

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIFTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Tuesday, 28 February 1978, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. J.T. Simard

(Canada)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Argentina:

Mr. F.J. DÁVILA

Brazil:

Mr. I. MASTROGIOVANNI

Bulgaria:

Mr. P. VOUTOV

Mr. G. GAVRILOV

Mr. I. PETROV

Mr. I. SOTIROV

Burma:

U. THAUNG HTUN

Canada:

Mr. J.T. SIMARD

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. RUŽEK

Mr. E. ZÁPOTOCKÝ

Mr. V. ROHAL-ILKIV

Egypt:

Mr. A. ABOUL KHEIR

Ethiopia:

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER

Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI

Mr. M. RAKAU

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFEIFFER

Mr. J. PÖHLMANN

Hungary:

Mr. M. DOMOKOS

Mr. I. KÖRMENDY

Mr. A. LAKATOS

India:

Mr. S.T. DEVARE

Iran:

Mr. M. FARTASH

Mr. H. AMERI

Mr. D. CHILATY

Italy:

Mr. N. DI BERNARDO

Mr. C. FRATESCHI

Japan:

Mr. M. OGISO
Mr. T. SAWAI
Mr. Y. NAKAMURA

Mexico:

Mr. M. MARÍN
Miss A. CABRERA

Mongolia:

Mr. L. BAYART

Morocco:

Netherlands:

Mr. A.J. MEERBURG
Mr. RITSEMA

Nigeria:

Mr. O. ADENIJI
Mr. G.A. FALASE
Mr. S.T. ADAMU

Pakistan:

Mr. M. YUNUS

Peru:

Mr. A. BELAUNDE
Mr. J. AURICH-MONTERO

Poland:

Mr. A. OLSZÓWKA
Mr. H. PAĆ
Mr. M. KRUCZYK

Romania:

Mr. C. ENE
Mr. V. TUDOR
Mr. O. IONESCU

Sweden:

Mr. G. HAMILTON
Mr. L. NORBERG
Mr. U. ERICSSON

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.I. LIKHATCHEV
Mr. N.V. PESTEREV
Mr. P.F. SHAKHOV
Mr. G.A. SHEVCHENKO
Mr. L.A. NAUMOV
Mr. A.I. TIOURENKOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.R. ASHE
Mr. I.R. KENYON

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER
Mr. A.R. TURRENTINE
Mr. A. AKALOVSKY
Mr. R.N. FRITZEL
Mrs. B. KILLIAN
Miss B. MURRAY

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. LUKABU K'HABOUJI

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. Risto HYVÄRINEN

Alternate Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Ms. A. SEGARRA

Assistant Secretary-General:

Mr. R. BJÖRNERSTEDT

Communiqué of the Meeting

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 775th meeting at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Simard, representative of Canada.

The representative of the German Democratic Republic (His Excellency Ambassador Gerhard Herder) stated that disarmament had become the key issue of the continuation of the process of détente. He underlined that it was possible to solve even the most complicated disarmament questions if they were based strictly on respect for the principle of equality and equal security. This would be of particular importance for the negotiations on the conclusion of a new SALT agreement. Ambassador Herder stressed that the successful conclusion of such an agreement would essentially contribute to the consolidation of the process of international détente as well as to the solution of the problems facing the CCD.

Having dealt with the trilateral talks on a CTBT, the representative of the German Democratic Republic appreciated the recent far-reaching proposals of the USSR and raised the question whether the time was not ripe for other parties to display the same flexibility and to take the necessary steps with a view to bringing those negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Referring to the neutron bomb, Ambassador Herder stated that the German Democratic Republic could not remain indifferent when certain imperialist circles were seriously discussing the question of deploying that cruel weapon in the European States of NATO, including a neighbouring State of the German Democratic Republic. He said that that would constitute an open threat to the physical existence of the people of the German Democratic Republic. His delegation fully supported the proposal of the USSR addressed to western countries to reach agreement on the mutual renunciation of the neutron bomb as soon as possible.

With regard to the special report of the CCD to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the German Democratic Republic representative stated that the report should give a short and objective summary of the results already achieved and should mention the important treaties and conventions to the elaboration of which the CCD had contributed.

Furthermore, the report should expound objectively the present situation with respect to negotiations on the other issues on the CCD's agenda.

