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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWOTHOUSAND AND TWELFTH MEETING

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Chairman: Mr. Siddiq (Vice-Chairman) (Afghanistan)
Rapporteur: Mr. COSTA LOBO (Portugal)

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  thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries [287] (continued)
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      Released as a Result of the Reduction of Military Budgets;

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DECLARATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA (A/9706)
Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt): On 25 October I addressed the Committee on the item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East". Today I have asked to speak in order to express my delegation's views on the various disarmament items.

If we take the agenda of the General Assembly as an index of the international community's concern, disarmament will rank among the most important issues discussed during this twenty-ninth session. We have before us 12 items covering different aspects of the subject. Starting from that fact, my delegation would like to take part, as it has always done, in this ongoing constructive debate on a list of topics.

One item to which the Egyptian delegation attaches great importance is the item entitled "Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use". This problem has gained a certain momentum since 1972, when it was submitted as one of the disarmament items on the agenda of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The subject was considered again at the last session of the Assembly as a separate item. By resolution 3076 (XXVIII) the General Assembly invited the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts to consider -- without prejudice to its examination of the draft protocols submitted to it by the International Committee of the Red Cross -- the question of the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons. In the Diplomatic Conference, Egypt joined Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Libya, Sudan and Kuwait in proposing the establishment of an ad hoc committee of the whole on conventional weapons, to deal with the question of the restriction and prohibition of the use of conventional weapons which might cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects. Egypt participated also in the submission, with the same group of countries, of a working paper which included the question to be studied by the Conference and proposed specific draft rules to bring about the prohibition of such weapons.
As a result of this discussion, the agenda which was submitted by the Conference of Government Experts held in Lucerne under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross was adopted. Egypt has always advocated early action to curb certain weapons and establish a complete ban on their use. We shall always join constructive efforts to this effect.

The subject of preventing meteorological and environmental warfare has recently received the attention of the international community. My delegation would like to express its support for the Soviet Union initiative in proposing for our discussion here a subject which is becoming important as a result of scientific and technological progress. We think that we should tackle this problem with vigour and spare no effort to work out an acceptable formula. We are aware of the technical complexities and intricacies involved, but this should spur the process of negotiating agreed principles and adopting the most effective measures possible to overcome the dangers of the use of environmental modification techniques for military purposes.

Over the last three years, extensive discussions and exchanges of views have taken place in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament concerning the question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. One salient development in this respect was a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. The Japanese draft convention, together with the draft convention presented by the socialist delegations and the working paper submitted by the delegations of 10 non-aligned States, constituted an adequate basis for meaningful negotiations towards an agreed text. We are aware of the technical aspects of the problem, but we are fully confident that through serious work and diligent negotiations all differences can be adjusted for the benefit of the international community.

Egypt still considers the Japanese draft as a positive step. The draft is based on the principle of a comprehensive ban to be achieved by stages. 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.
While we welcome the announcement made at the Moscow summit in July 1974 that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to consider a joint initiative in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to seek effective measures for a comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons and for the destruction of existing stockpiles, we are impatiently looking forward to seeing this initiative take its proper course in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament without further delay.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference contains the views of Member States concerning a number of subjects related to the convening of a world disarmament conference and preparations for such a conference.

My delegation would like to emphasize the significant work done this year by the Ad Hoc Committee. We hope that the General Assembly, during this session, will renew the mandate of that Committee in a manner that would allow it to reach conclusions and pave the way for convening the conference, instead of just compiling the views of Governments. The world disarmament conference must receive world-wide support, especially from the nuclear States. Finally, adequate preparation is essential for the successful convening of a world disarmament conference.

My delegation was one of those that supported the Soviet Union proposal at the last session on the reduction of military budgets. One of its merits was that it recognized the organic link between disarmament and development.

The report of the Group of Consultants on the Reduction of Military Budgets appointed by the Secretary-General draws our attention to certain significant facts. First, military expenditures represent a burden which is accentuated by the arms race. Secondly, despite the improvement in the international climate and the relative relaxation and détente, military expenditures have followed a totally unimpeded ascending curve. In the absence of the political will to take a decision on this subject, despite repeated appeals to halt the arms race and the urgent need to divert part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries, no progress on the right path will be achieved.
We feel that the realization of the objectives set last year in the General Assembly resolution on the reduction of military budgets by 10 per cent, and the use of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries, cannot be achieved in the absence of certain conditions in international relations or of the unanimous approval of the permanent member States of the Security Council and the States with significant military and economic power. The Secretary-General's report is an early warning of a possible state of affairs which should urge us to take timely action. Otherwise, we may be faced with an impossible situation in the not-too-distant future.

When we talk about the urgent need for the cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and the conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban, we are faced with a peculiar situation. Despite the repeated calls by the General Assembly and international recognition of the urgent need for the cessation of tests, the number of tests is increasing. Among the efforts directed towards a comprehensive nuclear test ban two international instruments, the partial test ban Treaty and the non-proliferation Treaty, make clear the irrevocable determination to achieve the discontinuation of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and the need to continue negotiations to that end. But in contradiction to this our planet is constantly witnessing the continuation of the arms race, the increase of nuclear stockpiles and the improvement of nuclear weapons.
The importance of securing agreement on a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, a treaty that would extend to underground tests the already existing ban on tests in all other environments, has been widely recognized. Despite many efforts, especially by the non-aligned members of the Committee on Disarmament, in the decade since the signing of the partial test ban treaty, it has not yet been possible to reach agreement on a comprehensive test ban. The apparent reason for this failure has been the impasse on the question of verification.

The only achievement to date is the treaty on the limitation of underground nuclear weapon tests, prohibiting any such underground tests having a yield exceeding 150 kilotons and beginning 31 March 1976. The United States and the Soviet Union committed themselves at the same time to continuing negotiations for a cessation of all underground weapon testing.

Underground weapon testing is an important subject directly related to the arms race and nuclear disarmament. We do not consider the Moscow agreement of July 1974 adequate enough. Egypt's view is that the United States and the Soviet Union must start forthwith, within the Committee on Disarmament, negotiating an international convention with a clear cut pledge to halt all underground weapon tests without any qualification. That would be the right action in the right direction.

