

Non-proliferation is not the only dimension of the international system that is put at risk by an unrelenting arms race — *détente* also is in danger. The dominant premise of a policy of *détente* is confidence. That is how it is defined in the Final Act to which 35 heads of state and government subscribed in Helsinki in 1975. Only in a climate of confidence will it be possible, over time, to transcend the harsher realities of divergent ideologies and to fashion the links of a co-operation based on common interests and concerns. The arms race cuts across these purposes. The development of each new weapons system carries the risk of unbalancing the existing security equation. A policy of political *détente*, which has to be based on confidence, cannot be expected to withstand such strains indefinitely.

The arms race also defies the logic of an interdependent world. It is hardly credible that nations that have learnt that their destinies are linked, that national aims can no longer be wholly realized within national boundaries, that beggaring our neighbours is the surest way of beggaring ourselves, should have discovered no better alternative to assuring their security than an escalating balance of terror. And it is even less credible that, in a world of finite resources, in so many parts of which basic human needs remain unsatisfied, nearly \$400 billion in resources should have to be spent year by year for purposes of security.

Security, even absolute security, is not an end in itself. It is only the setting that permits us to pursue our real ends: economic well-being, cultural attainment, the fulfilment of the human personality. But those ends are all incompatible with a world of neighbours armed to the teeth.

On all these counts, we are right in having chosen this moment in time to pause and survey the disarmament scene. What we face is a general tendency to add to arsenals as the only way of correcting perceived imbalances in security. That way lies the logic of the arms-spiral. We must recognize it for what it is: a search for security, however elusive. And we must deal with it on its own terms. To attempt to divorce disarmament from security is to be felt only with the bare bones of rhetoric.

**Achieving
security
through
disarmament**

How to achieve security through disarmament is the theme of the great debate that has been waged through much of the present century. We are taking up that debate again at this special session. The terms of the debate have been drastically altered in the last 25 years by two developments. One was the advent of nuclear weapons, which has forced us to assimilate the concept of unusable power. The other was the transformation of the political map, which has brought a whole host of new international actors into the disarmament debate. Perhaps it is useful, nonetheless, to review the principal strands of the historic debate to see what relevance they may have for our efforts at this special session.

The broad spectrum of proposals to achieve greater world stability and the reduction of tensions ranges all the way from what is sometimes called the "declaratory approach" to the notion of general and complete disarmament.

The "declaratory approach" encompasses the whole complex of non-aggression pacts, treaties of guarantee, security assurances and bans on the use of certain weapons. The