Ambassador Herder said that the present composition of the CCD essentially corresponded to the requirements which a representative multilateral body for negotiations on disarmament must meet. The CCD had proved to be an authoritative body for effective disarmament negotiations and he therefore believed that its composition should in principle be maintained.

The delegation of Nigeria presented a working paper entitled "Suggestions for inclusion in a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament" (CCD/555).

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 2 March 1978, at 10.30 a.m.

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Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): It gives me particular pleasure to welcome on behalf of my delegation, as new representatives to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, Ambassador Terrefe of Ethiopia, Ambassador Pfeiffer of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Fein of the Netherlands, and Ambassador Adeniji of Nigeria, as well as Chargé d'affaires U Tha Tun of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma.

I congratulate Ambassador Voutov of Bulgaria on the honour bestowed on him to represent, for the second time already, his country in this important body.

My delegation states its readiness to collaborate with them in a constructive and objective manner with a view to solving the problems which are facing the Committee.

I am convinced that the proven support given by Ambassador Hyvärinen and Ms. Segarra will contribute to a successful continuation of our work.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic has the honour of participating directly in the activities of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament for the fourth year now.

Four years are a very short period of time. The 33 years which have elapsed since 1945 are a relatively short period of time too. It was precisely in 1945 when the founding States of the United Nations--on the basis of the experience gained during the Second World War--laid down appropriate obligations in its Charter to save future generations from the scourge of war and to fight for effective disarmament measures.

Taking into account the results achieved by the striving of peoples to limit the arms race and to bring about disarmament, which are reflected in the activities of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, one can recognize the great changes which are taking place right now in this field.

The understanding is gaining ground that disarmament has become the most important problem of world politics and has become the key issue of the continuation of the process of détente. The efforts made to reach an agreement on effective measures for a quantitative and a qualitative limitation of the arms race take on ever greater dimensions. They have become a world-wide movement in which participate millions of people with different outlooks.

We can state with satisfaction that the many-faceted initiatives taken, and the progress achieved, in this field are closely connected with the activities of the Soviet Union and the other countries of the socialist community.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

It becomes ever more evident that the disarmament programme of the socialist States has proved to be, already at present, a goal which is quite attainable. The achievement of this goal fully corresponds to the vital interests of all peoples. Many multilateral and bilateral negotiations are now in progress. They demonstrate that favourable conditions do exist for putting into practice numerous initiatives for the limitation of armaments and for disarmament, and for making them binding in terms of international law. Experience proves that it is possible to solve even the most complicated questions during these negotiations provided they are strictly based on respect for the principle of equality and equal security.

This is particularly topical for the negotiations on the conclusion of a new USSR-United States agreement on the limitation of strategic arms. A successful conclusion of such an agreement would essentially contribute to the consolidation of the process of international détente and also to the solution of the problems facing this Committee. That is why the German Democratic Republic is sincerely interested in achieving real progress. We resolutely oppose actions by forces hostile to détente which are in flagrant contradiction to the efforts of peoples aimed at consolidating the process of détente and which are designed to prevent agreements on the limitation of the arms race as well as the transition to real disarmament.

It is not new that, whenever possibilities for an understanding on measures to limit the arms race are taking shape, certain circles opposed to détente in the imperialist States launch campaigns of defamation against the Soviet Union and its allies. They talk about the threat from the East, about the superiority of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact over those of NATO in order to justify an intensified arms race and the development of new and modern types of weapons.

Naturally, such arguments prove to be completely groundless. They nevertheless remain dangerous because they serve to justify another round of the arms race, thus complicating the achievement of results in disarmament talks.

There is no doubt that the socialist States are firmly determined to reach agreement on radical disarmament measures. This is attested by the numerous initiatives they have taken within recent months alone. Among those initiatives is the far-reaching proposal which was submitted by the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. L.I. Brezhnev, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. As is known,

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

this proposal provides that agreement should be reached on a simultaneous halt in the production of nuclear weapons by all States, on the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles of such weapons and on their complete, total destruction. Is there a more radical solution to eliminate the threat of nuclear war for ever and ever?

A few days ago, the USSR, also acting on behalf of other socialist States members of the CCD, including the German Democratic Republic, submitted a working paper on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Its objectives and tasks give an answer to the question how general and complete disarmament can be achieved gradually. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic is of the view that this material should be used by the Ad Hoc Group on the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament as a basis for its work.

