

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 10 April 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. P. NOTERDAEME

(Belgium)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. A. BENSMAIL
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. A.N. MOLTENI
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. L.D. THOMSON Mr. A.J. BEHA
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. P. NOTERDAEME Mr. P. BERG Mr. G. VAN DUYSE
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. A. CELSO DE OURO PRETO
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. P. VOUTOV Mr. I. PETROV Mr. I. SOTIROV
<u>Burma:</u>	U SAH HLAING U THAUNG HTUN
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. J.T. SIMARD
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mr. L. SOLA VILA
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. M. RUZEK ^{ov} Mr. V. TYLNER Mr. L. STAVINOH
<u>Egypt:</u>	Mr. O. EL-SHAPEI Mr. M. EL-BARADEI Mr. N. FAHMY
<u>Ethiopia:</u>	Mr. T. TERREFE
<u>France:</u>	Mr. F. DE LA GORCE Mr. BENOIT D'ABOVILLE

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER
Mr. S. KAHN
Mr. H. GRACZYNSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFELFFER

Hungary:

Mr. H. DOMOKOS
Mr. C. GYÖRFFY

India:

Mr. C.R. GHARAKHAN
Mr. S.T. DEVARE
Mr. S. SABHARWAL

Indonesia:

Mr. C. ANWAR SANI
Mr. I. DAILANIK

Iran:

Mr. M. PARTASH
Mr. D. CHILATY

Italy:

Mr. N. DI BERNARDO
Mr. M. MORENO
Mr. C. FRATESCHI

Japan:

Mr. M. OGISO
Mr. T. NONOYAMA
Mr. R. ISHII

Kenya:

Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDENBILEG
Mr. L. ERDENECHULUUN

Morocco:

Mr. M. RAHHALI
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:

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

<u>Nigeria:</u>	Mr. O. ADENIJI Mr. K. AHMED Mr. T. OLUKOTO
<u>Pakistan:</u>	Mr. H. KHAN
<u>Peru:</u>	
<u>Poland:</u>	Mr. B. SUJKA Mr. B. RUSSIN
<u>Romania:</u>	Mr. C. ENE Mr. V. TUDOR Mr. T. IERESCANU
<u>Sri Lanka:</u>	Miss M.L. NAGANATHAN
<u>Sweden:</u>	Mr. C. LIDGARD Mr. L. NORBERG Mr. S. STRÖMBÄCK
<u>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:</u>	Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN Mr. Y.K. NAZARKIN Mr. A.I. TIOURENKOV Mr. Yu.V. KOSTENKO Mr. M.G. ANTIUKHIN
<u>United Kingdom:</u>	Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES Mr. P.M.W. FRANCIS

United States of America:

Mr. A.S. FISHER
Mr. C. FLOERKE
Mr. A. AKALOVSKY
Mr. H. DALEY
Mr. H.L. SANCHES
Ms. B. KILLIAN
Mrs. J. ARENSBURGER
Mr. G. CROCKER

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. KAMANDA VA KAMANDA
Mr. E. MULONGANDUSU

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): My dear colleagues, before we proceed with our agenda I should like to say a few words in my personal capacity. You know that last week I was detained by other duties here in Geneva, and I wish to tell you that I am most happy to be among you once again and intend to do everything within my modest means to help advance the work of our Committee as much as possible. That being said, the list of speakers for today includes the representatives of Mongolia, Brazil and Nigeria.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Erdembileg, the distinguished representative of Mongolia.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): The Mongolian delegation congratulates you, Mr. Chairman, on assuming the office of Chairman of our Committee for the month of April, and expresses the hope that under your chairmanship the Committee will, during the time remaining for the first part of the work of the current session, accomplish useful work in examining the specific issues before it. We also wish to express our thanks to your predecessor, Ambassador Thomson of Australia, who exerted maximum efforts in connexion with the adoption of an agreed agenda for this year's session of the Committee.

In my statement today I should like once more to refer to the question of negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed.

As is known, this question was submitted for inclusion in the Committee's agenda on the initiative of the socialist countries, including Mongolia, and is contained in document CD/4 of 1 February 1979.

In my previous statement I had the opportunity briefly to describe the motives by which Mongolia was guided in submitting that document jointly with other socialist countries.

It is generally recognized that, in the context of disarmament problems as a whole, primary importance is attached to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. And this is perfectly natural. The nuclear weapon, as a weapon of mass destruction which, from the time of its first appearance, has been considerably developed from both a qualitative and quantitative standpoint, today represents the greatest threat to mankind, since it has the capacity to destroy all life on earth many times over.

