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Chairman: Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina)

Rapporteur: Mr. COSTA LOBO (Portugal)

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  - (a) Report of the Special Committee on the Distribution of the Funds 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. HYVÄRINEN (Finland): It has been the custom of the Finnish delegation, as indeed of most other delegations, to use the opportunity of this annual debate on disarmament to express its views on a wide range of disarmament questions. This year, again, there is no lack of topical subjects; if anything the opposite is true, as can be seen from the wealth of items relating to disarmament which appear on the agenda of the First Committee. This not only reflects the crucial place which disarmament and arms control continue to occupy in international relations in this era of détente but also testifies to the intensity of effort which the international community deploys in order to come to grips with the problem.

More than ever, disarmament negotiations have become a permanent institutional feature of international life. Negotiations have continued in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and have been resumed in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks and in Vienna. The Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference and the group of experts on the reduction of military budgets have produced their reports for the scrutiny of the General Assembly. So has the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. The spectrum of disarmament questions to be discussed this year has been widened by the addition of three important new items: environmental warfare and the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and in South Asia.

(Mr. Hyvärinen, Finland)

On the substantive side, this year's summit meeting resulted in an agreement on the further limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems, in the threshold test-ban Treaty, in a prospective joint initiative by the USSR and the United States in the field of chemical weapons and in a joint statement on environmental warfare. While these steps are limited, they do not lack significance. Even a few years ago, each of them would have been hailed as an important breakthrough on its own merits. The fact that this is no longer the case today is less a reflection on their value in themselves than on the rising expectations and increasing impatience for more rapid and more radical progress in disarmament.

Some encouraging features in the international efforts to stem the tide of the production of arms and their deployment can furthermore be seen, inter alia, in the recently concluded conference of experts on conventional arms in Lucerne. The conference, held under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, dealt, as we know, with the question of the possible bans or restrictions on the deployment of certain conventional weapons such as incendiary weapons.

The Finnish delegation may have more to say on these and other disarmament items at a later stage. Rather than to pass in review all of the topical disarmament questions today, my delegation would like to speak mainly to one subject which to us seems of overwhelming importance at this particular time. I refer, of course, to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I need hardly dwell on the reasons why we consider this subject of such overwhelming importance. Upon its conclusion, some six years ago, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was acclaimed as the most important international agreement in the field of disarmament since the nuclear age began and as a major success for the cause of peace. We believe this still to be true.

The Treaty came about because the parties -- and here I quote the language of the Treaty itself -- were conscious of "the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples" and believed "that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously enhance the danger of nuclear war" (resolution 2373 (XXII)). We believed then, and believe now, that

(Mr. Hyvärinen, Finland)

these words give expression to something which can only be conceived as a general interest of the international community as a whole, while it also responds to particular security interests of each and every one of its component member States. We continue to believe that the non-proliferation Treaty is the best available instrument for promoting those interests.

We consider that the non-proliferation Treaty, concluded after such painstaking effort and protracted negotiation, remains the major achievement in the field of disarmament. Together with the Partial Test-Ban Treaty, the non-proliferation Treaty forms the twin pillars underlying the effort of the international community to contain the threat of nuclear war inherent in any further proliferation of nuclear weapons. Time will tell whether the Treaty will be successful in averting that peril.

But the non-proliferation Treaty has wider significance which transcends its importance as a major international agreement in the field of disarmament. By its genesis and by its impact on international relations it has become an integral part of the political process of détente, whether we conceive of this process as a general relaxation of tensions, as a normalization of relations between major Powers or as an emerging era of entente and co-operation in Europe.

The Government of Finland has consistently stressed the importance of efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. From 1965, Finland followed closely the negotiations leading to the conclusion of the non-proliferation Treaty by dispatching special observers to Geneva where the negotiations took place. At the resumed twenty-second session of the General Assembly in spring 1968, a representative of Finland had the privilege of serving as a chairman of the group of sponsors for the resolution which commended the Treaty. The Finnish Government signed the Treaty on the day it was opened for signature and was among the first to ratify it. My country also was the first to conclude with the IAEA a safeguards agreement in accordance with article III of the non-proliferation Treaty.

It follows that my Government attaches the greatest importance to the forthcoming review conference of the parties to the non-proliferation Treaty. It is in recognition of this that the Finnish Government has attended the sessions of its Preparatory Committee through an observer.

(Mr. Hyvärinen, Finland)

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to commend the Preparatory Committee for the way in which it has been working so far. It is our impression that during its two sessions the Committee not only has progressed more than satisfactorily in dealing with the technical and procedural preparation of the conference, but also has done so with a unity of purpose, based on consensus, which augurs well for the prospects of the conference itself. It is to state the obvious to say that only such unity of purpose among the parties can guarantee the success of the review conference and result in the strengthening of the non-proliferation Treaty régime. This, as I have said, is not only of overriding interest for the parties themselves but is also in the general interest of the international community as a whole.

