to create nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and South Asia. Naturally, we welcome the objectives of such proposals and we look forward to hearing the views of all those States in the areas, which will govern our thinking on the subject. My delegation believes that on a matter of direct regional interest there should always be close consultations among Member States concerned. Any basic differences in the approach and procedure should also be ironed out among themselves.

We members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have followed this procedure in our own attempt to secure the recognition of, and respect for, South-East Asia as a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality, free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers. We are hopeful that some time in the near future we shall be able to inform the United Nations of the results of our joint study.

Closely related to the concept of the zone of peace in South-East Asia is the question of the Indian Ocean. In this connexion my Foreign Minister, in his general statement to the plenary Assembly on 1 October, expressed his hope that "... the interests of the littoral States will also be taken into account and that a policy of restraint leading to a reduction of big-Power rivalry and contention in the Indian Ocean will ultimately prevail, thus translating that worthy idea into concrete action." (A/PV.2251, p. 113-115)

We therefore support continuing efforts by the Ad Hoc Committee to prepare the groundwork for the possible convening of a conference of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean.

The new Soviet item 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 adds another important dimension to our annual debate on the question of disarmament. On 21 October Ambassador Malik of the Soviet Union described in detail and in graphic terms the dire consequences of such meteorological warfare. We should like to thank the Soviet delegation for alerting us to this very interesting issue. My delegation believes that the draft convention needs to be studied carefully by a group of experts, and such questions as the delineation between military and civilian action needs to be clarified. The proposal deserves serious and positive consideration by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.