

Disarmament

There have been three important developments in the field of arms control since I spoke to the General Assembly at the twenty-first session: first, the approval of the Treaty on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; second, the conclusion of the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons in Latin America; third, the submission of draft treaties on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union on August 24 in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee.

With its imminent entry into force, the Treaty on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will soon be an established and far-reaching fact. It ranks among the important achievements in the arms-control sphere since the establishment of the United Nations.

I am sure we should all wish to congratulate the states of Latin America and the Caribbean for reaching agreement to establish the first nuclear-free zone in an inhabited part of the world. This treaty will lend impetus to the non-proliferation negotiations, which have now been intensified in Geneva and will shortly be before this Assembly.

Non-Proliferation Treaty

The conclusion of a non-proliferation treaty is vital, urgent and of paramount importance. I urge that the General Assembly endorse the results of more than two years of effort, so that a treaty can become a working reality soon. The treaty may not be a measure of nuclear disarmament, but it is a vital step towards nuclear arms control, in itself an important prerequisite to ultimate nuclear and general disarmament. It will help to prevent a new nuclear arms race, greatly reduce the danger of nuclear war and contribute to conditions in which the nuclear powers can address themselves to the problem of reducing their nuclear arsenals. Far from perpetuating a nuclear weapons monopoly, the international forces generated by this treaty will bring pressure to bear on the nuclear powers themselves to undertake further measures of nuclear arms control.

We are confident that the treaty will not inhibit collective defence arrangements or the civil nuclear programmes of non-nuclear signatories. On the contrary, in my view, the treaty will enhance nuclear development for peaceful purposes in non-nuclear states.

My country, by the way, has long had a nuclear capacity, but it determined from the very beginning to use its nuclear know-how for peaceful purposes only.

We are firmly convinced that this treaty should prohibit non-nuclear signatories from developing so-called peaceful nuclear explosive devices. There is no distinguishing between military and civil nuclear explosive technology, between the destructive power of a nuclear bomb and a nuclear excavating charge. A more permissive provision for peaceful nuclear explosions would represent a fatal loophole by means of which non-nuclear states could acquire military nuclear technology. That is not to say that we should not expect the nuclear powers, perhaps in this Assembly, to give an explicit undertaking to extend nuclear explosive services on reasonable terms upon request once they become