How then can the non-proliferation Treaty régime be buttressed and the Treaty itself strengthened? The need of achieving the widest possible acceptance of the non-proliferation Treaty seems to be one of the recognized objectives of the review conference. To date, more than 80 States have either ratified the Treaty or acceded to it. In number of contractual parties it is second only to the Moscow test-ban Treaty. In addition, more than 20 States have, by signing the non-proliferation Treaty, demonstrated their positive interest in it and signified their intention to become a party. In this category, a number of key countries with significant peaceful nuclear activities and a potential capacity of becoming nuclear weapon Powers are presently engaged in or intend to start the process of ratification which will enable them to participate in the review conference. An overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations will thus be present at the review conference in their capacity as parties to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Even so, the Treaty will still remain far from universal. A number of States have stayed aloof from it as an act of deliberate policy. We can only hope that even in the absence of legal obligation they will continue to act in a manner which does not jeopardize the general interest of the international community in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

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But apart from those countries, there is a considerable number of States Members of this Organization -- well over twenty at a conservative estimate -- which would seem to have an obvious interest in acceding to the non-proliferation Treaty and no obvious reason for staying outside it. Many of these States won their independence and were admitted to the United Nations after the conclusion of the non-proliferation Treaty and its consideration by the General Assembly. They have thus not been called upon to define their attitude to the Treaty nor to take action with a view to becoming Parties to it. It would be of evident interest to all if the largest possible number of these States were to accede to the non-proliferation Treaty in time for the review conference. This session of the General Assembly would seem to offer as good an opportunity as any to initiate appropriate consultations to this end.

The task of the review conference will be to review the operation of the Treaty with a view to assuring that its purposes and provisions are being realized. While the review should be comprehensive -- that is, it should cover all the aspects of the Treaty, as indeed the draft agenda worked out by the Preparatory Committee envisages -- it is nonetheless necessary to keep firmly in mind the basic purposes of the Treaty. For the Finnish Government the basic purpose is expressed in the first two preambular paragraphs which speak of the necessity of limiting the danger of nuclear war through the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, the main obligations assumed by the Parties in order to achieve that purpose are contained in articles I and II of the Treaty, with the concomitant verification machinery provided by article III in the form of IAEA safeguards.

In his message at the first session of the Preparatory Committee, in April, the Secretary-General of the United Nations emphasized that while measures should be taken to strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty, it had fulfilled its essential function: that is to say, no proliferation of nuclear weapons had in fact taken place. On 18 May of this year the Atomic Energy Commission of India announced that it had carried out a peaceful nuclear explosion. A number of representatives of Governments have expressed their concern over this event at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and elsewhere, and have characterized it as a setback for the non-proliferation Treaty. While the Finnish Government, as a Party to the non-proliferation Treaty, shares this concern, it equally takes note of the assurances given by the Government of India that the explosion was for peaceful purposes only and that India had no intention of producing nuclear weapons.

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It is the considered view of the Finnish Government that this event, which took place outside the context of the non-proliferation Treaty, does not cripple that Treaty. If anything, it serves to underline the urgent necessity of doing everything that can be done in order to strengthen the Treaty, whether by encouraging its wider acceptance, by seeking the fullest possible implementation of its provisions or by finding ways and means for possible supporting action outside the immediate realm of the non-proliferation Treaty itself. While the non-proliferation Treaty review conference is a natural forum for this, it is by no means the only one.

More particularly, the Indian explosion raises anew the whole problem of peaceful nuclear explosions. Article V of the non-proliferation Treaty proposes to deal with this problem in a manner which would bring the possible benefits of these techniques within the reach of the non-nuclear-weapon States on a cheap and non-discriminatory basis, while instituting international procedures to guard against the risks of nuclear-weapon proliferation inherent in the spread of this particular technology. During the intervening years, the IAEA has taken a number of practical steps of a preliminary nature with a view to enabling it to act as the appropriate international body envisaged in article V of the non-proliferation Treaty. But its activities in this respect, useful as they are, have been circumscribed by the lack of the special agreement or agreements on the subject also envisaged by article V. The relative inactivity in this field is mainly due, however, to reasons of a different order. The high expectations raised by the techniques of peaceful nuclear explosions in the sixties have proved largely illusory. Experimental programmes carried out so far seem to demonstrate that difficulties of a practical character, whether technical, economic or environmental, are all but insuperable at least in a foreseeable future.

Be that as it may, the experiment carried out by India has introduced a new dimension to the question. It implies that the whole question of peaceful nuclear explosions must be taken under renewed consideration whether within the framework of the non-proliferation Treaty or of IAEA, or in some other context. The Finnish delegation therefore replies affirmatively to the question raised by the Secretary-General in his introduction to the annual report, of whether we should not now proceed also to the international consideration of the question of peaceful nuclear explosions in all its aspects.

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I have spoken earlier of the need for a comprehensive review of the non-proliferation Treaty at its review conference, while keeping firmly in mind the basic purpose of the Treaty. One of the other important aspects of the Treaty is its function as a vehicle for further progress in disarmament and arms control. An assessment of how well or how badly the Treaty has performed this function obviously varies from Government to Government. But whatever that assessment, it should not be allowed to overshadow the simple truth that the principal function of the Treaty is to prevent further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It is the view of the Finnish Government that as a vehicle for further progress in disarmament, the non-proliferation Treaty has not performed all that badly, while it should and perhaps even could have performed better. Disarmament negotiations have certainly been intensified in the aftermath of the conclusion of the non-proliferation Treaty. While progress in them has been slow, it has not been non-existent. On the multilateral front, the treaties on the denuclearization of the sea-bed and on the banning of biological weapons have been negotiated. At the bilateral level the SALT talks, which are a direct outgrowth from article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty, have produced a number of agreements which as a minimum serve to limit the threat posed by the very existence of nuclear weapons by stabilizing the nuclear strategic balance and by institutionalizing the continuing strategic dialogue between the two leading nuclear Powers. Another treaty between these Powers -- the Agreement on the prevention of nuclear war -- pursues the same fundamental objectives as the non-proliferation Treaty and complements, at the same time, the security assurances given in the context of the non-proliferation Treaty by Security Council resolution 255 (1968).

