

probability of violations of a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests; and it is also a praiseworthy effort to find a way out of the deadlock in the negotiations on that question. We share the view that any arms-control agreement would involve taking a calculated risk. The concept of a no-risk arms-control agreement ignores the larger and more dangerous consequences of an escalation of the arms race.

72. It is discouraging that the working paper of the Swedish delegation is, for contrary reasons, not acceptable to the nuclear-weapon Powers, and that yet another initiative in this Committee to break the deadlock should be of no avail. The General Assembly cannot but be profoundly concerned at the lack of progress towards the elaboration of a treaty banning underground nuclear-weapon tests, to which it attaches such great urgency.

73. The present prospect for a comprehensive test-ban treaty was summed up in the following words by the head of the Japanese delegation, Mr. Asakai, on 31 July:

"...so long as one takes the position that an underground test-ban treaty should not be concluded unless all underground explosions, however small, are to be detected and identified, there will be no chance for a complete underground test-ban treaty in the foreseeable future. In order to conclude a treaty prohibiting all underground nuclear-weapon tests one has to start from the premise that a political decision has to be made to prohibit all such tests when a means is devised to detect and identify underground explosions above a certain limit in size" (ENDC/PV.424, para.42).

Mr. Asakai pointed out that the size should be of a magnitude of 4.75, as explosions above that level can be identified even at present (*ibid.*, para.43).

74. At the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, the First Committee evinced great interest in the conclusion reached by the meeting of experts of ten countries, including four from nuclear-weapon States, held in Stockholm last year under the auspices of the International Institute for Peace and Conflict Research (SIPRI) (ENDC/230). That conclusion was that, as far as seismic events of a magnitude of 4.75 were concerned, it would be possible to differentiate nuclear explosions from earthquakes with almost 100 per cent accuracy from outside the country in which they occurred. Accordingly I stated on behalf of my delegation that a way had been opened for a political decision by the nuclear-weapon Powers to ban underground weapon explosions of moderate and large yields which are verifiable without on-site inspection.

75. My delegation therefore commends the Japanese proposal that, as a first step, agreement should be reached without delay to prohibit underground nuclear-weapon tests above magnitude 4.75, which would not require on-site inspection, while securing a commitment by all States to co-operate with each other with a view to devising within a certain period of time a system of verification which would be able to monitor all underground explosions above magnitude 4.0 (ENDC/PV.424, para.46).

76. At this point my delegation would like to remind this Committee that the proposal for a threshold underground test-ban treaty is supported by the informed judgement of some leading scientists in the world. In our view, even if the continuation of testing below the threshold would not be without military significance, it would hardly pose a danger to the nuclear balance but, on the contrary, by ending high-yield test explosions, particularly in the megaton range, would slow the nuclear arms race and be conducive to the stabilization of the balance.

77. We agree with those delegations which have affirmed that what is required above all for progress towards the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty — or even a threshold treaty for that matter — is the political will to reach agreement. Given the political will, the scientific and technical means to verify compliance with such a treaty would not be too difficult to devise.

78. A proposal has been made by Canada in document ENDC/251 that States should