

some reason to hope that the test-ban agreement of August 5 signifies, as the distinguished representative of Tunisia said in Plenary Session, "an irreversible trend towards disarmament and peace".

For many years the major powers have talked about disarmament, but many countries, including ourselves, have believed that these discussions would remain unrealistic so long as the nuclear powers were unable to take the first essential step of stopping the development of nuclear weapons. The limited test-ban is therefore of particular significance. It provides reassurance to the world that fallout will not continue to endanger the health of this and future generations - that in itself is a gain of enormous human significance. It also shows that the major powers have taken a step towards ending the unrestricted development of even more destructive types of weapons. The object of disarmament is to reduce and then eliminate all major weapons, but it is important, first, to arrest completely the refinement of weapons which testing makes possible. This is why we regard the partial test-ban as a "break-through", heralding - we hope - further steps towards restricting competition in new types of armaments.

We welcome, therefore, the determination of the nuclear powers, as expressed in the preamble to the limited test-ban, to continue to seek agreement on stopping underground tests. Previous speakers in this Committee have quite rightly emphasized the importance of continued negotiations towards this end. The competition in and the development of new types of nuclear weapons cannot finally be ended until agreement on this matter is achieved.

We welcome the fact that other countries, great and small - now numbering over one hundred - and many with the potential to develop nuclear weapons, have signed the treaty, thereby signifying that they do not intend to develop nuclear weapons. The fact that several technically and economically advanced countries have taken this step is of special significance in limiting quantitatively the proliferation of these weapons. In this connection, it should be noted that the Federal Republic of Germany, in signing the partial test-ban, has provided further evidence of its intention to adhere to its policy of refraining from manufacturing nuclear