This leads me to deal with another subject which is really pertinent to the nuclear arms race, that is, the review conference in regard to the non-proliferation Treaty, which is scheduled for May 1975. The review conference should strengthen the Treaty. All we are looking to achieve is a real international régime for a guaranteed system of non-proliferation. Egypt is firmly in favour of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. I need not repeat here what I mentioned in the Committee on 25 October on this subject. In view of the great importance of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the development of our country and the rest of the developing countries, the Review Conference must ensure the right of these countries to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and provide for the facilities necessary for that.
Having that in mind, Egypt has always advocated and still advocates the elimination of all nuclear weapons. We consider them an evil in themselves. Therefore, not only should nuclear weapons be eliminated forthwith but their production should be ceased and their use should be prohibited, and any nuclear blackmail will be condemned and refused categorically. Therefore, starting from this principle, Egypt actively took part in the elaboration and drafting of the non-proliferation Treaty. In consistency with this policy, Egypt was among the first countries to sign the non-proliferation Treaty. We believe strongly that ratification of or accession to this international instrument is an essential step for the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones. This was spelled out clearly in my statement contained in document A/C.1/PV.2001. However, for the establishment of such zones the political conditions prevailing in each area must be taken into consideration. At this juncture, my delegation expresses its appreciation for the noble motives behind the Pakistani proposal for the declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. Egypt will always be interested in sincere initiatives in the right direction. My delegation believes that it is appropriate to carry out a comprehensive study of the question of nuclear free zones.

Mr. SOLIHARE (Mauritania) (interpretation from French): Despite the recommendations made by the Chairman at the outset of our work, permit me to convey to him, on behalf of the Mauritanian delegation, my warm congratulations on his election to preside over the First Committee. The ability, skill and energy with which he has guided our work heretofore are evidence that all the congratulations that have been addressed to him are well deserved. In the discharge of the lofty mission which our Organization has entrusted to him—a choice which is a tribute to the vast wealth of experience he has acquired in international relations—he may be assured that the Mauritanian delegation will spare no effort to give him its collaboration and facilitate his work. It is with pleasure that we also convey our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee, who with him make up a team whose abilities are a guarantee for the success of our work.
For a small country like my own, to speak of the problems of disarmament is, above all, to express hopes and offer prayers that the forces of evil may be less aggressive and less inhuman and that the demon may relent somewhat. As the representative of Saudi Arabia was saying at the very outset of the consideration of these problems, it would appear that we are prohibited from taking action since we do not have the means; but we believe in the virtue of prayer and of the spoken word, which testify to our hope for a world of justice and peace.

In taking up consideration of the problems of disarmament, our attention is focused first of all on the most awesome reality of our era, which is the proliferation of nuclear weapons both in quantity and in quality and in its horizontal form which, although it is most often censured, is not the most to be condemned. This phenomenon in all its aspects is in the process of becoming an idea as familiar to our minds as the fact that we can make a trip by air in a few hours from one hemisphere to another of our planet, a voyage the mere idea of which was hardly believable at the beginning of the century. Today the man in the street knows that nuclear weapons, which are capable of destroying his entire country in a few minutes, are a silent presence always at his side, and nothing is beyond their reach. This fact is now such a commonplace that people no longer pay much attention to it, except in certain specialized circles. Is this not something disturbing, when one thinks of the destructive capacity of these weapons and when one knows that a mere error, something which is so human, a trifle, can unleash a cataclysm and overwhelm our world in a flood of fire? This anguish is mingled with indignation and horror when one thinks about the astronomical sums of money that are devoted each year to the production and improvement of these weapons, while in many regions of the world thousands of men are dying of hunger and disease, most of them in the prime of life, if indeed they do not die in infancy.
Those responsible for the situation are the Powers which were the first to master the techniques of the production of those weapons and have remained for many years the only possessors of the secret. This crazy race for over-armament, as was to be expected, has finally dragged in other Powers which are concerned about their security, and today, in many other countries, the idea of acquiring nuclear military equipment is being considered and even envisaged as a possibility. In a few years, about 15 other countries may enter the nuclear club. That is not our assertion; it was stated in our Committee by some of those very States which now have a monopoly on the production of these weapons and which are undoubtedly among the best informed on these issues.

In the face of such a danger, my delegation considers that the only remedy is the destruction of all nuclear-weapon stockpiles and the absolute prohibition of their use. True, we are aware of the difficulties in the way of the adoption of such a measure in the near future, and this awareness is increased by the mediocre results of lengthy negotiations undertaken over many years, both in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and at the bilateral level.

That is why, in our desire for efficiency and as part of a global strategy of nuclear disarmament, we think that we should act by stages.

In the first stage, two measures appear to us essential:

First of all, the countries possessing nuclear weapons should all give their support to any proposal to create nuclear-free zones and should ratify the relevant treaties. My delegation viewed favourably the draft submitted by Egypt and Iran concerning the creation of such a zone in the Middle East. We hope that the Tel Aviv authorities will heed reason and will give their support to this agreement, since that support is an indispensable prerequisite if the idea is to be put into practice.

This draft should command the full attention of the international community, because, first of all, it would help to slow down the spread of nuclear weapons and also because the Middle East is one of the most unstable regions of the world. Moreover, the creation of such a zone, as well as the creation of a denuclearized zone in South Asia, as proposed by Pakistan, would make it possible, in the interests of peace and disarmament, to create a vast geographical area
completely free of nuclear weapons. The agreement of all the countries of those regions should obviously be reinforced by that of all the great Powers which for the time being are the only ones able to introduce such weapons into those areas.

The second measure at this first stage would be for the countries possessing nuclear weapons to refrain from using those weapons against any country belonging to a nuclear-free zone or any non-nuclear country. Each one of them would undertake also never to be the first to use nuclear weapons, or to threaten to use them in any conflict between it and one or more other members of the group.

My delegation is happy to note the statement made on this point by China, which is thus making a great contribution to the conclusion of an agreement on this issue. In the interest of peace, we would urgently call upon the other nuclear-weapon Powers to assume a similar commitment.

The danger of nuclear weapons does not blind us to the importance of prohibiting other types of weapons, such as napalm, incendiary weapons and chemical and bacteriological weapons.

The position of my country has not changed on this matter. The cruel nature of this type of weapon, the scourge which their use can create, and, finally, their potential for mass destruction both of living beings and of the environment, make any argument superfluous with regard to the urgent need rapidly to achieve a total ban on their use and production and the destruction of present stockpiles.

