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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWENTY EIGHTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 April 1979, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. F. Noterdaeme

(Belgium)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. A. BENSMAIL
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. F.J. DAVILA
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. L.D. THOMSON Mr. A.J. BEHM Ms. M.S. WICKES
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. P. NOTERDAEME Mr. G. VAN DUYSE Mr. P. BERG
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. A. CELSO DE OURO PRETO Mr. C.A. SIMAS MAGALHAES
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. P. VOUTOV Mr. I. SOTIROV Mr. I. PETROV
<u>Burma:</u>	U SAW HLAING U THAUNG HTUN
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. R. HARRY JAY Mr. J.T. SIMARD
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mrs. V.B. JACKIEWICH
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. M. RUZEK Mr. V. TYLNER Mr. L. STAVINOHAI
<u>Egypt:</u>	Mr. O. EL-SHAFTI Mr. N. FAHMY
<u>Ethiopia:</u>	Mr. T. TERREFE
<u>France:</u>	Mr. F. DE LA GORCE Mr. BENOIT D'ABOVILLE

<u>German Democratic Republic:</u>	Mr. G. HERDER
	Mr. S. KAHN
	Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI
<u>Germany, Federal Republic of:</u>	Mr. G. FEIFFER
	Mr. J. PÖHLMANN
<u>Hungary:</u>	Mr. M. DOMOKOS
	Mr. C. GYÖRFFY
<u>India:</u>	Mr. C.R. GHAREKHAN
<u>Indonesia:</u>	Mr. M. SIDIK
	Mr. I. DAMANIK
	Mr. HARYOMATARAM
<u>Iran:</u>	Mr. M. FARTASH
	Mr. D. CHILATY
<u>Italy:</u>	Mr. N. DI BERNARDO
	Mr. M. MORENO
	Mr. C. FRATESCHI
	Mr. FOLCO DE LUCA
<u>Japan:</u>	Mr. M. OGISO
	Mr. T. NONOYAMA
	Mr. R. ISHII
<u>Kenya:</u>	Mr. G.N. MUNIU
<u>Mexico:</u>	Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES
	Miss L.M. GARCÍA
<u>Mongolia:</u>	Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
	Mr. L. ERDENECHULJUN
	Mr. L. *RAYART
<u>Morocco:</u>	Mr. M. RAHHALI
	Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:

Mr. R.H. FEIN

Mr. A.J. MEERBURG

Nigeria:

Mr. K. AHMED

Mr. T. OLUMOKO

Pakistan:

Mr. J.K.A. MARKER

Mr. M. AKRAM

Peru:Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA

Mr. H. PAC

Mr. M. KRUCZYK

Romania:

Mr. C. ENE

Mr. V. TUDOR

Mr. T. MELESCANU

Mr. VASILE GLIGA

Sri Lanka:

Mr. I.B. FONSEKA

Miss M.L. NAGANATHAN

Sweden:

Mr. C. LIDGARD

Mr. L. NORBERG

Mr. S. STRÖMBÄCK

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN

Mr. A.M. VAVILOV

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. M. DALEY
Mr. M. SANCHES
Mrs. E. ARENSBURGER

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. E. MULONGANDUSU

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I have the honour to declare open the twenty-eighth plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

Distinguished delegates and dear colleagues, before we make a start on our agenda, I would like to say a few words on behalf of all the delegates gathered here and also on my own behalf to the distinguished delegate of Sweden. I am sure that Ambassador Lidgard will agree to act as spokesman for all of us in conveying to Minister Thorsson our most sincere condolences on her recent bereavement, which has prevented her from being with us today. We regret her absence and would like to express to her our deepest sympathy.

Mr. LIDGARD (Sweden): I would like to express, to you, Mr. Chairman my deep appreciation for your warm words and I shall certainly convey them to Mrs. Thorsson.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I would now like to invite you to take up our agenda. May I remind you, first of all, that we shall be considering today the second item on the Committee's agenda, which reads: "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

May I also remind you that it was agreed among all the members of the Committee that delegations may speak on any proposals which have been made or will be made on this topic.

It was also agreed that, in adopting the programme of work of the Committee, we would bear in mind the provisions of rules 30 and 31 of the rules of procedure.

I would now like to open the list of speakers by giving the floor to the distinguished representative of Mexico.

Ambassador García Robles, you have the floor.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, both my delegation and I associate ourselves with the profound regret and sympathy you have expressed to Mrs. Thorsson on her bereavement.

In the statement I made on 24 January, that is, the day on which the Committee on Disarmament began its work, I said how important we thought it that this multilateral negotiating body should possess rules of procedure and an agenda in keeping with the momentous task entrusted to it.

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Accordingly, as this is the first occasion on which my delegation is taking the floor since the successful completion of the lengthy deliberations and negotiations -- conducted in informal meetings that are not reported in our records -- which led to the preparation of the two documents I have just mentioned, we thought it fitting to begin this statement by making some comments on them.

