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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 1 February 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. D. Carlos Ortiz de Rozas (Argentina)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. A. FASLA
Mr. A. HENSMAIL
Mr. N. KERROUM

Argentina:

Mr. D.C. ORTIZ DE ROZAS
Mr. F.J. DAVILA
Mr. A.N. MOLTENI

Australia:

Mr. A.J. BEHM
Ms. M.S. WICKES

Belgium:

Mr. P. NOTERDAEME
Mr. P. BERG
Mr. G.V. DUYSE

Brazil:

Mr. L.P. LINDERBERG SETTE
Mr. A.C. DE OURO PRETO
Mr. C.S. MAGALHAES

Bulgaria:

Mr. P. VOUTOV
Mr. I. SOTIROV

Burma:

U SAW HLAING
U THEIN AUNG
U THAUNG HTUN

Canada:

Mr. G.A.H. PEARSON
Mr. R. HARRY JAY
Mr. J.T. SIMARD

Cuba:

Mr. L.S. VILA
Mrs. V.B. JACKIEWICH
Mr. C.P. BECEIRO
Mr. R. VALIENTE
Mr. R.L. GARCIA

Czechoslovakia:

Dr. M. RUZEK
Mr. V. TYLNER
Mr. J. JIRUSEK

Egypt:

Mr. O. EL-SHAFEI

Mr. N. FAHMY

Ethiopia:

Mr. T. TERREFE

Mr. B. DERESSA

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER

Mr. S. KAHN

Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFLEIFER

Mr. J. POHLMANN

Mr. H. MULLER

Hungary:

Mr. M. DOMOKOS

Mr. C. GYORFFY

Mr. A. LAKATOS

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE

Mr. J.C. PARAVY

India:

Mr. C.R. GHAREKHAN

Mr. S.T. DEVARE

Mr. S. SABHARWAL

Indonesia:

Mr. A. KAMIL

Mr. M. SIDIK

Mr. I. DAMANIK

Iran:

Mr. M. FARTASH

Mr. D. CHILATY

Mr. D. AMERI

Italy:

Mr. N. DI BERNARDO

Mr. M. MORENO

Mr. C. FRATESCHI

Mr. F. DE LUCA

Japan:
Mr. M. OGISO
Mr. T. NONOYAMA
Mr. T. IWANAMI
Mr. Y. NAKAMURA

Kenya:
Mr. K. MWAMZANDI
Mr. C. GATERE MAINA

Mexico:
Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Miss A. CABRERA

Mongolia:
Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. L. BAYART

Morocco:
Mr. A. SKALLI
Mr. A. BEN BOUCHTA
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:
Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. A.J. MEERBURG

Nigeria:
Mr. K. AHMED
Mr. T.O. OLUMOKO
Mr. B.C.M. THEKUNA

Pakistan:
Mr. J.K.A. MARKER
Mr. M. AKRAM

Peru:
Mr. J. AURICH MONTERO

Poland:
Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. H. PAC
Mr. S. KONIK
Mr. M. KRUCZYK

Romania:
Mr. C. ENE
Mr. T. MELESCANU
Mr. G. TINCA

Sri Lanka:
Mrs. M.L. NAGANATHAN

Sweden:

Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. L. NORBERG

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. Y.K. NAZARKIN
Mr. A.M. VAVILOV
Mr. E.D. ZAITSEV
Mr. A.I. TIOURENKOV
Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO
Mr. M.G. ANTIUKHIN

United Kingdom:

Mr. N.H. MARSHALL
Mr. C.K. CURWEN
Mr. P.M.W. FRANCIS

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER
Mr. C. FLOWERREE
Mr. A. AKALOVSKY
Mr. R. HAGENGRIEBER
Ms. B.L. MURRAY
Mr. M.L. SANCHES
Mr. T. WATSON
Mr. A. YARMOLINSKY
Mr. W. JACKSON

Venezuela:

Mr. R.C. CASTILLO
Mr. H. ARTEAGA
Miss D. SZOKOLCZI
Mrs. R.L. DE NECER

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC
Mr. D. DJOKIC

Zaire:

Mr. BUKETI-BUKAYI
Mr. M. ESUK

Assistant Secretary-General for
Disarmament:

Mr. R. BJORNERSTEDT

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): On assuming the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of February, and speaking on behalf of all its members, I would like first to express our sincere homage and warmest gratitude to the delegation of Algeria, which had the delicate task of getting our work started.

