

**Chemical
weapons
convention**

With regard to efforts to achieve a convention on the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction, to which this Assembly has also assigned a very high priority, we note that this year there are much better prospects than existed last year. Negotiations are being pursued actively between the United States and the Soviet Union. We are encouraged by the fact that the two major military powers have recognized their special responsibility for taking the initiative of working out the key elements of a chemical-weapons treaty. As is the case with the efforts to achieve the basic elements of a CTB, there remains much ground to be covered in these negotiations. But perhaps it would be realistic to expect that the bilateral negotiations may be successfully completed in time for the Geneva Disarmament Conference to begin its work on the multilateral treaty before the special session of this Assembly devoted to disarmament meets next year.

**Reduction of
military
budgets**

Turning now to the question of the reduction of military budgets and an adequate reporting system — this is an area where efforts can probably best be pursued in a broad multilateral forum, because such reductions should be implemented universally. My country appreciates the extremely valuable work that has been carried out by the Secretary-General's study group, and supports their recommendations. The viability of reductions in military budgets as a means of progress towards real disarmament on an assured basis rests upon the development of a satisfactory means for reporting and comparing military expenditures. It also clearly requires a much greater degree of openness on the part of states in making useful information available. This is, in our view, an avenue that should be followed vigorously with the objective of devising a valid reporting system and adequate verification techniques to make military budget reductions a truly effective approach to disarmament.

**Special session
on disarmament**

While reviewing, as I have been doing, the list of more-promising opportunities for progress that we now have before us, I would place particular importance on the special session devoted to disarmament, which is to be convened next May. Provided that it pursues its deliberations in a truly collective and co-operative spirit, a spirit that I am happy to note has prevailed throughout the sessions of its Preparatory Committee so far, the special session could and should provide an opportunity to reach a meeting of minds in identifying further avenues for progress in concrete arms limitation and towards more comprehensive measures of real disarmament.

Of course, such a broadly-based forum cannot itself undertake the negotiation of specific measures and treaties. These will require intensive efforts in the appropriate negotiating bodies, including particularly the Geneva Disarmament Conference, which we now have good grounds to believe may be about to enter upon a period of renewed activity and importance. The special session could also provide us with an opportunity for a broad reassessment of the problems and the opportunities and of the interrelations between disarmament, international peace and security, and economic development.

My country joined in the initiative for the special session; we are pledged to play our full part in it and to contribute to making its deliberations as fruitful as possible.