The spring session of the CCD concentrates on the preparation of a draft treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. The Committee has done thorough preliminary work on this matter. We have learnt with satisfaction that the trilateral negotiations on this topic are continuing intensively at this time, and that the results of these discussions will hopefully be presented to the CCD at an early date.

My delegation welcomes the progress already achieved in this field. We do not underestimate in any way the complicated nature of the problems to be solved in this connexion. But in our opinion, the issues which still remain outstanding could quickly be solved if all parties display the necessary political determination.

As is well known, the Soviet Union has made far-reaching concessions in order to facilitate an understanding. They relate not only to the question of the moratorium, to the readiness to halt, for a stipulated period, nuclear tests for peaceful purposes, but also to the readiness to participate in the search for a solution of the problem of on-site inspection verification in a voluntary framework.

The CCD, for its part, has made great efforts to contribute to the task of determining the possibilities for thorough verification of a CTB Treaty without mandatory on-site inspections. The question is whether the time is not ripe for other parties, too, to display the same flexibility and to take the necessary steps with a view to bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion. This would be an important step towards an agreement of unlimited duration on the prohibition of all nuclear weapon tests with the participation of all nuclear-weapon Powers, including France and China. This would open the way to further steps leading gradually to the complete and total destruction of all nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

It is now that we are especially aware of the negative consequences of the fact that the results of efforts in the field of disarmament measures are lagging considerably behind the development of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

The forced arms race in this field, the development of such weapons as the neutron bomb and the strategic cruise missile clearly demonstrate the well-founded and timely nature of the proposals by the socialist States aimed at reaching agreement on the complete prohibition of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation welcomes the fact that the previous discussions largely bore out the serious consequences for mankind which could result from the development of the neutron bomb. The representatives of other socialist countries -- as well as of India -- for good reason unmasked the danger of this weapon and called for its prohibition. As a body for disarmament negotiations, the CCD cannot and must not keep silent about this cruel weapon. The CCD is called upon to act in time and to take very seriously the expanding international movement of protest against this weapon. My colleagues of the friendly socialist States have already compellingly described the negative impact that the development and introduction of the neutron bomb could have on peace.

Permit me to quote in this connexion once again the words used by Professor Eric Burhop, President of the World Federation of Scientists, in describing the neutron bomb: "It is a weapon par excellence for the aggressor who has the intention to conquer intact the towns and industrial centres of another country."

Therefore, the German Democratic Republic cannot remain indifferent when certain imperialist circles are seriously discussing the question of deploying this cruel weapon in the European States of NATO, including a neighbouring State of the German Democratic Republic. This constitutes an open threat to the physical existence of our people. Furthermore, the development of the neutron bomb is likely to burden the current negotiations on the limitation of the arms race, to create the danger of a new round of the arms race and to call in question what has been achieved so far through strenuous work in the field of the limitation of the arms race in Europe and in the world.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

This is one of the reasons why the statement of 4 December 1977 by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the German Democratic Republic's Council of State, Mr. Erich Honecker, was received by our people with large response. In his statement he said:

"The cessation of the arms race, constructive steps towards disarmament have become a key problem of world peace. The Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic and the other friendly countries, as is known, have indefatigably been undertaking efforts in this field for years ... We demand the prohibition of the development of new systems of weapons like the neutron bomb and the cruise missile."

The danger posed by the development of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction and the waste of enormous funds on their production could have been prevented if the proposals of the Soviet Union and of other socialist States for the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the development and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction had been realized. A treaty binding in terms of international law would freeze the existing level of armaments in this field. The existing balance of forces would remain unchanged and a new spiral in the arms race could be prevented. But unfortunately certain NATO States have not yet abandoned their reservations against a comprehensive prohibition of the development and production of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction, as was proved once again during the discussions at the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. According to their statements they are ready to negotiate the prohibition of single new types of weapons of mass destruction only if the development of those weapons can be identified.

Does this mean that negotiations in this field should begin only when these weapons have already been developed and are in the arsenals of States? We are of the view, however, that the development of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction must be prohibited right from the very beginning by a comprehensive and preventive agreement.

Ambassador Fisher stated here, in connexion with his explanation of radiological weapons on 31 January last, that effective steps can be taken against the dangers ensuing from this -- provided we act before these weapons are in the arsenals of States.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

For what reason should this conclusion not also apply to other types of weapons? We are in favour of including the prohibition of the development of such types of weapons in an agreement, for in doing so it would be possible to erect effective barriers in the way of the arms race.