In particular, the expression of our joint gratitude goes to His Excellency, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, whose presence at the inaugural session and whose wise direction of the debate significantly enhanced the splendour of a singularly important event. The same sentiments are extended to His Excellency Ambassador Raouf Boudjakdji, of whose efficient guidance and constant courtesy we had ample proof during the difficult initial stages of our Committee's work. The performance of these two and of the other members of the Algerian delegation provides an instructive example, which I for my part, aware as I am of my limitations, shall try to imitate, so that the intensive work which awaits us can be carried out in the same positive fashion that characterized our first week's efforts.

I am certain that for that purpose I can also rely on resolute co-operation and indulgence from all of you. I shall have constant need of both as I dedicate myself completely, and with all my strength to continuing with you, in harmony, a task so well begun.

Mr. RUZEK (Czechoslovakia): May I be permitted, in connexion with the resumption of the work of the newly reconstructed Committee on Disarmament, to extend sincere greetings to all the delegates present here and to express, on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation, our determination to co-operate constructively with all members of the Committee in the elaboration of concrete measures in the field of disarmament.

Particularly, I would like to welcome the new members of our Committee -- the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Kenya, Cuba, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Venezuela. We highly appreciate the great interest shown by these countries in the work in the field of disarmament, and are convinced that their participation in the Committee will be an important contribution to the success of its deliberations.

We welcome also the presence of the French Republic at the negotiating table of this Committee. We firmly believe that the participation of France not only increases the authority and weight of the Committee in international life, but contributes to the strengthening of its effectiveness also. However, the interests of the strengthening of peace and security in the world urgently require that a constructive attitude to disarmament negotiations and measures be taken also by the only remaining nuclear Power which, as is known, has not so far taken part in such negotiations.

(Mr. Ruzek, Czechoslovakia)

We express the hope that our activity within this Committee will build on the positive experiences of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. We would at the same time wish -- and we shall do our utmost to that end -- that it will represent a new, qualitatively higher stage as far as its concrete results are concerned.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that under your chairmanship, and thanks to your experience and skill, our Committee will solve successfully the organizational and procedural questions of the initial stage of its work, and that it will soon begin to deal with the urgent subject matter of the negotiations.

The Committee is gathering at a time when the questions of disarmament are in the focus of attention. The year 1978 was a witness of one of the most important events in this respect -- of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament. In spite of the fact that the session was not held in conditions which one could describe as optimal, one can evaluate its results positively. This is the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the States, as has been confirmed also by the thirty-third regular session of the General Assembly. The fact that the special session adopted, by consensus, the Final Document, which identifies the main objectives and the programme of disarmament negotiations, shows not only the interest of States in their success, but also proves that conditions for the creation of a general platform for concrete disarmament measures exist.

On the other hand, no one can underestimate certain phenomena of international life which point to the growing activity of enemies of the relaxation of international tension, to the attempts of influential circles in a number of States to instigate a new spiral of the feverish arms build-up. We cannot be indifferent to the long-term plans for increasing the military offensive strength of the NATO States, the continuing preparations for the production of nuclear neutron weapons, as well as to the disquieting developments in many other spheres. All these phenomena complicate the international atmosphere, lead to the escalation of tension in the military sphere and delay progress not only in the field of disarmament, but also in the solution of questions of economic and social development.

We are at the same time of the opinion that there exists a whole range of factors at the present time which can positively influence the work of the Committee on Disarmament. Thanks to the policy of relaxation, we can begin our deliberations in undoubtedly more favourable international political conditions than those which existed for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament at the beginning of the sixties. We can build on a certain number of significant positive results achieved in the field of disarmament in the recent period.