And yet, the balance must be termed disappointing. This is singularly true in the case of the efforts to obtain a comprehensive test-ban treaty. For more than 11 years, ever since the conclusion of the Moscow Test-Ban Treaty, a comprehensive test ban has stood highest among our priorities here as well as in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. No other arms control measure has received as intensive a treatment as the comprehensive test ban; none would be more effective as a non-proliferation

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measure in itself, or in underpinning the non-proliferation Treaty both in disarmament and in political terms. And yet the comprehensive test ban continues to elude us, while we have to register, with profound regret, that more States than ever before have during the year engaged in nuclear testing both underground and in the atmosphere.

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Against this background, the threshold test-ban Treaty between the USSR and the United States, while certainly a step in the right direction, must seem a dismally small step in the eyes of those countries, among them Finland, which during all these years have insisted on the need for a comprehensive test ban. Legitimate doubts can be expressed about its real impact on nuclear testing or its restraining effect on the nuclear arms race. The real promise of the Treaty lies perhaps in its possible role as a pilot project for resolving the verification question which, it is claimed, has for far too long bedevilled efforts to obtain a comprehensive test ban.

I spoke a moment ago about the necessity to try to find ways and means for possible supporting action outside the immediate realm of the non-proliferation Treaty itself. What I had chiefly in mind, in addition to the comprehensive test ban, was the question of nuclear-free zones. The non-proliferation Treaty itself recognizes their value in its article VII. The idea of nuclear-free zones has in itself, ever since the Unden plan, represented an independent method of trying to deal with the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In the aftermath of the non-proliferation Treaty it can be seen more as a valuable complementary instrument for seeking the same ends within a different structural and conceptual framework. The advantages of nuclear-free zones lie not only in the regional approach but also in the fact that, while the non-proliferation Treaty deals primarily with the question of the possession of nuclear weapons, nuclear-free zones take into account also the question of the geographical distribution of such weapons.

The question of nuclear-free zones has been under discussion in the United Nations, as well as in other international and regional contexts, since the 1950s. Proposals and ideas have been put forward with a view to establishing nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world, such as Africa, the Balkans, central Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Nordic countries and South Asia. Initiatives with regard to the Latin American continent and the Antarctic have resulted in international agreements on nuclear-free zones in those areas. The Treaty for the Prohibition

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of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, signed at Mexico City on 14 February 1967, represents a milestone by establishing the first nuclear-free zone in an inhabited part of the world.

In addition, in December 1965 the General Assembly adopted a resolution calling upon all States to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone and endorsing the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa issued by the Heads of States and Governments of African States. Similarly, in December 1971 the General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace.

The agenda of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly indicates a great interest in nuclear-free zones. Five items pertaining to this question have been inscribed on the agenda of the present session: those concerning the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its two Protocols, the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and the proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in the Middle East and in South Asia.

The renewed interest in nuclear-free zones is also evident from this year's proceedings in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament where several representatives made statements on the subject.

The specific proposals for the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world will obviously continue to be pursued in their proper contexts. The Finnish Government, for its part, intends to pursue the idea, originally advanced by the President of Finland more than 10 years ago, of declaring the Nordic countries a nuclear-free zone.

My Government would suggest that the time has now come to undertake a comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-free zones. In our view the analysis of the concept of nuclear-free zones could only benefit from a thorough and comprehensive general study of all its aspects. The Latin American nuclear-free zone and the experience of the functioning of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, often mentioned as a model for nuclear-free zones elsewhere, would provide a rich source of factual material for such a study. At the same time we have to keep in mind that solutions fitted to a particular situation and particular circumstances are not automatically applicable elsewhere. Such a general study should cover all the main aspects, characteristics, conditions

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and criteria relating to the concept of nuclear-free zones, such as, inter alia: definitions, structures and form of agreements, character of legal rights and obligations, institutional arrangements, verification, security guarantees, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the role of peaceful nuclear explosions, interrelationships between various nuclear free zones and co-operation between them and relationships to other disarmament and arms control agreements, whether global or regional.

We feel that the most appropriate form for the study would be for it to be carried out by a body of qualified expert consultants appointed by the Secretary-General. This method has been used with positive results in connexion with a number of questions related to disarmament and arms control throughout the years.

The Finnish delegation would be ready to enter into consultations on nuclear-free zones, particularly with delegations which have shown an interest in the question, with a view to working out a draft resolution on this subject susceptible of commanding the wide measure of support which the importance of the issue obviously demands.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Since this is the first time that I have spoken in the First Committee during the present session, I can allow myself the pleasure of expressing to you, Mr. Chairman, my most sincere and warmest congratulations without thereby infringing the rules of procedure or even acting contrary to the recommendations of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. I am convinced that seldom has the General Assembly conferred a signal distinction such as it has conferred on you with more discernment and justification. In proof of this I will limit myself to quoting one example which everybody present can confirm. In the 25 years during which I have attended the meetings of this Committee I have never, to my recollection, witnessed approval of what is called "organization of work" given with so much spontaneity as this year.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Quite obviously, that ease which is so difficult to attain was not the result of mere chance or the effect of some hidden magic power. That ease in approval was due to the skilful, persevering and patient work of prior consultations and conciliation which you carried out, Mr. Chairman. That result, and the exemplary manner in which you have in every way been guiding our debates, constitute the best guarantee and augury for total success, which, we are certain, you will achieve in discharging your important functions.

The number of items on disarmament, probably the largest ever registered in the annals of the First Committee, and their variety as they appear on our agenda involve a danger similar to one which is customarily mentioned when we speak of not seeing the wood for the trees.

That is why I do not intend to proceed to a detailed review of any of the 12 items before us. On almost all of them, the procedures to be applied to achieve the purposes pursued by the United Nations ever since it came into being in regard to disarmament have already been exhaustively analysed, as attested to by the thousands of pages of the verbatim records of the 28 sessions of this Committee and of the 13 years of work of the Disarmament Committee.

