1. The international situation in which the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is taking place remains on the whole quite complex and contradictory. It is, however, different from the situation that prevailed at the time of the second special session. After long years of stagnation, a trail of new political thinking, reflecting the realities of the contemporary world, was blazed over the past three years, during which positive results were achieved in the area of disarmament, basically in the bilateral sphere.

2. This was made possible by such major breakthroughs in world politics as the Soviet-American summit meetings in Geneva and, particularly, in Reykjavik, which gave real impetus to the negotiating process and greatly influenced the whole international climate. The conviction that there can be no victor in a nuclear war and that such a war must never be unleashed, and that any war - both nuclear and conventional - must be averted, was an important prerequisite for propitious advances. The concept of security in disarmament, embodied in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, still retains its significance.

3. A major practical result of the inclusion of the new thinking in international politics and an event of historical significance in international life was the entry into force of the Treaty concluded between the USSR and the United States on the Elimination of their Medium- and Shorter-Range Missiles, which was made
possible by the efforts of many States, anti-war movements and peace-loving forces on all continents. The Treaty, which for the first time removed a whole class of United States and Soviet nuclear weapons, confirms that it is possible to achieve nuclear disarmament and to create a nuclear-free and non-violent world.

4. Considerable work has been done to lay the foundation for the conclusion, subject to observance of the ABM Treaty, of a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction and limitation of strategic offensive weapons, which will promote strategic stability and enhance the security not only of the Soviet and American peoples but of all mankind.

5. Steps have been taken towards the limitation and subsequent cessation of nuclear tests. At the full-scale, stage-by-stage negotiations between the USSR and the United States on questions connected with the problem of nuclear testing, the sides are close to attaining the goal of the first stage - the formulation of improved methods for monitoring observance of the 1974 and 1976 "threshold" treaties. With a view to promoting the complete cessation of nuclear testing as part of an effective disarmament process, the USSR maintained for a long time its unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosions and repeatedly extended it.

6. Parallel to the search for agreements at the bilateral level, efforts are being made within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, which could in the future promote the international exchange of seismic data in accordance with a comprehensive treaty on nuclear tests. However, multilateral negotiations on the question of the preparation of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty have not yet started at the Conference on Disarmament.

7. The agreements on the establishment of a new mechanism for the expeditious transmission through nuclear risk reduction centres of notifications between the USSR and the United States in connection with activities in the military sphere, and also the agreement on notifications of launchings of inter-continental missiles and of submarine-launched ballistic missiles, are of practical significance.

8. One of the most important international arms control agreements, to which over 130 States are parties, is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty (1985) confirmed the continuing validity of its fundamental aims and stated the parties' conviction that the Treaty was essential to international peace and security. A useful contribution to the cause of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is made by the activities of IAEA and the relevant bilateral consultations. Unfortunately, no progress is yet discernible towards the attainment of effective agreements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

9. The establishment of nuclear-free zones in various regions of the world - notably in Europe - is an important measure to reduce the threat of nuclear war. The establishment of another such zone - in the South Pacific area (in accordance with the Treaty of Rarotonga) - will facilitate the task of the elimination of nuclear weapons and the goal of strengthening ecological security on a regional and global scale.
10. The first special session devoted to disarmament recognized that the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction represent one of the most urgent measures of disarmament. Today it is gratifying to note the substantial progress in this area made recently at the Conference on Disarmament. A detailed text of a future convention has been drafted and was transmitted by the Conference to the third special session. Although there are a number of issues requiring further technical study and although certain questions of a political nature are still outstanding, the conclusion of a convention is possible in the very near future, if additional efforts are made by all the participants in the negotiations. The possibility of the use of chemical weapons and the threat of their proliferation are a source of great anxiety.

11. Very significant results were achieved at the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons, which noted the successful implementation of the Convention and initiated an exchange of information on relevant activities concerning biological questions.

12. Efforts have continued - at both the bilateral and multilateral levels - to prevent an arms race in outer space. Significant work has been done at the Conference on Disarmament to study the problem of an arms race in space. This task has already been completed, but the transition from studies to negotiations on practical measures has still not been made.

13. Negotiations have started at the Conference on Disarmament with the aim of achieving agreement on a convention prohibiting radiological weapons, but they have not yet produced concrete results.

14. The active multilateral negotiating process is opening up the possibility of diminishing the dangerous confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization and of reducing conventional weapons and armed forces in Europe. Progress has been achieved in formulating terms of reference for new negotiations on this question, although further efforts are needed in order to progress to specific measures for substantially reducing armed forces and weapons in Europe, for decreasing the danger of surprise attack and for building confidence.

15. A complete turn-around is being observed in the issue of the monitoring of observance of disarmament agreements of various kinds. This is particularly apparent in the Soviet-American INF Treaty, which contains unprecedented provisions on this subject. Far-reaching measures of control are also contemplated for START verification. Major results in the area of verification are being achieved at the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Parallel to the agreement on these specific measures, work is continuing successfully on the formulation of the principles on which verification must be based (notably in the United Nations Disarmament Commission).

16. Increasing importance is attached to the problem of naval weapons and disarmament in the area of naval weapons and the extension of confidence-building measures to seas and oceans, which is being considered in the Disarmament Commission. United Nations studies have been made on this question. Unfortunately, no results whatsoever have yet been achieved in this area.
17. Useful steps have been taken to discover new possibilities for approaching the problems of the relationship between disarmament and development. This was facilitated, in particular, by the International Conference held in 1987.

18. Measures have been taken to achieve greater mutual understanding in the question of the comparison of military doctrines.

19. Substantial progress has been made in the area of confidence-building measures, which can and must promote the successful implementation of disarmament measures. Full implementation of the provisions of the document of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe can do much to increase openness and strengthen mutual trust. At the recently concluded session of the Conference on Disarmament, consideration was given to the question of the multilateral exchange of data on chemical weapon capabilities prior to the signature of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons.

In the United Nations Disarmament Commission, consideration was given to the question of the formulation of guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures and their implementation at global and regional levels.

20. The World Disarmament Campaign and the Disarmament Weeks have played and continue to play a useful role in publicizing, explaining and promoting public understanding and support for the goals of the United Nations in the area of arms limitation and disarmament, as stated in the Final Document adopted at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

21. To sum up - over the past three years we have managed to make the threat of war recede. The direct threat of a war involving the major Powers has decreased and the world situation has acquired greater stability and predictability. Prospects have improved for the curtailment of weapons with all the ensuing consequences, including a reduction of the burden of military expenditure, and the possibility is emerging, on a broader social and political basis than before, of resisting the threat of war and creating conditions for the solution of the global problems of mankind by the joint efforts of the world community. What has been achieved is the starting-point for further joint actions at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, but represents only the first steps on the road to disarmament. Bilateral and multilateral efforts must supplement and enrich each other. Without an optimum balance between bilateral and multilateral negotiations, it will be impossible to achieve substantial results in the field of disarmament.