(Mr. Erdembiler, Mongolia)

The efforts of peoples directed towards the achievement of real measures in the disarmament sphere are meeting with opposition from those who are creating significant obstacles on the path of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Negotiations on this question are still not fully under way. The deferment of this issue seriously affects the interests of all peoples.

Precisely because they are guided by the noble objectives of strengthening universal peace, the socialist countries have come forward with a new initiative to begin negotiations on ending the production of nuclear weapons and on their complete destruction. We are fully aware that this process will not take place all at once and cannot have a rigid time-frame, and that it must take place in stages, with consideration being given at particular stages of the negotiations to various aspects connected with qualitative and quantitative limitations until all types of nuclear weapons, as well as the means of their delivery, have been completely destroyed.

The sponsors of document CD/4 take full account of this important element. In the special section entitled "Stages of negotiations" it is clearly and explicitly stated that the cessation of the production, the reduction and the destruction of nuclear weapons should be carried out by stages on a mutually acceptable and agreed basis. The extent to which such reduction will be carried out should be decided by agreement among the participants in the negotiations.

The socialist countries have always been and still are in favour of agreed and mutually-acceptable measures in the disarmament sphere. They have never sought and do not seek unilateral advantages. After all, almost all the treaties and agreements which have been concluded so far in the field of disarmament, as well as the constructive proposals submitted in the past which now form the subject of bilateral and multilateral negotiations, are on the whole initiatives of the countries of the socialist community.

We have always proceeded from the view that the principle of non-impairment of the security of all the parties should be the fundamental principle of negotiations at all stages. Only the strict observance of this principle, reinforced by political will, can contribute to a businesslike examination of the problem and to guaranteeing the success of negotiations in so complex and arduous an area of disarmament as that of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

In this connexion I should like, directly and frankly, to express our disagreement with the argument of the representative of the United States who, speaking in the Committee recently, said that the proposal presented in document CD/4 addresses the problem of nuclear disarmament with no consideration given to what effect the elimination of this class of weapons alone would have on the security of States.

As one of the sponsors of document CD/4, the Mongolian delegation would like to emphasize that this document in no way precludes other bilateral and multilateral negotiations on various aspects of the limitation of nuclear armaments, including strategic armaments, and also does not impede the achievement of bilateral or multilateral agreements on the limitation or destruction of any nuclear armaments on a mutually agreed basis. Nor does our document preclude conducting negotiations on various other types of weapons.

Due attention is also given in document CD/4 to the necessary verification measures, which should be agreed at a specific stage of the negotiations.

Another important element contained in document CD/4 is that of the indispensable participation in the negotiations of all nuclear-weapon States without exception.

In admitting the possibility of embarking upon an exchange of views on the matter under consideration in this Committee without the participation of China, the sponsors of document CD/4 do not in the least depart from their firm position and do not contradict themselves, as certain persons in this Committee would like to suggest. We are saying quite unambiguously that the participation of all nuclear-weapon States, including China, in negotiations on nuclear disarmament is essential from the outset.

As we understand it, an exchange of views on the question contained in document CD/4 has, in effect, already begun in the Committee on Disarmament, from which China is still absent although a working place on the Committee has been set aside for its representatives from the very beginning of the Committee's current session.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The Mongolian delegation is in favour of continuing, in an effective manner, preparatory consultations so as to facilitate the start of practical negotiations on this urgent issue.

At the same time we are, however, obliged to voice our concern in connexion with the new actions being undertaken by the opponents of disarmament. China's ruling circles, who recently provoked an aggressive war against their southern neighbour, socialist Viet Nam, have recently committed an unfriendly act against their northern neighbour, the Soviet Union, by unilaterally deciding to denounce the Treaty of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance between the People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The attitude of the Government of the Mongolian People's Republic to this decision by Peking is quite clearly stated in the declaration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia dated 5 April 1979. The Mongolian People's Republic, as an Asian socialist State and immediate neighbour of China, the chauvinistic policy of whose Government in respect of our country is well known to world public opinion, considers that cessation of the validity of the Soviet-Chinese Treaty on the initiative of the Chinese side runs counter to the interests of strengthening peace and security in Asia and the Far East. China's present leadership bears the full weight of the consequences of this act and has full responsibility for it before its own people.

