

and I assume others, resort to other solutions to protect fundamental national interests. The Governments and people of the world are not prepared to wait much longer for the results of the Conference. We must act quickly and in concert. If we do--and I am convinced we can--we will achieve what the Secretary General has rightly called "one of the most important conventions ever devised by the International Community".

In 1945, Mr. President, the founders of the United Nations, profoundly influenced by the holocaust of war, were determined that the central task of the international organization would be the maintenance of international peace and security. They devised--so they believed--a system for the settlement of disputes between nations without recourse to the use of force.

Thirty years later, this fundamental problem still faces the United Nations. Two crucial aspects of this problem are disarmament and peacekeeping. They were the principal themes of my address to the Assembly last year, but, such is their importance, that I make no apology for reverting to them.

DISARMAMENT

Few issues before this Assembly give rise to aspirations so great or frustrations so deep as the question of disarmament.

We aspire to agreements that will check the use of force; reduce tensions; and free resources for productive social and economic purposes. But our hopes are frustrated by the relentless drive towards new heights of destructive power.

Nuclear weapons exist in the tens of thousands and we are faced with the frightening possibility that they will spread to more countries. The advanced countries continue to spend enormous amounts of money on armaments of all kinds, and the military expenditures of some developing countries are rapidly increasing.

Is it any wonder that ordinary people everywhere, with deep unease and impatience, await real progress towards disarmament?

The SALT talks have been of major importance in promoting a climate of strategic stability and political détente. But they have not halted the competition in nuclear armaments. Nor have they achieved steps of actual nuclear disarmament.

The problems involved are infinitely complex, but the need for solutions is pressing. We urge the United States and the Soviet Union to conclude their present negotiations and to proceed without delay to achieving steps of nuclear disarmament. We also urge the nuclear weapons powers to re-examine the technical and political obstacles to an agreement to end nuclear weapons testing.