It is now up to us to project these positive aspects into concrete results of our talks. To that end, we have a stronger and more diversified mechanism at our disposal.

(Mr. Ruzek, Czechoslovakia)

In addition to our Committee, as the main negotiating body, there exist also other consultative and study disarmament fora. Within a few years another special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament will take place. Of particular significance is the decision of the special session to hold, as early as possible, a world disarmament conference. Such a conference could lead, in view of its full powers and the binding character of its decisions, to a decisive turn in disarmament talks.

Nevertheless, we must continue to proceed from the fact that even the most perfect mechanism of negotiations can be effective only if the participants are determined to achieve agreement and show enough political will in this respect. On our part, such political will always existed, exists and will continue to exist.

No small effort has been developed in recent years for the relaxation of international tension and for the over-all improvement of the atmosphere in international relations. Significant success has been achieved in this respect.

This positive development is in full conformity with the innermost sense of the policy of the socialist countries, member States of the Warsaw Treaty, whose main foreign-policy objective is the elimination of the danger of war, the enforcement of the principles of peaceful coexistence and mutually advantageous co-operation. Today, when forces of international reaction step up their activity against this direction of the development of international relations, we consider it necessary to exert further efforts towards the strengthening of all positive trends achieved in international life. As follows from numerous statements of the leading representatives of the socialist countries, particularly from the Moscow Declaration of 23 November 1978, we are firmly determined to strengthen these trends in all spheres of mutual relations. But we regard it as the most important task of international activity in the present conditions, as was emphasized in the Moscow Declaration, to achieve a decisive breakthrough in negotiations on the termination of the arms race and on disarmament as soon as possible. This task becomes today all the more urgent due to the fact that the rapid development of military equipment, especially the possibility of creating new kinds and system of weapons of mass destruction, can complicate the achievement of practical solutions of disarmament questions much more.

Nuclear weapons are the main threat to international peace and security of nations. The socialist States have again emphasized their preparedness to start negotiations on the termination of the production of all kinds of nuclear weapons and on the gradual

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reduction of their stocks up to their full liquidation. Together with that, it is necessary to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons and renounce the use of force in mutual relations between States.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, the talks between the USSR and the United States on the limitation of offensive strategic arms are of special significance. We hope that the negotiations in the framework of SALT II will be successfully concluded. An early elaboration of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of tests of nuclear weapons would be an important contribution in this context. We believe that we shall be able to consider the draft of this treaty in our Committee soon. As indispensable we regard the strengthening of the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, while, at the same time, all States would have access, without any discrimination, to the use of nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes, under effective international control, in conformity with the standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The solution of the problem of nuclear weapons and other disarmament questions should proceed together with the strengthening of international security and confidence among States. The socialist States have expressed themselves firmly for the strict observance of the principle of the non-use of force and threat of force in relations between States, so that all disputes should be solved exclusively by peaceful means. In this respect, the conclusion of a world treaty on the non-use of force in international relations would be a significant contribution.

We consider it important that the negotiations on general and complete nuclear disarmament, on the permanent prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons as well as on the non-use of force or threat of force, in which particularly all States possessing nuclear weapons would participate together with other countries, should begin as soon as possible.

A very useful step towards the strengthening of over-all international security would be the adoption of proposals of the Warsaw Treaty member States that all States participants in the All-European Conference on Security and Co-operation should undertake that they will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against each other, that the NATO and Warsaw Treaty States would not enlarge the membership of the two groupings, that the scope of military exercises of both sides will be reduced and that the confidence-building measures, agreed upon at the All-European Conference, will be extended also to the region of the Mediterranean Sea. Another urgent task is the solution of the problem of the security of States that do not possess nuclear weapons and do not have them on their territory. On this question, as on the question of non-deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of States where they are not presently stationed, there were submitted by the USSR constructive proposals which,

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in our opinion, create a suitable basis for further negotiations on generally acceptable agreements in the Committee on Disarmament, as follows from the respective resolution of the thirty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly.