In our view, the negative attitude of some, not so much to participation in the work of the Committee on Disarmament as, in general, to problems of disarmament and the attempts by others to block efforts in the Committee aimed at achieving general agreement to begin negotiations on ending the production of nuclear weapons and completely destroying them cannot in any way promote progress in the cause of disarmament.

The sponsors of document CD/4, duly taking into account differences in the level of the arsenals of some nuclear-weapon Powers, provide for a different degree of participation of nuclear-weapon States in measures at each stage, which will be determined taking into account the quantitative and qualitative importance of the existing arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States and of other States concerned. It is, of course, most important to make sure that the existing balance in the field of nuclear strength should remain undisturbed at all stages, with the levels of nuclear strength being constantly reduced.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

In conclusion, I should like to observe once more that the Committee on Disarmament is the most suitable forum for conducting such negotiations. It has both the competence and sufficient experience in this vitally important sphere.

Such are some of the Mongolian delegation's considerations in connexion with the examination in the Committee of the document submitted jointly by the group of socialist countries.

We fully associate ourselves with the statement by Ambassador Israelyan of the Soviet Union in which he appealed to the Committee to give businesslike consideration to the proposal for negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Mongolia for his kind remarks.

I now give the floor to Mr. Celso de Ouro Preto, the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. CELSO DE OURO PRETO (Brazil) (translated from French): I wish first of all, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you on your chairmanship. We are all aware of Belgium's interest in disarmament issues and we are sure that, during your term of office, our Committee will again be able to make appreciable progress in carrying out its programme of work. I should **also** like, through you, to address a few words to the Ambassador of Australia.. His dedication to the task entrusted to him and the skill and diplomacy he displayed in the course of the delicate negotiations which took place during his term of office aroused our profound admiration.

The group of non-aligned and neutral countries known as the Group of 21 has always felt that the Committee on Disarmament should give high priority to the question of chemical weapons. Three draft conventions on this subject have already been submitted to the old CCD. Bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union have been held on this question since 1976. The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly emphasized the importance of the problem of chemical weapons. The Final Document of the tenth special session and resolutions 33/59 and 33/71, to cite only the most recent ones, are very clear.. We note, however, that

(Mr. Celso de Ouro Preto, Brazil)

multilateral negotiations on the question of chemical weapons have not yet begun. That is why I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Group of 21, a proposal to establish an ad hoc working group, open to the participation of all member States of the Committee, with a view to elaborating a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction. The Group of 21 believes that negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament may proceed in parallel with the bilateral contacts which have already taken place on the chemical weapons issue. The most recent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly affirm that the Committee need not await the conclusion of these bilateral contacts before it embarks upon negotiations itself. The ad hoc group proposed would have as basic texts for its work the draft treaties and working papers already presented both to the CCD and the Committee. A text containing the proposal of the Group of 21 has been distributed. The Group of 21 is prepared to hold consultations with other delegations in order to set up as soon as possible, the ad hoc working group whose establishment would demonstrate in a concrete manner the Committee's desire to embark upon the disarmament negotiations which the international community expects from it.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for his kind remarks addressed to the Chair.

I now wish to give the floor to Ambassador Adeniji, the distinguished representative of Nigeria.

Mr. ADENIJI (Nigeria): Before I share the immediate thoughts of my delegation on the important proposal contained in document CD/4, allow me first of all to express our congratulations to you and to your country, since this is the first time I am speaking under your chairmanship. We are conscious of the important contribution which Belgium can make to our negotiations, and we remain confident that the Committee on Disarmament will make significant progress under your leadership.

My delegation recognizes the proposal in the working paper CD/4 as a positive proposal. There is universal consensus on the importance and urgent necessity for nuclear disarmament. Paragraph 45 of the programme of action of the Final Document

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

of the tenth special session clearly allotted the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. That paragraph, taken together with the paragraphs that immediately follow it, underline the views of the world community with regard to the urgency of nuclear disarmament. This was not a new-found view inspired by the solemnity of the first special session devoted to disarmament.

We can all, including those of us who were not members of the United Nations at the time, recall that the unanimous first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly was that atomic, namely, nuclear, weapons should be eliminated from national arsenals; and more important at this juncture, the reasons which motivated that unanimous first resolution are still valid and even more urgent today. Thus for thirty-four years international opinion has remained consistent in its demand for urgent action on nuclear disarmament. We also believe that the possession of nuclear arsenals, whatever else it might have done to those who possess them, has continuously engendered a sense of insecurity, not only in the nuclear-weapon Powers themselves, as direct potential targets of nuclear attack, but in mankind as a whole about its very existence.