On reading these verbatim records, one learns that it is axiomatic that it was not patient perseverance in the effort, keen reasoning, fertile ingenuity or a constructive spirit that were missing but that the key to our inertia resides in the total absence of the political will to prove with deeds their reiterated promises and solemn declarations manifested to a greater or lesser degree by the two nuclear super-Powers.

As I had occasion to say in the general debate in the plenary Assembly, the détente between the great Powers -- which, in principle, has our full support and sympathy -- should not be used as an instrument to institutionalize the so-called balance of terror by legalizing the maintenance in perpetuity of a deadly over-saturation of nuclear weapons, however balanced or equal it may be, which entails a potential threat to the very survival of mankind. The specific and nightmarish facts given here by the Chairman of the Military Installations Sub-Committee of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee of the United States Congress -- who gave, may I say in passing, an example of official information worthy of being imitated by the representatives of other nuclear Powers -- according to which

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"... the United States stockpile of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons is equivalent to 615,385 Hiroshima bombs" (1998th meeting, p. 23) completely demonstrate that there is absolutely no exaggeration in affirming that what is at stake in our time is, as I said, the very survival of mankind.

If one considers that the Hiroshima bomb caused the death of approximately 100,000 persons, the conclusion necessarily follows that the arsenal of nuclear weapons of only one of the two super-Powers would be enough to extinguish the life of 61,538 million human beings or more than 15 times the entire population of the earth. This is no doubt what is to be understood by "overkill".

To that must be added the constant innovations intended to increase the destructive power of nuclear weapons. In evaluating this phenomenon, I shall limit myself to recommending that representatives read the relevant chapters of the SIPRI Yearbook for 1974; the report very recently published in the magazine Center Report entitled, "The Nuclear Arms Race Is Out of Control", written by Mr. David Johnson and Rear Admiral Gene R. La Rocque, Directors of the Centre for Defense Information; the article entitled "Nuclear Strategy and Nuclear Weapons" by Mr. Barry Carter, which came out in Scientific American of May this year; and the well-documented statement made in this room last week by the representative of Ecuador, Ambassador Leopoldo Benites.

So there is nothing astonishing in the fact that one of the most authoritative sources of the United States on the subject, the present Director of the Arms and Disarmament Control Organization of the United States, Dr. Fred Charles Iklé, last month made statements to the effect that one of the likely apocalyptic effects of a nuclear conflagration would be the destruction of the layer of ozone in the stratosphere which makes life on our planet possible by protecting it against the ultraviolet rays of the sun.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

What I have been describing explains the reasons on which is based our conviction that the modest collateral disarmament measures adopted during the last decade, most of which applied only to outer space or the abyssal depths, or were intended to eliminate such arms as biological weapons which, for reasons of self-preservation, nobody would have dared to use, should not lead us to forget the situation we face, of which it has been said, only too rightly, that it entails dangers for human survival far greater than those that existed during the first million years of history.

We believe, therefore, that the nuclear Powers, and in particular the super-Powers, should again place general and complete disarmament under effective international control where it legitimately belongs, as the final goal towards which negotiations on the subject should be directed. The United States and the Soviet Union would make a valuable contribution to this end, either by bringing up to date the texts they submitted to the Committee on Disarmament more than 12 years ago, or by submitting new proposals.

It is also urgent, and perhaps the need is even greater if the super-Powers wish to prevent horizontal proliferation, that they comply, without delay, with the commitments they have contracted in regard to vertical proliferation. In our opinion, compliance with these commitments requires mainly two things:

First, that the two super-Powers, whose arsenals have an astronomical superiority over those of the other nuclear Powers, should put an end without delay to all their nuclear-weapons tests, as the Assembly has requested in so many of its resolutions and as they themselves have promised to do in the preamble and in article I of the Moscow Treaty and as they reiterated in the preamble to the non-proliferation Treaty.

Secondly, that they cease the nuclear arms race and start to carry out nuclear disarmament in accordance with what is expressly provided for in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty. Adequate methods for this have been repeatedly indicated by the General Assembly in emphasizing the urgent need for the super-Powers to reach an agreement on "major qualitative limitations and substantial reductions in their strategic systems of nuclear weapons as a positive step towards nuclear disarmament".

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

So far, although more than 11 years have elapsed since the signature of the partial nuclear test-ban Treaty, has not only the number of tests not decreased -- and far less have they been eliminated altogether -- but, although most of them have been underground, the number has risen by approximately 60 per cent.

As regards the manner in which the super-Powers have interpreted their commitment to carry out "the cessation of the nuclear arms race" and "nuclear disarmament" -- and I am quoting from article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty -- I should like to recall here some significant facts which I stated at the 627th meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) on 16 April 1974 as a result of a comparative analysis of the most serious and reliable publications on the subject:

The most modern nuclear submarine in existence in 1968, when the non-proliferation Treaty was opened for signature, was built at a cost of $180 million. The Trident which is now being built to replace it costs $1,300 million.

One of the super-Powers has substantially increased its stock of land-based ballistic missiles, while in the case of the other, there has been a qualitative increase through the development of the so-called "multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles" (MIRV). The end result is, however, the same: the number of nuclear warheads with which the two super-Powers have equipped their intercontinental missiles -- and I am referring exclusively to intercontinental missiles -- and the bombs of the two super-Powers, in a constant state of readiness for firing, from land bases, from submarines or from long-range bombers, which in 1968 came to a total, for both of them, of 3,700, will probably by 1975, still for both the super-Powers together, come to around 15,000.