We have clearly indicated the procedure and priorities for the solution of the problem of nuclear and other kind of weapons in the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament. Now it is urgently necessary to start the gradual realization of this plan. The Committee on Disarmament has before it a whole range of important tasks directly resulting from the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly or from the resolutions of the thirty-third regular session.

A new important task of the Committee is the elaboration of the already-mentioned draft of an international convention on the strengthening of security safeguards of non-nuclear States. Then, the expected draft of the treaty on the general prohibition of tests of nuclear weapons to which all nuclear Powers should gradually accede.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic participates actively in the work of the group of experts for international co-operation in the seismic field, and we continue to be prepared to contribute to the exchange of seismic data within the framework of the control of implementation of the treaty prohibiting tests of nuclear weapons.

As far as the question of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons is concerned, we are of the opinion that it is necessary to start negotiations with a view to working out a draft of the treaty. Wherever an agreement banning a new kind of weapons can be achieved it is to be welcomed. In this connexion the expected agreement on radiological weapons can be mentioned, but also -- as a matter of urgency -- the draft of an international treaty on the prohibition of the development production and deployment of neutron nuclear weapons tabled in the CCD by the socialist countries last year.

On the agenda of the Committee is also the question of chemical weapons. In our view a combination of national and adequate international procedures would be a suitable basis for controlling the implementation of the respective treaty. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is prepared to take part in the work of the group of experts for the solution of this question also.

The solution of all problems to be dealt with within the Committee on Disarmament requires a constructive approach of all participants. On our part, we are firmly determined to do our best in assisting the Committee on Disarmament to solve questions included in its agenda in conformity with the provisions of the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament.

Mr. SKALLI (Morocco) (translated from French): I address my first words to you, Mr. Chairman, to extend to you my congratulations and those of my delegation on your accession to the chairmanship. We all remember the eminently constructive role you played as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament. We remember, too, the skill with which you guided the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of that important session. Thanks to your great experience and your qualities as a shrewd and discriminating negotiator, that work produced extensive and tangible results. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that we are convinced that, thanks to you, this new-born Committee on Disarmament will get off to a happy and promising start.

Allow me to discharge the agreeable task of welcoming the honourable representatives of member States who have come to join us in our efforts to try to bring to a successful conclusion the task entrusted to us by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

There is no doubt that, together, we will be able to make substantial progress in our exalting task.

We are, of course extremely pleased to welcome the distinguished representatives of other non-aligned countries who come to strengthen our ranks for the benefit of all. The non-aligned countries do not want to be regarded as a group opposed to other groups, but as a nucleus, which, because it is not committed to either camp, is in an excellent position for trying to reconcile viewpoints, drawing attention in a calm and collected way to the objectives assigned to us by the General Assembly and striving in as objective a manner as possible, to attain them. Our aim is not to upset balances, for we know that everyone is anxious to preserve them, but to act in such a way that, through disarmament, the balances are no longer based on distrust and terror but on confidence and the desire to build a peaceful world founded on understanding and solidarity. This is of course a difficult goal, and the road leading to it is long and beset with pitfalls, but in the opinion of the non-aligned countries these are additional reasons for settling down to our task without delay.

In 1975, I stated before the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament that we should improve our working methods and see to it that the two nuclear Powers which were not yet participating in our work could join us in our common effort to promote disarmament.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

We now have the pleasure of noting the participation of one of those two Powers. This is an event which gladdens us and which we welcome very sincerely. The representative of France can rest assured that his country's presence and contribution are greatly appreciated.

We hope that the Committee will also have the benefit of China's contribution, for we are convinced that the role this Power is in a position to play will greatly help to direct our negotiations along more positive and more constructive lines.

The special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was actually called at the request of the non-aligned countries, was held just at the right time to assess progress on the road to general and complete disarmament and decide on measures for reaching this goal.

Everyone is aware of the complexities and difficulties of the problem of disarmament. It is a major problem, on the solution of which that of so many others depends.

The arms race is like a weed which has sprouted and spread in the soil of distrust and under the shadow of the cold war.