As to the neutron bomb, nobody can today any longer deny that the development of this weapon can be identified. Consequently, even if one proceeds from the above-mentioned approach of certain NATO States, it is high time to put the prohibition of the neutron bomb on the agenda and to start negotiations on this subject.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic fully supports the proposal of the USSR addressed to western countries to reach agreement on the mutual renunciation of the neutron bomb. It hopes that the negotiations, both bilateral and multilateral, will start as soon as possible. Our delegation is ready to make its contribution in this field.

At the spring session our Committee is faced with the task of preparing a special report to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. This report will enable us to examine in detail the place and the role of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and to stress the necessity of its further strengthening.

In our opinion, the report should give a short and objective summary of the results already achieved. It could point to the contribution the Committee has made during past years in preparing agreements on the limitation of the arms race and on disarmament. Here, the following important treaties and conventions should be mentioned:

1. Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water,
2. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,
3. Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof,
4. Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and their Destruction, -- the first direct convention on disarmament in history, and
5. Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

We think it useful to expound objectively in the report the results already achieved in the negotiations on the other issues on our agenda, such as the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon tests, the prohibition of chemical weapons, of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction, and others. It should show the contribution the CCD has made and is making at present to the solution of different problems, for example, the elaboration of a study on nuclear-weapon-free zones as well as the activity of the Ad Hoc Group on the detection and identification of seismic events.

Another task of the report, in our view, is to show that the CCD, since coming into existence 16 years ago, has grown dynamically. Its membership has increased. In response to corresponding demands, it adapted its procedures to the respective conditions. During the three years of the German Democratic Republic's membership of the CCD alone these questions were being discussed regularly, and only in April 1977 a decision on certain procedural aspects of the CCD was adopted.

It is now ensured that all States Members of the United Nations are informed in detail about the activities of the Committee.

Experience proves that there are various possibilities for the non-member States to participate actively in the Committee's work.

The Committee turned out to be very flexible and was always able to create the necessary technical and organizational prerequisites for the solution of its problems.

We want this flexibility to continue, and therefore declare ourselves against the establishment of bureaucratic machinery in the form of a permanent sub-committee. It has proved good that the Committee work strictly on the basis of the consensus principle. This embraces to the greatest extent the principle of complete equality and respect for the sovereignty of States. Thus, every State assumes the same measure of responsibility in the discussion of problems, and in particular in decision-making. This never is, and has never been, affected by the existence of the institution of the co-chairmen -- quite the contrary. Their close collaboration, established in this way, in the preparation of many problems saved the Committee from lengthy discussions. Nobody can deny that the voices of the USSR and the United States, because of their indisputable special responsibility for the safeguarding of peace and international security, for bringing about understanding on all substantial and technical and organizational questions in the field of disarmament, are of outstanding significance.

Furthermore, my delegation believes that the present composition of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament essentially corresponds to the requirements which must be met by a representative multilateral body for negotiations on disarmament. Its composition guarantees successful disarmament negotiations. Therefore, we believe that it should be maintained in principle.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

In view of this situation, my delegation believes that certain attempts made under the pretext of pretended democratization, to transfer the structures and procedures of other international bodies mechanically to the CCD cannot but harm its cause. In our opinion, the CCD has turned out to be, in principle, an authoritative body of disarmament. The fact that, up to now, greater success could not be achieved is surely not due to its structure or its procedures. The main reason for this is that a number of States are not yet ready to conclude agreements on more comprehensive and more radical disarmament measures which have been proposed by the socialist States again and again. In saying so we entirely take into account the fact that agreements on disarmament measures directly concern the security interests of States. There are numerous complicated scientific and technical problems to be solved. This requires time and patience. We therefore hold the view that the demands made repeatedly by some representatives in the CCD to change its structure and its procedures are not, and cannot be, the decisive means to speed up the work of the Committee.

My delegation is willing to make its contribution to help the Committee to live up to its lofty responsibilities. We are ready to continue to join other delegations in efforts to achieve effective disarmament measures.

Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, you will recall that, in my statement on 7 February, I indicated that the Nigerian delegation would have some suggestions to make on the content of the comprehensive programme of disarmament. We have since submitted suggestions in the form of a working paper which is now before the Committee, CCD/555, and to which I would formally like to draw the attention of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.