My delegation considers the "Draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction", which Japan submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD/420), an important contribution in this respect. Since the delegations of countries members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament were almost unanimous in their affirmation of the positive contribution made by that draft, we are impatient to see them engage in genuine negotiations on the subject of the draft, as well as on the draft submitted by the socialist countries and the working paper submitted by the non-aligned countries, all of this with a view to the speedy conclusion of a convention.
The situation in the world has scarcely improved since the General Assembly finished the work of its twenty-eighth session. Hot-beds of war persist in various parts of our planet. The firing has not yet ceased in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, where the hopes raised by the Paris Agreements have given way to pessimism. Tension still prevails in Korea because of the maintenance of the artificial division of that country whose people aspire to the rebuilding of its national unity. Recently -- in fact it was only three months ago -- war broke out in Cyprus bringing with it its sequel of nameless evils and condemning to hunger, disease and suffering the peoples which, despite their different racial origins, want only to live in harmony and peace.

In the Middle East, the cease-fire agreements have certainly led to some calming of the situation, but the conditions for true peace have unfortunately not yet been created there. Finally, if we can rejoice in the fortunate development of the situation in the Portuguese colonies, we must be wary of the explosive situation which still exists in Rhodesia and southern Africa and which constitutes a serious threat for peace.

Hence, at various points around the world, for many long years a climate of insecurity has existed, and the peoples of many countries seem once and for all to have settled down to a state of war and are in despair because they have not been able for a whole generation to regain that peace which is so dear to the hearts of all men. The anguish in which these people live strikes all of us in different degrees.

If we recall the existence of these centres of tension and war throughout the world, it is in order to point out that, in our opinion, their elimination is one of the important conditions for the creation of a climate favourable to the activities undertaken by our Organization with a view to reaching genuine and complete disarmament. In fact, any rational strategy for disarmament should devote itself to creating a favourable international climate.
The improvement of this climate also depends, to a large degree, on the advent of a new economic order. The international economic system born of the colonial era was basically founded on the pillaging of the natural resources of other nations by the industrialized countries, which thus had conveniently at their disposal the elements needed for wealth and progress. This system of injustice and exploitation of the poor by the rich must give way to an order which will allow the creation of a world of justice. The conclusions of the work of the sixth special session of the General Assembly of our Organization devoted to the study of the problems of raw materials and development are evidence of the need for change, for which the countries of the third world are loudly calling. We cherish the hope that the industrial Powers will not continue to cling to the privileges born of a situation that runs counter to the course of history and is leading the world to a crisis in which we can already see the seeds of a confrontation that some believe to be inevitable.

If a less sombre international climate could be created in the areas whose importance we have just emphasized, the efforts we are making towards disarmament would certainly be endowed with a greater chance of success and effectiveness. In particular, it would facilitate the achievement of an agreement among all countries on the convening of a world disarmament conference, which seems to us to be the best framework for seeking adequate solutions to the problem of genuine and complete disarmament.

We are happy to note that, as was emphasized by the Ad Hoc Committee in its report contained in document A/9628, the idea of a world disarmament conference has gained the unanimous agreement of the States Members of our Organization. However, in order for the convening of this conference to be possible and for us to be able to hope to see it reach successful conclusions, my delegation considers that certain conditions must be fulfilled in addition to those concerning the improvement of the international climate and the creation of a real détente.

In the first instance, the participation on an equal footing of all States, large and small, powerful and weak, must be obtained. This condition is a consequence of interdependence of nations. True, the active participation of all the great Powers and, in particular, the nuclear-weapon States is the fundamental not to say vital condition for the holding of the conference.
Secondly, the world disarmament conference should be carefully prepared and that preparation should, in particular, result in reasonable prospects for agreements on a minimum number of specific objectives to be defined.

The third and last important prerequisite for the holding of this conference is the determined commitment of the nuclear-weapon States not to use those weapons in certain conditions that I have already specified. Such a commitment, in the opinion of my delegation, is of capital importance because it would permit the birth and growth of mutual confidence among the nuclear Powers, as well as furthering a relaxation of tension the effects of which on the international situation certainly cannot be underestimated but which needs to become universal to be more credible and more effective.

In conclusion, I shall speak briefly on agenda item 24, "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".

My delegation is aware of the link existing between development and the fight against underdevelopment, on the one hand, and the arms race, on the other. We are all the more aware of it, since military expenditure, which has now reached an annual sum of more than $240,000 million, is depriving the world of colossal sums the use of which in development activities would be highly appreciated by the millions of starving people, victims of malnutrition, disease and poverty. Our position is consistent with the many resolutions that our Organization has already adopted on this point, in particular, General Assembly resolution 2171 (XXI) of 6 December 1966 and 2387 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968, concerning the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament.

The study of the Secretary-General's report on this question, contained in document A/9770, causes us some concern. It reveals a great many complex issues involved in the problems which arise out of resolution 3093 A and B (XXVIII) of 7 December 1973. The obstacles to the application of the measures recommended by this resolution are so unwieldy that we remain sceptical about the effectiveness of those measures.
Indeed, it is very difficult to work out a system that would be sound and acceptable to all by which to determine the military budgets of States whose economic, financing and accounting systems are so different. The definition of the content of a military budget, itself determined by the meaning of the term "military sector", varies from country to country. This fact distorts any comparison in this area.

Our concern is also based on the fact that speculations on these definitions threaten to push into the background the effort which we expect of wealthy countries in terms of assistance to development, by introducing considerations or pretexts unacceptable to the third world.

True, there is a great discrepancy between the stagnation in world assistance to development, the official part of which is still far below the figure of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product, the goal fixed by our Organization for achievement by the middle of this decade, on the one hand, and the ever growing increase in military expenditure, on the other. In the light of such a situation, should one not rather continue to seek by parallel courses to strengthen assistance for development, on the one hand, and, to bring about a reduction in military expenditure, on the other, it being understood that any decrease in the latter could be translated into an increase in the former.

Those are the comments which my delegation felt in duty bound to introduce in this debate, a debate whose monotony is sometimes deplored. Its repetition in this hall every year will certainly not, however, lead us to despair. The slightest glimmer of hope is in fact a reason for persevering.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mauritania for the kind remarks that he addressed to the members of the Bureau.