Thanks to efforts on both sides, we have emerged from the cold war. But the cold war, it has been said, has given way to the cold peace. The change in climate has not weakened this encroaching weed or made it less flourishing. On the contrary, it is preparing for fresh conquests, ever more terrifying and terrible. Man's imagination and his thirst for research and discovery know no bounds. The main thing is to make sure that research and discovery are applied for the well-being and progress of the human race.

More than 30 years after the Second World War, the world is muddling along in this armed peace, which subsists only thanks to the balance of terror.

The world thus lives in a state of relative and fragile peace. But it is still alive, and it is perhaps on that fact that we should build our portion of hope and optimism.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

According to the most moderate estimates, the destructive capacity of the two super-Powers, in the nuclear field alone, is already such that it can wipe out the present population of our planet 25 times over. To measure the extent of the loss caused to humanity by military expenditure it is sufficient to recall that the amount devoted to such expenditure is of the order of \$400 billion a year, whereas the amount of public assistance accorded to developing countries barely exceeds \$20 billion.

This is the more significant since the General Assembly has often stressed the importance of the links between disarmament and development, recommending that the resources released by disarmament should be used for the economic and social development of the countries of the third world.

It seems to us, therefore, that disarmament can make an effective contribution towards the introduction of the new international economic order. It is consequently a means of achieving another type of relationship between States and peoples and provides a glimpse of a new world based on confidence and co-operation.

In this connexion, my delegation welcomes the speed with which the Secretary-General of the United Nations set up the group of governmental experts to initiate an expert study on the relationship between disarmament and development.

We are convinced that, under the chairmanship of Mrs. I. Thorsson, an eminent person who enjoys our respect and esteem, the group will provide the Secretary-General with all the help he needs in preparing the study. The fact that the group has already met twice, in September 1978 and January 1979, proves that it is determined to discharge its task as soon as possible.

We know that we still have a great deal to do, because -- and this must be stressed -- the results obtained so far are far from conclusive. On meeting in this new Committee we must be fully aware of the extent of the task awaiting us, for the most difficult problems have not yet been solved. I am referring in particular to the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and the prohibition of chemical weapons.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

This means that we must show greater determination and political will in seeking adequate solutions to the problems that are still outstanding. Without a clearly defined political will, we cannot hope to arrive at tangible results. And this political will, let us be open about it, is expected first and foremost of the nuclear Powers. We ask them for their co-operation, and we assure them of our understanding.

However complex the questions to be settled, we must not think that the obstacles are insurmountable. The Committee is starting its work in favourable circumstances. The chances of gradually reaching tangible results seem to be greater than they have ever been. As a result of the ties binding it to the United Nations and, more particularly, to the deliberative body in the field of disarmament, our Committee has greater powers and more authority. The central role and primary responsibility of the Organization have been affirmed in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly.

The Moroccan delegation keenly hopes that our Committee, which is more representative, in which responsibilities are better shared and in which non-member States will have an opportunity to express their opinions, will be better able to deal successfully with the task that has fallen to it.

The questions on which it must concentrate as a matter of priority are set forth in the Programme of Action of the Final Document of the special session.

Paragraph 45 of that document reads as follows: "Priorities in disarmament negotiations shall be: nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons; conventional weapons, including any which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects; and reduction of armed forces."

Need I reiterate that the lack of real results with respect to nuclear disarmament continues to pose a serious threat of insecurity to the world? Admittedly, partial measures have been taken in this field. The conclusion of the 1963 Moscow Treaty, the non-proliferation Treaty and the sea-bed Treaty are positive milestones. Nevertheless, the complete and definitive cessation of nuclear testing, which has been a subject of high priority for several years, is far from having been achieved.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

In its resolution 33/71 H (IV), adopted at the thirty-third session, the General Assembly requested our Committee to undertake on a priority basis, at its first session, in January 1979, negotiations concerning

"(a) a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests".

We hope that the negotiations on this subject between the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will result shortly in the preparation of a draft treaty, and that, in accordance with resolution 33/71 H (I), that draft will be submitted to our Committee at its current session.