With regard to the rules of procedure, my delegation was pleased to see that the introduction mentions expressly that they were adopted "taking into account the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". Our satisfaction is in no way lessened by the fact that some delegations considered it necessary that the document refers also to "the agreement reached following appropriate consultations among the Member States during that Session", since we have always maintained that the membership and functions of a negotiating body like this one must be satisfactory, as the United Nations General Assembly emphasized as early as 1961 in resolution 1660 (XVI), to both nuclear-weapon States and the rest of the world.

Another provision which we consider worthy of special mention concerns the rotation of the Chairmanship among all the members of the Committee. Although this has been in effect for less than three months, it has been demonstrably beneficial in contributing to the realization of the provisions laid down in the rules, which specify in rule 3 that "All Member States of the Committee shall take part in its work in conditions of full equality as independent States".

We believe that if rules 21 and 23 are correctly interpreted, they may prevent the Committee on Disarmament from becoming paralysed whenever the nuclear-weapon Powers fail to submit to it a preliminary draft treaty or convention on which they have succeeded in reaching an agreement. In fact, in accordance with the first of the two rules mentioned, "If the Committee is unable to take a decision on the substance of an item under negotiation, it will consider the subsequent examination of that item", while, under the terms of rule 23, the Committee may not only establish subsidiary bodies open to all its Member States but may also make exceptions to this general rule and set up ad hoc sub-committees or working groups with a limited membership. This would enable the nuclear Powers, whenever it is deemed essential, to conduct preliminary negotiations among themselves,

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as has been happening for more than two years in the tripartite talks on a nuclear test ban. The form of the negotiations would be the same, but there would nevertheless be a difference which to our mind is fundamental -- the nuclear Powers would be acting as a subsidiary body of the Committee on Disarmament, which would be entitled, among other things, to establish appropriate procedures to keep itself duly informed of the progress of the negotiations.

In this connexion, I would like to reiterate that, as we have said repeatedly in the most diverse forums, we are convinced that it should not be an essential requirement for the nuclear Powers to transmit to the multilateral negotiating body an absolutely complete text of a preliminary draft treaty or convention which they have been negotiating among themselves. The proper application of the rules to which I have alluded could solve this problem in a way that would be universally acceptable.

As regards the section of the rules entitled "Agenda and programme of work", the main point to be emphasized is the admirable flexibility introduced by the provisions of rules 31 and 30, without prejudice to the necessary precise delimitation of the subject. Under the first of these rules Member States may, while the work of the Committee is in progress, request the inclusion of an urgent item in the agenda. Under the second rule, although the subject of statements made in plenary meetings will normally correspond to the topic then under discussion in accordance with the agreed programme of work, any Member State will be entitled to present "its views on any subject which it may consider to merit attention", as my delegation is doing at this very moment, and to raise any subject relevant to the work of the Committee at a plenary meeting if it has not been specifically included in the programme of work.

Rules 32 to 36 succeed, in our opinion, in establishing a procedural system that will guarantee the exercise of the rights conferred on States not members of the Committee by the special session of the General Assembly on disarmament in paragraph 120 of its Final Document, with respect to their possible participation in the negotiating body.

The public nature of plenary meetings, which is dealt with in rule 20; the provision that verbatim records and other official documents of the Committee will be made available to the public, as stated in rule 40, and the contribution

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which non-governmental organizations can make under rule 42 will undoubtedly result in a beneficial symbiosis from which both world public opinion and what the General Assembly has called the "single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum" will derive mutual profit.

The final rule 47, entitled "Amendments", is a useful reminder of the need to be constantly aware that, if laws and constitutions are not immutable, regulations are even less so, and that whenever necessary, they should be adjusted to the demands of a constantly evolving situation.

With regard to the Committee's agenda and programme of work, the drafting of which took up most of our time in March and early April, my delegation is pleased to note, first, that the relevant document opens with the blunt statement that "the Committee on Disarmament, as the multilateral negotiating forum, shall promote the attainment of general and complete disarmament under effective international control". Accordingly, we hope that the Committee will endeavour to revive the activities directed to this noble aim which, since the first few years of the 1960s, has been invoked for rhetorical purposes only.

A second motive for satisfaction is the emphasis given in the introductory paragraphs to the fact that the Committee, in dealing with the cessation of the arms race and disarmament, will do so "taking into account, inter alia, the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament".

We are particularly glad to note, furthermore, that, once the initial doubts which might have caused a negative reaction were dispelled, the Committee agreed to the suggestion, which the delegation of Mexico ventured to put forward from the beginning, that it was desirable to define the competence of the Committee in very general terms so as to avoid unnecessary discussion, on the lines of those eventually adopted, which constitute a virtually exhaustive decalogue encompassing all the principles, objectives, measures and procedures contemplated in the Final Document of the special Assembly session.

On the other hand, our attitude is different with regard to the agenda adopted for 1979. We would have liked the agenda, unlike the ten previous section titles, to include very concrete and specific topics, for our primary objective must be to avoid a repetition of what happened in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. Every effort will have to be made to achieve what has so often been

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called in our informal meetings "an action-oriented agenda". Although we participated in the consensus which led to the adoption of the agenda for the current year, we still hope that in the years to come the annual agenda and programmes of work corresponding to the two parts of each session may conform to the system I have just outlined.