Mr. HAMZA (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): My delegation has pleasure in extending to Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas our congratulations on his unanimous election as Chairman of this Committee. We also congratulate you, Sir, and the other officers of the Committee. We are fully confident that our Chairman's experience, great ability and full knowledge of the issues of disarmament together with his effective participation in these discussions for many years, whether as head of the delegation of Argentina at the disarmament negotiations in Geneva, or at the discussions here in the United Nations, is a source of assurance that our deliberations in this Committee will bring us closer to the goals of mankind on the road to disarmament. My delegation is truly happy to work under the leadership of Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas.

We have absolutely no doubt that the items under consideration have received the full attention of the world; for who is not aware of the dangers of war and destruction, and who does not seek peace and stability? The world has already suffered two ruinous world wars with millions of victims and humanity has learned an unforgettable lesson in this field. Those crimes and sufferings were sufficient to warn the world and to direct it on to the road to reason. They have been cruel lessons for mankind, but men everywhere should make the evils of those ferocious wars the sublime motive for working towards peace and stability and seeking the best methods of realizing that cherished dream.

We have listened with great attention to the discussion in this Committee and have read the documentation on the subject of disarmament. It could in general be said that views abound but the results are not satisfactory, matters are shrouded in ambiguity and the achievements so far are no source of optimism or comfort. If that is the situation, then international responsibility for establishing rules for stability and a permanent peace is increasing with the passage of time. No breakthrough will be made in this respect without good will and mutual trust in dealings between countries in the long-term interests of mankind.
Important developments have taken place in international relations and it has become possible to solve some conflicts and to relax international tension through negotiation. The policy of détente has produced reasonable possibilities of understanding and dialogue between countries, and important steps have been made towards understanding and détente in international relations. Co-operation has also increased in some political, economic, cultural and technological fields, while the military field has remained as a source of anxiety and terror and is a loophole in international relations through which general destruction may befall the world. That does not mean that the matter has not received sufficient attention. Many achievements have been made, and agreements and bilateral treaties have been concluded. But although these do not represent the maximum possible achievement with respect to disarmament, it is no doubt a positive development that cannot be underestimated and at least gives grounds for hope that it will be possible to make further progress in the future.

Historic responsibility pushes the countries of the world -- especially the nuclear Powers -- towards finding suitable solutions and sufficient guarantees and the taking of practical steps to achieve the peaceful progress and development of all peoples. We feel that there are possibilities for understanding and international détente, so that humanity may advance further, in global concert, towards the realization of peaceful co-existence between nations, and will be able to benefit from the release of major armament expenditures for development purposes. We note that the annual expenditure on armaments is the equivalent of the annual income of all the countries of South Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and we believe that all, or at least part, of those funds, could be allocated to economic development and to the multiplication of resources and human energies in the world. That will be more beneficial and useful and will constitute a service to progress and international peace.

We are a small country with humble resources, exerting constant efforts to develop our economic resources and to create a better standard of living for the people. However we are distressed and grieved -- feelings shared by all the other developing countries -- when we see the colossal expenditure on armaments by the major Powers. We cannot believe that matters should take this course without a sense of responsibility on the part of those countries.
(Mr. Hamza, Democratic Yemen)

We join with those who have preceded us in denouncing the expansion and spread of weapons of mass destruction and hail the steps taken so far to restrict the dissemination of those weapons. We also demand that the international community should direct its attention to the adoption of measures aimed at the total prohibition of chemical, bacteriological and nuclear weapons for hostile and military purposes; to prohibit the use of napalm and other incendiary weapons; to work for the cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and to draw up general and binding legal controls to end the arms race, to achieve total disarmament, and to gain tranquillity, security and economic prosperity for the entire world.

While supporting disarmament in principle, however, we link this matter with the right of peoples to possess weapons to defend their dignity, to resist the arbitrary methods of colonialism and dependence and to achieve self-determination. We also consider that peaceful coexistence and political stability should not lead us to accept automatically the economic disparities between the industrial countries and the developing countries. The economic, political and military stability of the world should go hand-in-hand with the concept of economic justice for all peoples.

Democratic Yemen joins with those who have asserted that the responsibility for disarmament is no longer the responsibility of the nuclear Powers alone, but is the responsibility of the entire world -- those who possess nuclear arms and those who do not.
Taking that belief as a point of departure, we affirm the importance of convening a world disarmament conference with the participation of all countries to study the possibility of achieving general and complete disarmament. Success in convening such a conference will represent a wonderful gain on the road to peace and progress.

Allow me on this occasion to define my country's position on some of the issues under discussion. I shall start with the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, since our country is adjacent to that Ocean. Perhaps it will be useful at this point to refer to my Foreign Minister's statement to the General Assembly of 1 October, in which he said:

"Our country borders on the Indian Ocean, and we therefore attach great importance to the military and political developments occurring there. We are very pleased at the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, because we consider that real peace cannot be established unless an end is put to all military bases in all their forms in the Indian Ocean and the countries around it." (2251st meeting, p. 64-65)

A simple declaration is not an end in itself. What is required is the effective implementation of the declaration and the removal of the threat posed by military bases in the area.

I wish now to refer to paragraphs 22 and 27 (a) of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/9269) on the so-called military facilities made available to the Soviet Union by my country. Despite my Government's denial, and although the Committee refers to that denial in its report, in view of the strong ties of friendship between our country and the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, I wish to state again that we cannot accept these allegations. In the past our enemies have circulated certain rumours having a similar objective: the distortion of our progressive régime and the undermining of the excellent relations existing between the Arabs and the socialist countries.

At the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly the Soviet Union submitted a proposal to reduce the military budgets of the permanent members of the Security Council by 10 per cent. We hail that initiative and wish to express our gratification and our support for the proposal. We feel that
its implementation will truly reflect the awareness of the permanent members of the Security Council of the need to undertake economic development projects in the developing countries. On the other hand, my delegation has noted the Egyptian-Iranian proposal for the declaration of the Middle East as a nuclear-free zone. We have already supported a similar proposal when it was submitted to the Arab League last September. However, we would draw attention to the important questions raised by Mr. Abdel Meguid, the representative of Egypt, in his address to this Committee in connexion with the fact that although Israel has not signed the non-proliferation Treaty its representative hastens to support this proposal and gives a lecture not devoid of vanity on methods of implementing it. We detect a strange contradiction in Israel's position, and during this period we have heard nothing that would indicate that Israel intends to sign the Treaty. I therefore reserve my right to speak again on this matter in due course.