Pending the conclusion of such a treaty, all nuclear-weapon States ought, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 33/71 C, to refrain from conducting any testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Our efforts ought also to be directed towards finding ways of strengthening the security of the non-nuclear States. It is absolutely essential to devise guarantees which will fully reassure those States. We think that a solemn undertaking on the part of the nuclear Powers not to use or to threaten to use nuclear weapons against those who do not have such weapons would appreciably help to strengthen those guarantees.

Our Committee has before it two draft conventions on this matter which were introduced by Pakistan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly.

It is only fair to point out that it was on the initiative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that an item on the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of guarantees of the security of non-nuclear States was placed on the agenda of that session.

Furthermore, the non-nuclear-weapon States have the right to accede to the benefits of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This right was reaffirmed in unequivocal terms in the Final Document of the Assembly's special session, as follows:

"Non-proliferation measures should not jeopardize the full exercise of the inalienable rights of all States to apply and develop their programmes for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for economic and social development in conformity with their priorities, interests and needs. All States should also have access to and be free to acquire technology, equipment and materials for peaceful uses of nuclear energy, taking into account the particular needs of the developing countries."

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

We remain convinced that those two measures, among others, will contribute to the strengthening of the nuclear-weapons non-proliferation system.

Another question has been given high priority by the General Assembly over the last several years. I refer to the complete prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction. It is true that a stage towards this was completed with the elaboration of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and their destruction. None the less, we are far from having attained the final objective, which is the prohibition of all chemical weapons, and which, as the document of the special session reminds us, represents one of the most urgent measures of disarmament. We must, therefore, focus our efforts on the conclusion of a convention concerning this important question.

The prohibition of the development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons is another major concern of the international community. Here again, our Committee must make its contribution.

Among the other priority tasks we shall have to consider are the reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons and the reduction of military budgets. The importance of such measures is evident. If they were adopted, they might diminish tension in the world and create a climate propitious to security and the emergence of stability and confidence.

The CCD is no more. Nothing will be gained by seeking to vindicate it or by heaping it with abuse. It fulfilled its task and its destiny, as best it could. Let us say that it died of certain inadequacies ... Let us not seek to link it to the Committee whose birth we are celebrating today, but acknowledge its merit in having served as a springboard for the establishment of our Committee. As I have already said in another forum, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament was a closed and cosy club, where the sense of friendship among the members was as highly developed as the spirit of conclave. Let us hope that what our Committee has lost in intimacy, it will gain in efficiency.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

The Assembly has given us a heavy task. In doing so, it has demonstrated its trust in our Committee to approach all problems pragmatically and with the responsibility and zeal needed for finding the most appropriate solutions.

Realists we must be, but let us guard against allowing our realism to come too close to defeatism and resignation. We must not yield to despair, for we have advantages today which we did not have before.

As I said before, the Committee on Disarmament, by virtue of the authority conferred upon it, its greater representativity and its new procedures, offers us an opportunity we must seize of fulfilling our mission, which is a very exalting one, however frustrating it may at times appear to be. We must measure up to the responsibility which is ours. So let us all proceed with resolution and goodwill, for without them our efforts would be vain.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I have no more speakers on my list. With your agreement, I would therefore like to draw attention to a few matters which, I feel, should be given consideration soon.

The Chairman has received a number of communications from non-governmental organizations. May I, on the Committee's behalf, ask the Secretariat to prepare a list of these communications to be circulated to the Committee, it being understood that the communications themselves would remain on file in the Secretariat to be consulted by delegations.