When looked at in the proper context, the proposal in document CD/4 can provide a timely basis for starting negotiations. The proposal has not ignored the need to maintain credible security of all States during the stage-by-stage process of cessation of production and gradual elimination of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the proposal should not, in the eyes of my delegation, preclude proper consideration, in the course of detailed negotiation, of related disarmament measures or agreements which may be found necessary for the implementation of any stage of the proposed nuclear disarmament. In fact this may be done either in this Committee or in another forum, bilaterally or multilaterally.

I should like to stress that we fully accept as vital and essential the need to preserve the security of all nations at all stages. Given the recognition of the rather extreme urgency of nuclear disarmament, for the sake of the survival of mankind, and given the importance of the political will to negotiate, the issue of the undiminished security of nations becomes a very important point in the negotiations that will follow. In this context, we understand the preoccupation

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

of those delegations who stressed the importance of paragraph 29 of the Final Document of the tenth special session. Indeed it is essential, if the means are not to defeat the end, that disarmament measures should not confer advantage on any State or group of States. Precarious as the balance of terror is, an imbalance of terror may whet the appetite for world domination.

Negotiations on nuclear disarmament should have as their goal the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons such that undiminished security for all countries -- nuclear-weapon as well as non-nuclear-weapon -- is dissociated from this terrible weapon. The stages of such negotiations have been indicated in the Final Document of the special session as follows:

Cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear-weapon systems;

Cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes;

A comprehensive, phased programme with agreed time-frames for progressive and balanced reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, leading to their ultimate and complete elimination at the earliest possible time.

My delegation would hope that commencement of negotiations on this important problem will therefore not be unduly delayed by protracted discussions of what to negotiate. It is the view of my delegation that the identification of the issues made in the special session can form a useful beginning. We shall soon, in addition, begin the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament which, in the view of Nigeria should be so comprehensive as to provide negotiators in whatever forum with a basis for their negotiations, with the added advantage of the inter-relatedness of the entire process. In other words, the universal interest in nuclear disarmament should find expression in the comprehensive programme as it has to some extent in the Final Document of the special session, while the specific interests and responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States will assert itself in the negotiations.

(Mr. Adeniji, Nigeria)

If nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization, then it is obvious that realistic negotiations for effective measures should involve all nuclear-weapon States. We believe that everything possible should be done, and all opportunities given, to encourage and ease the way for China to participate in the negotiations. One such way is to have the basis for the negotiations set out in a document that is approved by all; another is the pertinent acknowledgement, contained in document CD/4, that the levels of arsenals of individual nuclear-weapon Powers are not the same and that the degree of participation of individual nuclear-weapon States in each stage should be determined accordingly. This is a realistic recognition of the special responsibility of the Superpowers for nuclear disarmament.

This Committee should not, and cannot afford to ignore an important working paper on nuclear disarmament negotiations simply because there are other dimensions to the problem. There will always be dimensions in negotiations. We have received the progress report of the Working Group of seismological experts concerning areas of co-operation in detecting and identifying seismic events. The report is an important contribution in settling a technical aspect of a CTBT. Similarly, whenever it is considered essential, the Committee could, and probably would, take steps to clarify issues regarding nuclearweapons disarmament, either through experts or by special parallel negotiations. The Committee should, at the appropriate stage in its work, take up the proposal in CD/4 given its pertinence to the mandate of the Committee on Disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Thank you, Ambassador Adeniji, for the kind words you addressed to me. I also wish to thank most particularly the three last speakers for the words of appreciation addressed to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson. I personally associate myself fully with what they said.

(The Chairman)

Is there any other delegation that wishes to take the floor? If not, I should like to draw the attention of distinguished delegates to a document which is before us -- document CD/3, and specifically the draft annex I to the rules of procedure proposed by the group of socialist countries.

Does any delegation wish to comment on this document?

Have all delegations had sufficient time to acquaint themselves with the document?

If so, I would propose that the Committee should now adopt this draft annex I to the rules of procedure proposed by the group of socialist countries. I believe that the Committee can adopt this draft of annex I.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I now propose to convene, in a few minutes, the Ad Hoc Working Group established to consider questions relating to the preparation of the provisional agenda and programme of work of the Committee; it would meet immediately after this meeting.