Democratic Yemen supports in principle the idea of establishing nuclear-free zones. Consequently, we welcome the Pakistani proposal under agenda item 107 for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. At the same time, we believe that action for peace and the establishment of nuclear-free zones should not mean ignoring the gravity of military interventions in the affairs of small countries and the fact that such interventions disturb international peace and security.

At the current session of the General Assembly the Foreign Minister of the USSR has submitted a proposal for the prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other purposes. In the discussion of that proposal in the First Committee, Ambassador Malik presented very important information and clarifications. While commending those peaceful initiatives, we emphasize the importance of studying the proposal and producing draft resolutions on the subject.

The risks involved in the use of the climate and environment for military purposes are considerable. Motivated by our desire to safeguard mankind from these risks, we have supported this proposal and have become a sponsor of the Soviet draft resolution together with a number of other countries. We believe that to confine ourselves to peaceful use of the environment will be beneficial and will promote world prosperity.
Finally, I wish to hail the work being done in this field by the United Nations, by its Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and by the various committees dealing with disarmament questions. We hope their work will be crowned with success and they can achieve prompt measures for disarmament and the strengthening of world peace.

Mr. ENTE (Romania) (interpretation from French): In my statement of 29 October last I explained the over-all position of my Government on the arms race and the problems of disarmament. Today I should like to refer in greater detail to one of the subjects of concern to our Committee, a subject to which Romania has always attached particular interest: the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world.

The inclusion on our agenda of five items on that subject and the fact that during our debate at least seven regions have been mentioned as regions which States actively wish to transform into nuclearized zones are unquestionable proof that the creation of such zones is an important element in the efforts of the peoples to call a halt to the nuclear-arms race.

The idea of denuclearization first became a reality in Latin America, through the conclusion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and was then extended to the African continent. At present it is undergoing a further evolution thanks to the welcome proposals for creating nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and South Asia. We can add to this that there is a desire to see the Indian Ocean declared a zone of peace, and interest has been shown in creating denuclearized zones in Europe, in the Balkans and in the central and northern parts of the continent.

We are, in fact, witnessing a very important development. A growing number of States, concerned at the increasing danger to their security posed by nuclear weapons, are seeking ways and means of taking authentic measures within the framework of disarmament in order to protect themselves from danger. The initiative still lies with the medium-sized and small countries, which are once again proving the importance of their role and their contribution, on the international scene, to the search for solutions to the problems faced by mankind.
(Mr. Ene, Romania)

In the light of all this we should like to reaffirm the consistent position of the Romanian Government, a position of active support for attempts to create zones of peace and co-operation free from atomic weapons.

Concerned for the maintenance of peace and the development of co-operation in our own region, Romania submitted proposals which were taken up in the Disarmament Committee in Geneva and also in the General Assembly, proposals for the creation in the Balkans of a zone of peace and co-operation free from nuclear weapons and foreign military bases. We are continuing to work towards the implementation of those proposals. This process is in our view an integral part of the policy of peace and security in Europe and throughout the world.

Romania has, in a spirit of consistency, promoted the concept of regional co-operation. I would simply remind the Committee of resolution 2129 (XX) adopted by the General Assembly on the initiative of my country entitled "Actions on the regional level with a view to improving good neighbourly relations among European States ..." and also the support we have given since 1963 to the concept of a nuclear-weapon-free Latin America, as well as a nuclear-weapon-free Africa.

The Romanian delegation, like other delegations, believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones requires acceptance of the zonal concept and the direct participation of States in the geographical region concerned in the preparation of agreements relating thereto.

At the same time, we believe that the active presence of the United Nations to support and stimulate the efforts of States towards that goal is an important obligation of the United Nations, flowing as it does from its purposes and principles. We believe that peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones are part of the new trend which we are witnessing in international life and is an important factor for the promotion of confidence and good neighbourly relations among States. These zones, which could be gradually extended, are harbingers of the world of tomorrow from which nuclear weapons will be abolished forever.

This session confirms the fact that in submitting for the consideration of the United Nations their wish to see their own regions declared nuclear-weapon-free zones, States are hoping for the support of the Organization. I would remind
the Committee in this context of the words of the representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Clark:

"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, ... of our determination to prohibit nuclear weapons in Africa" (2205th meeting, p. 11).

The concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones thus constitutes a new field of co-operation for all countries, great or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, and the proper framework for an effective contribution from all States to the strengthening of international security.

It is in this spirit that the Romanian delegation would like to reaffirm its total support for the efforts of the States of the Middle East and of South Asia to establish in those regions nuclear-weapon-free zones, as provided for in the items on the agenda of the present session.

The United Nations has many ways of supporting the process of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones.

First, the United Nations can and must, we feel, use its authority in supporting the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and encourage and promote the establishment of such zones in all areas and regions where the States concerned express a desire for them.

We appreciate the perseverance with which the Latin American countries -- and I should particularly like to single out the work done towards that goal by the Mexican delegation -- have, over the years, kept the attention of the United Nations focused on their wish to see a nuclear-weapon-free zone established in Latin America, and finally won the support of the international community for their efforts.

The United Nations can also provide assistance and, if necessary, the necessary machinery to enable the States concerned to make progress in their direct consultations.
It is from this standpoint that we view the suggestion of the delegation of Finland that the question of nuclear weapon free zones be considered in all its aspects. That idea is in keeping with the proposal made in the past by my country in the Disarmament Committee in Geneva for an examination of the fundamental factors deriving from the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the drafting of a model agreement for nuclear-weapon-free zones, which can serve as a guide in the negotiation of regional legal instruments.

In the view of the Romanian delegation, the value of such action would be to highlight factors which may prove to be common to all nuclear weapon-free zones but which could, of course, be supplemented or adapted to the specific requirements of the geographical region concerned.