Are there any objections to this suggestion? I see none.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: As you are aware, the Secretariat, at the request of the Chairman of the Group of 21, prepared an informal paper on decisions taken by the ENDC and the CCD on procedural matters. Later, this informal paper was circulated in the English language. As I believe it might still be useful by way of background, and if the Committee has no objection, I would ask the Secretariat to have this paper translated into all our working languages and issued as an unofficial Committee document to be distributed to all its members. If there are no objections to this proposal I take it that it is accepted.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Committee allows, I should now like to refer to a number of aspects connected with our work. I intend to convene a formal meeting of the Committee at 10.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 6 February, to enable delegations wishing to make statements on our work to speak. I would be grateful to those delegations wishing to make further statements to inform the Secretariat accordingly. If we had no speakers, on Tuesday, 6 February, we would use the available time for an informal meeting. Without prejudice to this, I should like to propose that at 3 p.m. this afternoon we hold an informal meeting to start an informal exchange of views on some questions relevant to our work. That exploratory meeting would be devoted to, inter alia, commencement of the consideration of the modalities it might be desirable to follow with a view to the elaboration and adoption of the Committee's rules of procedure. Some preliminary drafts have already been prepared, or are in process of preparation, either by delegations or by groups of delegations. We might, therefore, consider the method it would be desirable to adopt for comparing that work and arriving at a joint criterion, whether through an informal meeting or through contacts between the various groups and delegations concerned, or by any other alternative which may be proposed and adopted by the Committee. We could also hear comments concerning the programme of work of the Committee, on such matters as the frequency and nature of our plenary meetings and subjects to be dealt with by them. In other words, whether we should have formal meetings, what the periodicity should be, how many informal meetings we wish to hold and how frequently. Finally, and without prejudice to any other suggestion that members of the Committee may wish to make, we might tackle in a preliminary way the question of our agenda, especially the kind of agenda we should adopt and its content. The idea, as I said before, is to promote and stimulate a first informal discussion on this or any other subject that delegations may wish to suggest. Following some consultations I have had, and I must admit that I have not had occasion to meet with all thirty-nine delegations, it would appear that there is a very considerable trend in favour of not having any meeting tomorrow, Friday, or next Monday; this would allow delegations to pursue the very useful positive contacts which began a few days ago. Also, delegations could continue to work on the preparation of rules of procedure, especially in the light of any comments and remarks that may be made at this afternoon's informal meeting. I should like to ask delegations whether the procedure I am proposing concerning this afternoon's informal meeting and the official, formal meeting of Tuesday, and my suggestion not to meet at all on Friday and Monday, are acceptable to them.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time I am taking the floor under your chairmanship, I believe it would not be out of order for me to convey to you the sincere congratulations of my delegation and to say how gratified we are to see that at this session, which in some respects will be crucial for our Committee, the conduct of our work is in such able hands as yours.

As to the suggestion you have just made, my delegation agrees fully with the purpose of those informal meetings, and with the suggestion that we should not meet at all on Friday or Monday. The only change I would venture to suggest is that we do not meet this afternoon either, and that on Tuesday morning, if there are no speakers, we should immediately revert to an informal meeting and, if necessary, hold another informal meeting on Tuesday afternoon. The reason for this is that I believe we can make better use of our time this afternoon for those informal consultations among delegations to which you referred.

It therefore seems to me that by Tuesday we may perhaps have draft rules of procedure or preliminary draft rules, similar to the ones already prepared by the western group and the group of socialist countries. This would be a draft of the Group of 21, and our deliberations could thus be based on more precise texts than is the case at present.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Spanish): I thank my distinguished friend, Ambassador García Robles of Mexico for his very kind words.

The Committee has heard his proposal to the effect that we should have no informal meeting this afternoon and that we transfer that meeting to Tuesday.

We already have one delegation on the list of speakers for the formal meeting on Tuesday morning. If, therefore, the proposal of the distinguished representative of Mexico is acceptable to the Committee, and with a view to employing our time usefully, we could meet punctually at 10.30 a.m. in a formal meeting to hear that delegation or any other delegation wishing to put its name on the list, and then, if we have sufficient time immediately after the formal meeting, we could go into informal meeting. That informal meeting would of course, if necessary, continue in the afternoon.

(The Chairman)

If I hear no objection, may I take it that the suggestion of the distinguished representative of Mexico, as just outlined by the Chair is acceptable. I hear no objection.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: The next formal meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be on Tuesday, 6 February, at 10.30 a.m. It will be followed immediately by an informal meeting. If there are no further comments, the meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.