If you agree, I suggest that the plenary meeting should be suspended and that it should resume after the meeting of the Working Group.

I accordingly declare this plenary meeting suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 5.40 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I now propose to resume the twenty-sixth plenary meeting of the Committee.

I wish to inform the Committee that several draft decisions have been recommended by the Working Group with a view to their adoption by the Committee.

In accordance with rule 29 of the rules of procedure, I submit to the Committee document CD/L.2/Rev.1 on the provisional agenda and programme of work of the Committee.

In this connexion, I should also like to read to you the text of the following arrangement. I am reading it in English because this arrangement has so far been drafted only in English.

(The Chairman)

I quote:

"In submitting the provisional agenda of the Committee on Disarmament, it is the understanding of all members of the Committee that heading IX, dealing inter alia with 'collateral measures', includes the following questions, to be considered by the Committee at appropriate stages of its work:

1. Further prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques;
2. Further measures in the field of disarmament to prevent an arms race on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the sub-soil thereof;
3. Further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space."

Does any delegation wish to take the floor?

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I would like to begin by extending to you my delegation's warm congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament. We feel sure that, under your wise guidance, we shall be able to bring our work to a successful conclusion at this final stage of the first part of the first session of the Committee.

I should also like to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Thomson, the distinguished representative of Australia, for the way in which he presided over our work. We owe it to his moderation, patience, perseverance, skill and impartiality -- in short, to his unusual wisdom -- that our deliberations were fruitful.

With regard to the provisional agenda of the Committee, which is reproduced in document CD/L.2/Rev.1, my delegation considers that the title of section IX of what we are accustomed to call "the decalogue" is unnecessarily long. We would have preferred more concise wording more in line with the titles of the other nine sections. We are making this comment quite incidentally, since the main reason why my delegation asked for the floor is to state that it interprets the words "acceptable to all parties concerned" as applying equally to the "effective verification methods" and the "appropriate disarmament measures" which are referred to. Our approval of the title of section IX -- whose wording, as we have said, leaves much to be desired in our opinion -- should therefore be understood as being contingent on this interpretation, which is the only one we consider to be compatible with the provisions of paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I very much appreciate the kind words you addressed to me.

Mr. DE LA GORCE (France) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, I would like to convey to you again, this time in a public meeting, my delegation's congratulations and good wishes to you personally and for the accomplishment of the important task which falls to you during the month of your chairmanship. I am particularly happy to see in the Chair the representative of a country which, as I have said, is especially close to mine and with which we maintain truly fraternal relations. May I also take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to extend my congratulations and good wishes to our new colleagues, the distinguished representatives of the United Kingdom and Zaire.

The adoption of our agenda has entailed extensive discussions and consultations. Making a start is always difficult, and it was no doubt inevitable that our new Committee should take time to chart its own course rather than to follow that of the bodies which preceded it. It has done so responsibly in an atmosphere of co-operation and courtesy, and the interest it has shown in the concerns of each member augurs well for the future of our work. May I refer in this respect to the part played in these results by Ambassador Thomson, as our Chairman during the month of March. His wisdom, patience and talents as a conciliator have earned him the gratitude of us all, and I would like to take this opportunity to pay him today the tribute he so amply deserves.

The French delegation has done its utmost to contribute to the general effort to find the necessary consensus. In this spirit, it has refrained from expressing objections to or reservations on the inclusion in the agenda of the question of a treaty on a nuclear test ban. I must make it clear, however, that this does not mean that there has been any change in the well-known position of my Government on this matter and the negotiations concerning it. But its position does not, of course, affect the determination of the French delegation to co-operate as fully as possible in the work of the Committee in order to further the noble task of disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I should like to thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for the cordial words you addressed to me, and I must add that I also appreciate the tribute you paid to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

(The Chairman)

After these two statements, which will of course be included in the records of this session, I would like to know if there are other speakers who wish to take the floor.

If not, I shall now formally invite our Committee to adopt document CD/L.2/Rev.1.

It is so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I would now like to put before you other draft decisions prepared by the Working Group.

The first is that the opening date for the second part of the Committee's annual session should be 12 June 1979.

Are there any observations or comments on this proposal?