Within this context, the Romanian delegation has attempted to formulate on a preliminary basis, certain fundamental provisions which should apply to any agreement on nuclear-weapon-free zones. For example, the agreement:

(a) should be conceived as an integral part of a system of measures designed to lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons

(b) should provide for mutual obligations on the part of all States parties;

(c) should provide guarantees for the equal security of all parties through a solemn undertaking of nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use those weapons against countries of the zone, and also to respect the agreed status among the countries of the region;

(d) should not impose any limits on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; on the contrary, it should guarantee unlimited rights and possibilities for all States, on an equal footing and without any discrimination, to enable them to undertake research in that field, and to take advantage of the discoveries of nuclear physics for the purposes of peaceful development;

(e) should set up an accurate and equitable system of controls, based on the principle of the complete equality of States.
Of course, other criteria with the same universal application could be added to those fundamental criteria. From that point of view the negotiation of the Treaty of Tlatelolco provides us with valuable experience. We feel that the United Nations Secretariat also could play an important role in supporting this action by preparing a synthesis of the various relevant ideas put forward in successive years in the General Assembly and elsewhere.

In saying that, our concern is to stress that in our eyes any study made by the Organization of the question of denuclearized zones is justified only to the extent that it really and effectively assists the process of consultations among the parties concerned. Such parallel action on the part of the United Nations should not in any way encroach upon the consultations conducted by the States concerned for the purpose of establishing denuclearized zones in their regions.

Finally, an area of high priority in which the United Nations can exert a positive influence on the process of creating denuclearized zones relates to the obligations of the nuclear-weapon Powers vis-à-vis such zones. Their solemn undertaking to respect the denuclearized status of those zones and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the countries of the zones constitutes, in the final analysis, the central element of a denuclearized zone.

The legal basis for obtaining such undertakings is to be found in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which, through explicit provisions on the establishment of denuclearized zones, calls for a commitment by all the parties to the Treaty to support this process by, inter alia, granting security guarantees to States in those zones.

In conclusion, I should like to assure the Committee that, in the light of what I have said in this statement, the Romanian delegation is prepared to contribute in the future, too, to the efforts to establish denuclearized zones and to protect them from the nuclear danger posed by an ever growing number of countries and regions.
Mr. KENNEDY (Ireland): It is a very great pleasure indeed for me to speak in this Committee under your chairmanship, Sir. I should like to take this opportunity of expressing my delegation's full confidence that the officers of the Committee will continue to carry out very efficiently the important tasks entrusted to it. I would ask you, Sir, to convey to the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas, the Irish delegation's renewed congratulations and good wishes.

I am sure it would be generally agreed that the disarmament debate in this First Committee should be more than an annual ritual. It should, above all, be grounded in reality. After all, it is the one annual meeting in which virtually universal discussion of disarmament issues can constructively take place in an open forum in which every Member nation can participate. Our agenda at this session, indeed, covers no less than 12 vital issues in relation to disarmament. And yet I hope I shall be forgiven if I say that our debate at times seems to take on the character of an annual ceremony, a yearly ritual, not always related to the hard facts of reality. Like the Greek chorus of antiquity, we tend at times, I fear, to accompany the drama of human reality with words of rather retrospective wisdom. That sense of unreality derives, I would suggest, not from what is said here but from the fact that our disarmament discussions take place against a background of a continuous expansion in armaments. It would be not too harsh to say that our collective deeds belie our collective words. All States, particularly those most armed, acknowledges the urgent need, the rationality and the benefits of disarmament, but progress towards disarmament and arms control at the bilateral and multilateral level is depressingly slow. It is not surprising, therefore, that the perceptible inconsistency between the process of détente, co-operation and disarmament on the one hand and the arms race on the other should give rise to a sense of unreality about our proceedings or, even worse, induce a sense of resignation and dissatisfaction on the part of public opinion. The world public is encouraged to hope that tension, distrust and rivalry are being progressively replaced by détente, trust and co-operation between nations. But expenditure on arms continues and the hunger and desperation of a third of the world's population steadily grow. There are
signs, however, that informed public opinion is not willing to be misled and that it sees quite clearly the obvious connexion which should exist between détente and disarmament. Consequently, in many countries the general public is increasingly unwilling to bear the burden of military expenditure, to the disappointment of those with a vested interest in military spending and the development of elaborate new weapons and weapons systems.

In his address to this Committee on 21 October the representative of the United States, Senator Stuart Symington, gave us at the beginning of his statement a chilling résumé of the arithmetic of the Apocalypse — by summing up the array of destructive weapons at the disposal of the United States. In speaking of the problem of nuclear proliferation he used an arresting phrase, more than once. He said:

"... unless we handle the problem, it is becoming increasingly clear that the problem will handle us". (1998th meeting, p. 23)

My delegation agrees completely with that observation. But we would go even further and suggest that since the beginning of the nuclear age, and increasingly so in recent years, the problem has been handling us. And what is handling us is not only the problem of nuclear proliferation but a domination even more fundamental still: the tyranny of technique. Each major advance in military technology seems to impose its own domination and demands upon Governments. Each new phase in the arms race brought on by qualitative developments — such as MIRV, or MARV, or miniaturization — calls into being the development of new strategic or tactical doctrines. These doctrines do not necessarily reflect any major advance in political thinking or accommodation between the rival social systems or nations of the world. They are frequently merely rationalizations for the development and deployment of the weapons made available by military technology. And so policies cease to be guided by rational political choice and become instead imperatives dictated by technical innovation.
It could well be argued, I feel, that the end result of these developments has not been to increase national security for the countries developing these systems, but rather the reverse. Each new qualitative development increases the risk that the use of nuclear force, an option hitherto ruled out by the cruder strategies of mutual destruction or massive retaliation, may become a credible and feasible alternative to political accommodation and compromise. Moreover, the security of smaller countries, which cannot afford to develop such costly and sophisticated weapons, is manifestly decreased, and the impulse of the super-Powers to continue the quest for supremacy, the well-known but elusive first strike capability, is inevitably strengthened.

I have spoken at some length on this subject because my delegation believes that this issue, the dominant role of military technology manifested in continuous vertical proliferation by the super-Powers, lies at the very heart of the disarmament problem and of our debate. Détente, which ideally should bring about a state of affairs in which a network of mutual interdependence, co-operation and common interest makes the use of force an unacceptable political option between States, is undermined and diminished by every advance which encourages the use of force as a credible military option. In effect, the problem is "handling" us.