The military budget of one of the super-Powers, estimated at $68,000 million in 1968, is estimated at around $100,000 million for the current year. Similarly the military budget of the other super-Power which, in 1968 was reckoned to be $40,000 million, appears to have increased in the same proportion, since it is reckoned at about $60,000 million for this year.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Between 1968 and 1974 the cost of nuclear submarines rose by more than 700 per cent, which alone is eloquent evidence of the enormous increase in their destructive power; while there was an increase of 400 per cent in the number of intercontinental missile nuclear warheads for firing from land bases, submarines or long-range bombers, and an increase of 50 per cent in military budgets.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

In view of the refusal by the nuclear super-Powers to adopt effective disarmament measures, States which do not possess these terrible instruments of mass destruction seem prepared -- as clearly indicated, in our view, by the fact that this year we have three items on the agenda relating to nuclear-free zones -- to resort to procedures such as those applied in the event of an epidemic: to achieve a gradual broadening of the zones of the world from which nuclear weapons are prohibited forever, to a point where the territories of these Powers become something like contaminated islets subjected to quarantine.

As I said at the outset, I have deliberately wished to refrain from analysing the many items on our agenda. The little my delegation has to add on them we shall have sufficient occasion to say when we reach the stage of presenting or discussing the respective draft resolutions.

Before concluding I only wish to insist on something which I also already emphasized at the beginning of my statement: the need, which seems to us to be both unavoidable and beyond postponement, that the nuclear Powers, and particularly the two super-Powers, give convincing proof that they have the necessary political will to ensure that their promises do not remain a dead letter.

In this connexion, I would venture to emphasize two statements which seem to us to contain somewhat encouraging elements.

The Secretary of State of the United States, in the strong statement he made in the general debate in the plenary Assembly on 23 September expressed himself in terms which seemed to indicate that he is well aware of the tragic times we are living in, since he said:

> "The world has dealt with nuclear weapons as if restraint were automatic. Their very awesomeness has chained those weapons for almost three decades; their sophistication and expense have helped to keep constant for a decade the number of States which possess them. Now, as was quite foreseeable, political inhibitions are in danger of crumbling. Nuclear catastrophe looms more plausible, whether through design or miscalculation; accident, theft or blackmail." (A/PV.2238, p. 26)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, in turn, on the next day, on 24 September, affirmed with similar emphasis:

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"Stable and lasting peace is incompatible with the arms race. They are antipodes. One cannot seriously think of eliminating the threat of war, while at the same time increasing military budgets and endlessly building up armaments." (A/PV.2240, p. 63-65)

...

"The supreme interests not only of the peoples of the Soviet Union and the United States, but also of the peoples of the whole world, require that the Soviet Union and the United States, possessing the colossal might of nuclear weapons, should make every effort to achieve appropriate understandings and agreements." (Ibid., p. 71)

We wish to believe in the sincerity of the praiseworthy intentions reflected in those two statements and we hope that this time words will be followed by corresponding deeds. The delegation of Mexico, within its modest possibilities, will do everything it can to ensure that the United Nations General Assembly, by its decisions, contributes to the fulfilment of this task.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to express to my friend, Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, my sincere gratitude for his cordial and unduly kind words addressed to me at the beginning of his statement.

Mr. ENE (Romania) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, first of all I should like to say how much we appreciated your kind words at the beginning of our work on disarmament. It is a pleasure to the Romanian delegation to see you presiding over this Committee. Furthermore, I have a great deal of personal esteem for you, representative as you are of Argentina, a country with which Romania has the best possible relations of close co-operation. Your reputation, well-established everywhere, including Geneva, has confirmed once again, as you conduct the proceedings of this Committee so brilliantly, our conviction that the efforts of all delegations, under your presidency, will make a valuable contribution to the success of our work.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

The general debate in the Assembly this year highlighted once again the growing concern of the peoples of the world to live in peace and security, and concentrate on their economic and social development. We see ever more clearly now a trend emerging towards détente and the establishment of a new international order, a trend towards the elimination of the policy of force and diktat, devastating wars and all forms of interference in the internal affairs of other States. The need for common action to remove the great economic disparities which exist is becoming ever more clearly one of the most pressing problems affecting the present and the future of the contemporary world.

It is in the light of this trend that Romania bases its approach -- at this session as well -- to the problems of disarmament.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

The safeguarding of peace and the building of a more just world of understanding and co-operation among nations are closely connected with the campaign for general disarmament and, above all, nuclear disarmament.

The various reports before us and all the statements, without exception, that have been made on disarmament questions demonstrate the particular seriousness of the danger to peace and international security, as well as to the economic and social development of all nations, and the ceaseless acceleration of the arms race, which has achieved dimensions unprecedented in other fields of human endeavour.

World military expenditures, amounting to $275,000 million, mainly on nuclear weapons, are higher than the combined total national product of the developing countries of southern Asia, the Far East and Africa, and far higher than that of Latin America. The latest report of the Secretary-General on the subject stresses the fact that on the part of considerable forces there is a world long-term trend towards the increase of budgetary expenditures, with the great military Powers being involved in a constant competition to gain qualitative advantages in the field of armaments. Indeed, the arms race has become a technology race, governed by particular laws, which could go on for ever if not stopped by appropriate political action. Nothing justifies its further continuance. Our planet already presents the picture of a world in which weapons of all kinds -- nuclear, chemical, bacteriological, conventional -- have been stockpiled in vast quantities, with a destructive power such that they could already destroy the whole of the human race many times over.

