

(Mr. Kornienko, USSR)

Mankind has come to a watershed in its history, when it has to choose which road to follow: either it will overcome the inertia of the past, when security was regarded above all in terms of a position of strength and of military and technological solutions, or it will remain hostage to a race in nuclear, chemical and, in future, other equally awesome weapons.

This choice between what is prompted by reason and what would lead to catastrophe can only be made by all States together, regardless of their social system or their level of economic development.

This should be a courageous and responsible choice, and it depends to no small degree upon the States represented at the Conference on Disarmament if it is to be so. Now it is no longer enough to devise palliative solutions that would slow down the arms race in some areas only to allow it to surge ahead at double speed in others.

In other words, the time has come for us jointly to take major strides towards ridding our planet of nuclear and other weapons so that security for each of us will also mean security for all.

Guided by these considerations, at the start of this year the Soviet Union has put forward a comprehensive plan whose central element is a step-by-step programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons. We propose that the sword of Damocles which has been hanging over the peoples since the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki should be definitively and irrevocably removed by the end of this century.

It is only fair that the first crucial step should be made by the Soviet Union and the United States, which possess the largest nuclear capabilities, with the other nuclear Powers following suit.

"We are deeply convinced that there is only one direct way of ridding mankind of the nuclear threat -- to eliminate nuclear weapons themselves. Objectively, it is a fact that the development and deployment of 'Star Wars' weaponry would inevitably spur on the arms race in every area. This is why it is necessary that from the very outset an effective international ban should be imposed on space strike arms."

In the interests of undiminished security for all and, moreover, of the inadmissibility of military superiority of one side, our proposed programme also includes, as an integral component a ban on the development, testing and deployment of space strike arms. Without such a ban it would be absolutely pointless to hope for a possibility of eliminating nuclear arms.

This is not at all the kind of artificial "linkage" that arbitrarily makes the solution of an issue depend on the solution of a second issue that