Mr. Chairman, may I, in the light of these observations take up some of the principal issues on our agenda, to which my delegation feels its observations may be relevant.

The debate so far this year has indicated that there are at least four new considerations which have preoccupied previous speakers. They are: first, the concern for the success of the forthcoming non-proliferation Treaty review conference; in the second place, the relationship between the prospects for the review conference and the situation brought about by the advent of a sixth nuclear Power; thirdly, the proposals for nuclear-free zones in South Asia and the Middle East; and fourthly, the new Soviet proposals in regard to the prohibition of action to influence the environment for military and other purposes incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health.
In the case of each of these four topics which I have just mentioned, the concern of representatives expressed in the debate here illustrates the extent to which the tyranny of technology about which I spoke earlier is in danger of dominating our individual and collective political will as people and as nations.

Nowhere is this more obvious than in the case of the non-proliferation Treaty. Its durability, and the hopes for strengthening this Treaty, are basically dependent on the halting of vertical and horizontal proliferation, and therefore basically dependent on the capacity of States to resist the domination of technology. In the case of the super-Powers the issue is clear enough, for the sustained vertical proliferation and the qualitative improvement of weapons necessarily weakens the credibility of their commitment to the fulfilment of the obligation to disarmament which is contained in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty. In the case of the non-nuclear States the situation is more ambiguous. The increasing availability of fissionable material derived from nuclear power projects has brought the possibility of the possession of nuclear weapons even closer -- so that, as my friend and colleague Ambassador Jankovitsch of Austria put it very cogently the other day "a decision to 'go nuclear' will be mainly a political one and not a technical one for a majority of the countries concerned", that is, for the so-called "near nuclear States".

Moreover the situation of insecurity and ambivalence brought about by vertical proliferation and qualitative development, on the one hand, and the increasing capacity of States to exercise the nuclear option on the other, makes it imperative that the non-proliferation Treaty be further strengthened so as, in turn, to fortify the political will of States to forgo that option. Non-nuclear States will simply have to have concrete and unambiguous guarantees from the existing nuclear States that nuclear weapons or the threat of their use will not be employed against them. In this regard, my delegation would agree with the representative of France, who in his recent intervention, which frankly expressed reservations regarding the non-proliferation Treaty, clearly pointed out that the guarantees provided
by Security Council resolution 255 of June 1968 were not satisfactory. The guarantees which this resolution contains are a mere gesture to those outside the nuclear club, since the resolution is, it must be admitted, I feel, not without many ambiguities and contradictions. We feel that something more explicit and more categorical is needed, and we welcome the suggestion cited by Senator Taittinger that France, which has voluntarily placed itself outside the non-proliferation Treaty system, is nevertheless apparently willing unilaterally to consider giving a guarantee which the other nuclear Powers, parties to the Treaty, have as yet been unable to give within the framework of its provisions.

The dangers inherent in the continued vertical and potential horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons are reflected in the two items on our agenda in regard to nuclear-free zones in South Asia and the Middle East. My delegation welcomes these proposals. Ireland, as members know, has long been in favour of the establishment of zones of peace and stability, and my delegation will follow with sympathy and attention the further elaboration of these proposals. The proposal in regard to the Middle East is, we feel, of particular importance. It is a dismaying fact that the annual average increase in military expenditure in the Middle East has been of the order of 23 per cent -- according to the latest Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Year Book. The Middle East, therefore, in terms of the proportion of Gross Domestic Product spent on arms, is now the most militarized area in the world -- a situation which is clearly incompatible with the obvious and urgent need to encourage security and stability in that area. The proposal to make of that region a nuclear-free zone, therefore, in the measure in which it will enhance stability and inhibit the escalation of conflicts in that region, is surely worthy of support.

In the context of the renewed interest in the establishment of nuclear-free zones which the First Committee debate this year and the discussion in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva exemplify, my delegation listened with interest and sympathy to the ideas put forward by the representative of Finland in this Committee on 29 October. We look
forward to the further elaboration of these very welcome and, as always, constructive suggestions from the Finnish delegation.

The explosion of a nuclear device by India earlier this year -- although India, of course, was not a party to the non-proliferation Treaty -- seems to us to emphasize the need for the implementation of the provisions of article V of the Treaty in regard to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In particular, it underlines an urgent need for the further development and implementation of an international régime to regulate and control peaceful nuclear explosions and to make systematic and equitable arrangements for the distribution of the benefits of such developments. The need for a better system of safeguards in regard to the transfer of nuclear technology is now obviously necessary and Ireland will support practical measures at the review conference to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty in this regard.

With regard to the non-proliferation Treaty review conference, my delegation would like to add its voice to that of the representative of the United Kingdom, the Right Honourable David Ennals, when he suggested here on 5 November "that the Parties to the Treaty must take the opportunity of next year's review conference to initiate a drive for the widest possible adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty"."
We are also impressed by the welcome new Soviet proposals in regard to
the prohibition of action to influence the environment. They indicate a timely
realization that political measures must be taken to prevent and prohibit
further developments fatal to mankind in military technology. There have, to
date, been disturbing indications of an ability and a willingness by States
to engage in weather and environmental warfare, with consequences which bring
enormous suffering and damage in their wake - consequences which remain long
after the political and military conflict which engendered such catastrophes
has been resolved by compromise and negotiation. My delegation sees much
merit, therefore, in political measures which will guarantee that States will
not be impelled or even tempted to develop a technology of environmental warfare
at enormous and wasteful expense and with possibly disastrous consequences
to our human environment and ecology.

Having touched on the four main topics which it appears to my delegation
constitute the new themes in the debate this year, I should like to turn now
briefly to two principal, if perennial, subjects which occupy the deliberations
of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at Geneva and are also
reflected in this year's report. We are still, disappointingly, far short
of agreement on a comprehensive test ban treaty; nor is agreement yet near
on means of banning the so-called "conventional" means of destruction:
chemical and toxin weapons. Atmospheric and underground testing still continues.
The recent threshold agreement on underground testing between the United States
and the USSR is a welcome but modest step forward. How valuable it is is not
easy to tell. It could well be that the agreement simply reflects the present
stage of technological development of these two Powers, whose attention
currently seems to be directed at the qualitative development of weapons and
delivery systems which make larger underground tests unnecessary.