As a result of the massive stockpiling of armaments, particularly nuclear armaments, the whole world is in a terrible state of insecurity. Never, and still less in present circumstances, have arms been able to resolve the problems of international security. On the contrary, they are actually factors which promote tension and distrust in international relations. In the circumstances -- and we must be quite frank about this -- the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, has the effect of slowing down the new trend towards détente and democratization which is emerging in international relations.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

The new and most disturbing qualitative element deriving from the existence of nuclear weapons and modern armaments technology is the particular position of insecurity in which the non-nuclear countries are placed. In order to maintain sound international relations, special fundamental and practical importance should be attached to the establishment of a mutually acceptable balance of responsibilities and obligations between the nuclear and the non-nuclear Powers, so that all countries may feel secure. Equality of treatment in the matter of security is a direct consequence of the principle of equality of States. However, thearms race, because of the way in which it is developing and because of its dimensions, is a flagrant violation of the principle of the equal security of States. The arms race has adverse effects on the economic and social life of all and has repercussions on the world economy. It seriously affects the situation of the developing countries.

Mankind has lately become concerned about the major problems confronting it, such as inflation, energy, food, population and other problems. Indeed, all are different aspects of the same phenomenon, which today takes pride of place on the agenda of the world community -- development. The elimination of under-development, the levelling out of stages of development of States, is an objective necessity for general progress, including progress of the developed countries, and for the stability of the world economy. However, it is difficult to imagine a genuine effort to arrive at solutions to the problems of the deep-rooted phenomena from which mankind is at present suffering in conditions where vast sums of money continue to be swallowed up in the arms race.

The Romanian delegation would like to draw attention to the particular importance of all those aspects of the arms race now, when our Organization is fully engaged in establishing a new political and economic order in the world. We must fully realize that all efforts towards establishing that new order must necessarily include disarmament among its primary constituent elements.

The Romanian delegation shares the concern which has been widely displayed at this session, too, with regard to the stagnation and lack of results of disarmament negotiations. It is true that certain partial agreements have been reached. A series of ideas, proposals and suggestions covering a wide range of concrete disarmament measures have been put forward in the General Assembly and in the specialized forums of negotiation. However, the results achieved fall far short of the requirements of the time and the existing possibilities.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

Praiseworthy action begun in the Geneva Committee some years ago and many initiatives put forward by different countries, including my own, have been abandoned or disregarded and have not become the subject of effective negotiations as would have been natural and desirable. Priority questions of nuclear disarmament have in effect been set aside from the agenda of negotiations or considered as an area reserved to a limited group of States. In Geneva, discussion has concentrated on isolated topics which, generally speaking, are secondary in comparison with the true questions of disarmament, which are those of halting the production and improvement of nuclear weapons and the achievement of a stage, on the basis of a negotiated agreement, of destroying existing stocks of those weapons.

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, created by the United Nations with a view to "achieving an agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control", is very far from having discharged the functions entrusted to it by the General Assembly. Because of its working methods and its structure, the Committee has not only failed to benefit from the more favourable international climate and to contribute, by whatever means it possesses, to the strengthening of détente but has given no proof in recent years of its ability to adapt itself to new realities.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

It is the duty of the United Nations primarily to take account of this state of affairs with a view to discharging fully its functions and responsibilites in the disarmament field. We must work together energetically, in order to break the disarmament negotiations deadlock. It is high time for negotiations to reflect progressive trends and the tendency towards the democratization of international life more faithfully. The arms race constitutes a constant danger to the peace and security of all peoples and a heavy burden on the whole world. Consequently, a body with the task of conducting multilateral negotiations can only function effectively if it takes into account the views of all its members in the spirit and on the basis of respect for the equality of States and in keeping with the interests of all the peoples of the world.

The solutions to the problems of peace and security call for the active and direct participation of all States. It is in this spirit that we reaffirm the position of the Romanian Government in favour of convening, after proper preparation, a world disarmament conference open to all States on a basis of equality, which could make an effective contribution to the adoption of practical disarmament measures and primarily to the banning and elimination of nuclear weapons.

Romania firmly supports the need to proceed to the preparation and implementation of a new policy in the disarmament field. We therefore feel that we should now turn from the stage of general discussion, which has no actual effect, to genuine measures of disarmament and, first and foremost, nuclear disarmament.

This is one of the fundamental features of the foreign policy of my country. The draft programme of the Romanian Communist Party to be adopted next month by the Party Congress includes, as one of its priority tasks, that of working for achievement of lasting peace, general disarmament and, first of all, nuclear disarmament.

"The Romanian Communist Party", it is stipulated in the programme, "Considers that it is its duty to act ever more energetically in order to proceed to disarmament measures. We must do everything in our power to achieve, in the next 25 years, an end to the arms race, a reduction of military budgets, the allocation of money thus released to the furtherance of the economic and social development of the peoples of the world, and the elimination of underdevelopment."

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

It is in keeping with this position that the Romanian delegation firmly supports the idea that nuclear disarmament should enjoy the highest priority in disarmament negotiations. This demand is based on the extremely serious dangers and risks entailed for mankind by nuclear weapons whose destructive capacity exceeds that of any other weapon. Over the years we have proposed concrete subjects for negotiation in the nuclear field which, in our view, would contribute to the initiation of a genuine disarmament process, given the necessary political will. The subjects would be: the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons; the provision of security guarantees to non-nuclear States; the cessation of production and sophistication of atomic weapons; and the reduction and the total elimination of nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapon carriers.

Taking particular account of the new qualitative element that has emerged on the international scene as a result of the nuclear arms race -- that is to say, the state of insecurity in which the non-nuclear countries have to live -- we consider that the solemn prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons is a matter of the utmost urgency. This would be totally in keeping with the spirit of the United Nations Charter and also with the provisions of the General Assembly Declaration on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons and Thermo-nuclear Weapons of 24 November 1961.