Mr. FLOWERREE (United States of America): In our informal sessions the question of the date of the Preparatory Committee meeting for the Biological Weapons Review Conference was raised. There seems to be some doubt as to what the date will be, at least in the minds of the Secretariat, but there is no doubt in the minds of those who participated in the meeting at the General Assembly last autumn, or in fact in the minds of the depositories who are just about to issue the invitation for that meeting to begin on 12 June. There is a practical aspect of this opening date for the BW Review Conference which I think is analogous to that facing us next Tuesday in regard to the Preparatory Committee for the NPT. It seems to me that the opening of two important meetings on the same date would put some delegations under strain. I think that there are important statements that are usually made at the beginning of meetings of this nature, and it seems to me that it might be carefully considered whether one or the other might not be changed, perhaps by a day or two; for example, the opening session of the Committee on Disarmament could be on the following Thursday, which is the 14 June, or possibly there could be some slippage in the date of the opening of the BW Preparatory Committee. In any case I think this matter is something that we should look into and certainly for the convenience of some delegations, and I think it might be important that we should not take a firm decision at this time. We have no objection from the United States point of view to the opening date that has been suggested. We have the ability to cover both these meetings at the same time, but I think that, as a matter of principle, it is not a good idea, and I think I would prefer that we should not cast in concrete the decision on the date, but that we agree provisionally now, subject to a review of the situation by the Secretariat and to any other developments that may occur in the next few days or before the end of this particular session.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): May I suggest to you that we should simply take note of this suggestion without going any further, that is to say, we would not take a formal decision but revert to the question in the light of the information which the Secretariat will no doubt give us. It would be useful, in my view, if we were to take up this question again between now and the end of April. I would just like us to take note of the suggestion and to keep open the possibility of re-examining the matter before the end of the month when we shall be considering the question of coincidence or non-coincidence. May I simply ask distinguished delegates to note that the date of 12 June was suggested during the meeting of the Working Group, but that the suggestion will be reconsidered later.

In the circumstances, I would now like to turn to the second draft decision suggested by our Working Group, namely, that the plenary meeting of the Committee scheduled for 17 April should be cancelled and that a plenary meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday, 25 April, in addition to those scheduled for Tuesday, 24 April, and Thursday, 26 April. (Now, therefore, we are envisaging the possibility of including another plenary meeting on Wednesday, 25 April 1979, between the plenary meetings of Tuesday, 24 April, and Thursday, 26 April).

Is the Committee prepared to adopt this draft decision?

If so, I shall take it that the draft decision is adopted by the Committee.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I would also remind the Committee that document CD/11, submitted by the Group of 21, on the question of chemical weapons, has been circulated and submitted to the Committee during the present session by the distinguished representative of Brazil.

I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. CELSO DE OURO PRETO (Brazil) (translated from French): A draft decision was distributed a few minutes ago to the members of the Committee. This draft decision is sponsored by the Group of 21, and concerns their proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on chemical weapons. The draft decision has been distributed unofficially, and the Group of 21 hopes that it will be used as a basis for future negotiations on the establishment of such a committee.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I would now like to inform you that our Working Group has begun to consider the programme of work of our Committee between now and the end of the month. With your consent, I propose to convene another meeting of the Working Group tomorrow to continue its consideration of this matter. We could meet tomorrow at 3 p.m. If the Working Group draws up specific proposals and reaches firm conclusions on the programme of work, I reserve the right to call another plenary meeting after the meeting of the Working Group to present the Working Group's proposals with a view to their adoption.

Mr. THOMSON (Australia): Mr. Chairman, I have been deeply touched by the kind comments made about my chairmanship last month, but I am sure that no one will understand better than you, with your vast experience, why I think those comments are much too generous. A Chairman is no more than the instrument of the Committee he serves. If any praise is due at this moment I think it is owed to the members of this Committee, to their good sense, cordiality, inventiveness and sustained will to reach a consensus, even though doing so always required us to forego something of our own national positions. We saw that will to consensus actively at work this morning in the drafting group. I thought that sight was a very hopeful one, looking to our future work.

Mr. Chairman, I hope you will permit me now -- at this penultimate moment almost as it is the end of the beginning, when all of us, I think, are feeling a tiny glow of satisfaction -- to express my gratitude to those distinguished gentlemen over whose work I had the honour to preside during the month of March. I would add to that an expression of deep personal obligation to the Secretariat which helped to guide me through a time not wholly lacking in perplexity.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

It is 6 p.m., and I think we can now conclude our work for today. There is no plenary meeting scheduled for tomorrow, although there is a possibility that we shall have one -- and I very much hope we do -- to complete our deliberations on the programme of work. The next meeting will be Thursday, 19 April, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.