More information is needed from the parties to the Strategic Arms Limitation
Talks if the confidence of the world community in the significance of these
agreements is to be enhanced and translated into a willingness by more States
both to subscribe to and to strengthen the existing disarmament treaties and
to bring the world nearer the goals of a comprehensive ban on all nuclear
weapon testing and general and complete disarmament.
Mr. Kennedy, Ireland

My delegation also shares the disappointment of others who have spoken so far in regard to the lack of progress on the prohibition of chemical weapons. As a positive step in the direction of complete prohibition of such weapons the Irish delegation views with interest the draft proposals introduced by Japan in this regard. Like many other delegations, we look forward to seeing these proposals set out in more complete form and, in particular, the temporary exemptions from prohibition which are envisaged.

In conclusion, let me say that in another part of this Headquarters building today representatives are taking part in the annual Pledging Conference on the United Nations Children's Fund, in the course of which we were told this morning by its Executive Director that the Fund is striving with difficulty to mobilize $100 million for next year's budget to help the children of the developing world to live and to grow. But it seems that the world can find $200,000 million and more annually to spend on weapons. Only yesterday the World Food Conference in Rome was told that 400 million of the world's children are undernourished. But 400,000 of the world's engineers and scientists devote their time to appeasing the urgent demands of military technology. Let us never forget that this Organization was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. If we do not exercise a rational choice and agree to divert our energies from the production of the means of destruction to those of development, we may not be able to save succeeding generations either from the scourge of war or from the dangerous agonies of want.
The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Ireland for his generous remarks addressed to the officers of the Committee. I should like to assure him that I shall convey to our Chairman, Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, his kind remarks.

Mr. YAGUIBOU (Upper Volta) (interpretation from French): Only yesterday great scientific and technical discoveries brought man the hope that he would come to the end of the difficulties which nature placed in his path, and thus they offered him prospects for a better life. It seemed to us that we needed only to profit in all tranquillity from the thousands of facilities and conveniences that we obtained from these extraordinary discoveries in order to have a better life. Today the two-edged blade of science has become a true sword of Damocles which hangs more threateningly than ever over mankind in the form of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

My delegation considers, like previous speakers, that against the general background of the poverty, famine, suffering and misery in which the majority of mankind lives it is disheartening to note that more than $250,000 million are spent every year by the great Powers, not for the production of goods for improving the living conditions of mankind but for the manufacture of means of intimidation and death. Hence the very special importance that my country attaches to the problems of disarmament.
Drought, earthquakes, floods and disease cause hundreds of thousands of victims, just as the manufacturers of bombs create victims in apocalyptic proportions; but does not the greatness of mankind consist in opposing its creative genius to the destructive hostilities of nature? This would seem to be denied by some members of our family. It is obvious that the views and counterviews advanced by certain Powers, and not the smallest Powers, concerning their hesitation in prohibiting nuclear testing and the race for chemical and other weapons of mass destruction can never be convincing to the countries that love peace and justice, as long as those same Powers continue to place their selfish interests above the interests of the majority of the international community, which aspires to a tranquil life and a world free from fears and tensions.

Speaking on 3 October 1974 in the general debate in the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Upper Volta stated:

"I should like first of all to reaffirm unequivocally that the nation of Upper Volta has with determination, side by side with all nations represented here, assumed unfailingly the common responsibilities incumbent upon us all to free humanity not only from the spectre of war, but also to ensure for future generations a universe of justice and prosperity." (A/PV.2255, page 16)

My delegation is convinced that, in creating our Organization and joining it, the Member States have undertaken a solemn commitment not only to coexist in peace and brotherhood but also to seek the ways and means to bring about a rapprochement among nations and, above all, to achieve effective solidarity.
Hence the importance that my country attaches to the implementation of the General Assembly's recommendation for a 10 per cent reduction in the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council and utilization of part of the funds thus saved to provide assistance to developing countries. I take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to the Soviet Union for having proposed this item for inclusion on the agenda of the current session.

When one considers that the funds authorized by the developed countries for military purposes are 20 times higher than those that they devote to providing aid in the development of the underdeveloped countries, one is entitled to wonder whether in the long run natural resources will suffice to meet the needs of our planet. The reserves of certain natural resources are indeed limited and there is no certainty that we will be able to perfect and produce suitable substitutes in time.

The General Assembly proclaimed the present decade both a Disarmament Decade (resolution 2602 E (XXIV)) and the Second United Nations Development Decade (resolution 2626 (XXV)). The strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade was designed to raise the rate of growth of the developing countries to 6 per cent.

For the majority of the underdeveloped countries, the attainment of that objective requires both full mobilization of national resources and the receipt of considerably increased foreign aid. These two elements are necessary to ensure such an economic development. From that standpoint, the assignment of about a half million scientists and technicians to the perfecting of armaments and the use of natural resources existing in the world for destructive and sterile purposes are, more than ever, intolerable examples of waste.

My delegation is of the opinion that the special rights provided under the Charter carry with them special obligations and that the veto enjoyed by the permanent members of the Security Council requires them to discharge very serious obligations in all fields, including international peace and security.
At a time when many countries are meeting in Rome to seek solutions for the world food crisis, we would be doing something useful if we could give specific meaning to our deliberations on the item under discussion.

The implementation of the General Assembly's recommendation to reduce the military budgets of the five permanent members in order to allocate part of the foods thus saved to provide assistance to the underdeveloped countries would be a real step towards the slowing down of the arms race, and particularly by the great Powers, and would allow a considerable increase in economic and technical assistance to needy countries.

It is quite obvious that the application of such a measure would have a healthy influence on the international climate and would contribute to a further relaxation of tension and remove some of the apathy in which mankind lives today.

As members of the club of the less advanced countries, we are appealing to the developing countries to accept this idea. We share the misgivings of the representative of China. We would venture to hope that the implementation of this important recommendation by the General Assembly, if it were to command the support of our community, would be marked by the necessary sincerity and goodwill.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to announce that Bangladesh has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.675.

Mr. ROSCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR to thank the delegations of the German Democratic Republic and Bulgaria for their congratulations on the occasion of the fifty-seventh anniversary of our Great October Revolution.
The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the members of the First Committee, I wish to extend our congratulations to the representative of the Soviet Union on the occasion of the fifty-seventh anniversary of the October Revolution.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.