We have repeatedly requested that the problem of security guarantees for non-nuclear States, which was left outstanding by the non-proliferation Treaty, should be examined and settled appropriately in the course of the disarmament negotiations. These countries must be able to feel sure that never under any circumstances will they be victims of a nuclear attack, or ever be threatened by the use of these arms.

In order to achieve this final objective, in keeping with the general feeling at this session, particular importance should be attached to initiatives aimed at removing a group of countries or whole regions from the sphere of application of nuclear arms by the creation of peace zones or nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In view of the interest of Romania in this question, my delegation intends at a later stage of our debate to go into further detail about this subject. For the time being, I shall confine myself to stressing that the

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

existence of four or five items on the Assembly's agenda concerning the establishment of such zones as a demonstration of the growing concern of non-nuclear States to obtain a commitment from the nuclear States not to use these weapons against them or to threaten them with the use of these weapons.

Indeed, while accepting under the non-proliferation Treaty the obligation not to produce or obtain atomic weapons, the non-nuclear States have really demonstrated a true spirit of international co-operation and understanding of the existing situation. It is not only a right but it is also the duty of these States to be constantly vigilant, to see to it that their commitment not to arm themselves atomically, assumed under this Treaty, does not entail any dimunition of their security.

This spring will see the convening of a conference on the examination of the effectiveness of the non-proliferation Treaty. This conference will not only offer an opportunity to express our points of view on the progress in the the application of the Treaty but also an opportunity for a broad exchange of views which may enable us to formulate concrete solutions which would be taken into account by the nuelear Powers.

We would like to remind members of the Committee once again that each State Party to that Treaty has explicitly undertaken, in accordance with 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, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control". (Resolution 2373 (XXII). As has been quite rightly stressed by many States in the course of the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the review conference, this is one of the key provisions of the Treaty, a provision which will determine the effective functioning of the machinery to be established.

In this regard we would also like to state in all candour that if there is any concern to strengthen the Treaty, the only way of doing so is by the immediate application of article VI of the Treaty which concerns calling a halt to the production of nuclear weapons and proceeding on the basis of negotiated agreements to the destruction of existing stockpiles. Until concrete measures are taken to this end, no State can be prevented from producing nuclear or other weapons it deems necessary for its defence.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

We are sincerely convinced that the 1975 conference must analyse thoroughly and most seriously the practical results of the application, over the course of five years, of the non-proliferation Treaty so that the necessary measures can be taken.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

Viewed realistically, disarmament is a gradual, step by step process leading finally to general disarmament. It is a process which calls for sustained and consistent action likely to bring us closer to the final objective. In order to give a sense of continuity and perspective to the negotiations, this action must be taken within the framework of an integrated programme of military disengagement and of disarmament.

Such a programme must include measures aimed at eliminating from military arsenals all weapons of mass destruction: nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and others. In order to achieve this objective, the programme must also take into account partial measures which have already been proposed, such as the withdrawal of foreign troops stationed on the territory of other States to their own national territory; the dismantling of military bases on the territories of other countries; the reduction of all troops; the renunciation of military manoeuvres or demonstrations of force along the frontiers of other States; the gradual reduction of military budgets, and the elimination of military blocs.

The Romanian delegation is also concerned at the possibilities opened up by the use for military purposes of modern scientific technological discoveries. In this connexion, we welcome any effort aimed at banning the use of the environment and climate for military purposes, the subject of a new initiative from the Soviet Union at this session.

It is quite clear that the implementation of any disarmament measure will be achieved gradually, as and when conditions become ripe for it to be applied. Some disarmament measures might be applied to all countries; others to particular geographical zones.

In the light of this approach, Romania has for example, presented to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe proposals with regard to the military aspects of security, and measures designed to strengthen confidence and increase stability, such as advance notice of manoeuvres and large-scale military movements, and exchange of observers in the case of military manoeuvres, and a ban on the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of other States.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

Those proposals are at present the subject of active negotiation among States in the competent organs of the Conference, and we would express the hope that acceptable agreements in this field will be concluded at an early date.

Within the framework of measures which are liable to have an immediate influence on the development of the arms race, we attach particular importance to the reduction of military budgets.

It is on the basis of this position that Romania has always promoted the idea of practical measures aimed at a freezing and gradual reduction of military budgets on the basis of a concrete programme, beginning with the budgets of the great Powers which possess powerful armaments. Resolution 3075 (XXVIII), adopted by consensus at the last session of the General Assembly on the initiative of the Romania delegation and other interested delegations, draws the attention of competent organs to the need for substantial reductions in military expenditures, particularly on the part of countries possessing powerful armaments and calls on all States to make renewed efforts aimed at adopting effective measures for the cessation of the arms race, especially in the nuclear field.

We believe that over the last year the United Nations has taken a step forward with regard to consideration of this subject. We appreciate the report of the Secretary-General, published in document A/9770, which represents, in our view, a detailed analysis of the problems entailed by a reduction of military budgets. That analysis might be of practical use for any further action in this field.

Those are the points which I wanted to put forward on behalf of the Romanian delegation at this stage of the Committee's work. In conclusion I should like to express the sincere desire of my delegation to combine its efforts with those of other delegations so that this session of the General Assembly can contribute actively to bringing about a decisive turning point in disarmament negotiations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to tell my friend, Ambassador Ene, how much I appreciate his compliments to me.

Mr. MAKKI (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. Chairman, allow me to add my voice to the numerous speakers who have extended their congratulations to you and have expressed their appreciation regarding your unanimous election as Chairman of this important Committee. I also congratulate you on the ideal way in which you have guided the work of this Committee. My congratulations also go to the distinguished officers of the Committee.

I fully appreciate and understand the difficulty and complexity of the item submitted for discussion and the different way of thinking between intellectuals of the big Powers and the potentialities of all developing countries in the field of knowledge, understanding and accurate information. Nevertheless, I am confident that all developing countries, which live under similar conditions as my country, are devoting great attention to the topics covered by the items we are discussing.

This is so because increased armament in the world and the development of the means of mass annhilation and mass destruction by nuclear and chemical weapons and the like, have an adverse practical and psychological effect on all countries of the world, particularly developing countries. Those countries wish to devote their full attention to ensure rapid growth and to raise the general standard of living of their people.

Therefore, my delegation has fully welcomed the proposal aimed at reducing the military budgets of States which are permanent members of the Security Council in order to devote part of the funds thus saved for assistance to the developing countries. We thank the delegation of the Soviet Union for its initiative in this respect and for its positive and constructive proposal.

(Mr. Makki, Yemen)

We also welcome the proposal concerning the prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military purposes.

The general debate which has taken place so far has highlighted the terrible dangers which would result from the use of such weapons and methods and the disastrous consequences of a continuing increase in armaments. The debate had also demonstrated the futility of working to promote the development of nuclear weapons and to increase their effectiveness, because they are already capable of completely destroying the world several times over. Those who are not involved in this terrible policy have the right to ask what the aim is. Is that aim to prepare for and ensure the destruction of mankind and the elimination of all the civilization and technological progress achieved by mankind by the most effective and rapid means?

We must also ask what would be the judgement of coming generations -- providing, of course, we do not achieve complete destruction of the human race by the means already developed -- if they knew that we had devoted vast sums of money to bringing about the annihilation of mankind. The real concern is to ensure that no generation, indeed no life on earth, will survive and be able to condemn us for our shortsightedness and foolish selfishness.

For these reasons my delegation welcomes any treaty or measure likely to achieve a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests as a first step in the desired direction. We congratulate Latin America on its success in concluding the Treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons in that part of the world and on ensuring the effectiveness of that Treaty by means of its Additional Protocols. We hope that our desire to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone will be fulfilled, but we must draw attention to the dangerous nature of the information we have received to the effect that there are in the Middle East those who are working for the production of nuclear weapons. This would increase the dangers in that sensitive area and it is therefore the duty of the world and of the countries of the Middle East to try to remedy the situation by banning the production of nuclear weapons in that part of the world, and also to ban their acquisition. It is clear that if any country acquired these means of destruction other countries, feeling they were threatened, would try in

(Mr. Makki, Yemen)

turn to acquire similar weapons, and this would, of course, be at the expense of the development and advancement of our society.

Thus we support all measures aimed at breaking this vicious circle by prohibiting and destroying all nuclear weapons and all the equipment which has been developed with a view to their production. It goes without saying that the presence of a non-nuclear State side by side with a country which is known for its expansionist designs, supported by nuclear weapons, would increase the arrogance of that nuclear State and its desire to pursue and continue its dangerous policy based on expansion and the economic and political domination of others. Understanding this, my delegation supports the statement of the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt in this Committee that:

"It is imperative for the world community to exert pressure on Israel to sign the non-proliferation Treaty." (2001st meeting, p. 33-35)

The competition among the big Powers concerning our region, together with the increase in the importance of the region because of the presence of oil resources, and the introduction of an alien entity among us supported by all modern technological and military means and having dangerous racist and expansionist ideas, has made this region, in the south of which Yemen is situated, intermittently explosive and has deprived every country of stability and the chance of realizing all its potential for development and progress. The situation has worsened with regard to Yemen and the other countries bordering the Indian Ocean because of the arms race during recent years among the countries in this area and the arrival of international competition -- a fact which has induced our Organization to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. But everyone knows that declarations alone are not sufficient and have no value unless they are accompanied by practical measures to ensure their proper implementation. I hope that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, of which my country is a member, will succeed in its task.

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee shows that the decision to declare that region a zone of peace has not prevented some countries from continuing to build or introduce fleets and to construct military bases in the area.

(Mr. Makki, Yemen)

Nevertheless, we must not lose hope that the decision to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace will be respected by all the countries which are still competing in the area and outside it in the military as well as in other spheres.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that this Committee will devote particular attention to the two topics on which I have concentrated: namely, the declaration of the Middle East as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, with the necessary guarantees, and respect of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. Although we know there are difficulties which prevent the implementation of resolutions and the fulfilment of hopes, still we tend to be optimistic about the future.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank His Excellency the Deputy Prime Minister of Yemen for the very cordial congratulations which he was so good as to address to the officers of the Committee.

Mr. ERELL (Israel): Mr. Chairman, please accept the greetings and good wishes of my delegation for yourself and the other officers of the Committee. We have already had ample cause to admire the way in which you are conducting and guiding the work of our Committee, and it will indeed be a pleasure to co-operate with you as our discussions proceed.

The Government of Iran has submitted to the General Assembly the proposal by His Imperial Majesty that the Middle East be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This proposal is co-sponsored by Egypt. The Government of Israel is impressed with the motivation of Iran that such initiative might further the cause of peace in the area.

It must be recognized, however, that faith in peace by all parties concerned and an actual contractual and abiding peace between them are the stuff which lends genuine substance to a proposal of this kind.

The General Assembly is furthermore invited to discuss a proposal submitted by Pakistan for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia.

The areas of the Middle East and South Asia are geographically contiguous, and close cultural, religious, technical and scientific links exist between various States of both regions. The Government of Israel therefore deems it useful that both proposals be dealt with as one and that the States of these areas be invited to discuss among themselves the prerequisites from which the present proposals may emerge as a genuine contribution to peace.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Israel for the good wishes which he addressed to the officers of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.