I come now to the second part of my statement in which, in relation to the first topic in our programme of work, namely, the "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", I would like to make some general comments of a preliminary nature on a specific question: the proposal submitted to the Committee by seven socialist countries in working paper CD/4 of 1 February 1979, which was officially presented to us, on behalf of all the co-sponsors, on 6 February by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan. As I found his introduction more explicit and detailed than the proposal itself, our comments will mainly refer to his explanatory statement.

I also wish to add, by way of introduction, that Mexico takes very seriously the multilateral instruments to which it gives its approval in international bodies, even if they are simply resolutions and not what are known as solemn instruments such as treaties, conventions or protocols. That is why, for the purpose of the correct understudying of our position on the matter I am going to discuss, it ought to be appreciated that we not only approved but took an active part in the preparation of such texts as the introduction to resolution S-10/2 of the special General Assembly session on disarmament; paragraphs 11 and 18, forming part of the Declaration, and paragraphs 47 and 48 -- which form part of the Programme of Action -- in the Final Document of that special session.

In the resolution which I have cited, the most representative organ of the international community vigorously expressed its alarm at "the threat to the very survival of mankind posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and the continuing arms race".

The paragraphs of the Declaration to which I have just alluded state that "mankind today is confronted with an unprecedented threat of self-extinction arising from the massive and competitive accumulation of the most destructive weapons ever

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produced" and that "existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth", and add:

"Removing the threat of a world war -- a nuclear war -- is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation".

In the Programme of Action, the Assembly was equally or more explicit when it proclaimed:

"Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. It is essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of war involving nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal in this context is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

"In the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility."

Furthermore, we well recall the eloquent statements delivered by the Heads of State of the two main nuclear-weapon Powers, whose significance is attested by the fact that the General Assembly considered it advisable to reproduce them in full in two successive resolutions, 32/87 G of 12 December 1977 and 33/91 C of 16 December 1978.

The address referred to at the beginning of these two resolutions of the Assembly, includes the following solemn pronouncement made by the President of the United States of America, on 4 October 1977.

"The United States is willing to go as far as possible, consistent with our security interests, in limiting and reducing our nuclear weapons. On a reciprocal basis we are willing now to reduce them by 10 per cent, 20 per cent or even 50 per cent. Then we will work for further reductions with a view to a world truly free of nuclear weapons."

The other address reproduced in the resolutions I have mentioned is that delivered on 2 November 1977 by the President of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which was in the following terms:

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"Today we are proposing a radical step: that agreement be reached on a simultaneous halt in the production of nuclear weapons by all States. This would apply to all such weapons -- whether atomic, hydrogen or neutron bombs or missiles. At the same time, the nuclear Powers could undertake to start the gradual reduction of existing stockpiles of such weapons and move towards their complete, total destruction."

In the light of these statements, it will be appreciated, I hope, that we consider that the proposals submitted in working paper CD/4 should receive in our Committee serious and dispassionate study which should make it possible to arrive at constructive conclusions and should help us to identify the positive elements they undoubtedly contain and, in addition, to point out the shortcomings from which they also suffer.

Simply as an illustration and without in any way claiming to exhaust the subject, I shall confine myself to drawing attention, as an example of the former -- that is, positive factors -- to the following five aspects:

(1) We fully endorse the view of the sponsors of working paper CD/4 that the Committee on Disarmament is the most suitable forum for conducting negotiations on nuclear disarmament. On the one hand, the Committee is open to the participation of all nuclear Powers: four of them are already taking part in its work and it is to be hoped that the fifth, China, will soon occupy the seat specifically reserved for it by name. On the other hand, it has a substantial participation of 35 members which may be considered to be adequately representative of all the non-nuclear-weapon States. In addition, as I have said before -- but I think it does no harm to say so again -- the General Assembly of the United Nations itself has solemnly declared the Committee to be "the" multilateral forum for negotiations on disarmament. It seems obvious, therefore, that it would be difficult to find a more suitable organ than this one to deal with a matter which, as has been emphasized in many international documents, is of "vital" importance for all peoples.

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(2) Another aspect on which we hold the same view as the States sponsoring the working document of which I am speaking is that the nuclear-weapon States cannot all be placed on the same footing or treated in the same way. As their spokesman stated very aptly "the levels of the arsenals of the individual nuclear Powers are not the same, however, and it would be wrong to turn a blind eye to this".

(3) We are likewise fully in agreement with the statement made in this forum by the spokesman to whom I have just referred concerning the need "both at the negotiations and in the implementation of concrete measures, strictly to respect the principle of the inviolability of the security of States".

(4) We believe, similarly, that the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament which are taking place in this Committee should not preclude the possibility of conducting bilateral negotiations provided, we would add, that the Committee is kept duly informed of the progress and results of such negotiations.

(5) We find the approach which, we understand, is advocated by the socialist States to be very judicious, namely the avoidance of any undue haste, in conformity with the wise Latin saying festina lente or "make haste slowly", which will mean, as their spokesman explained, that "by way of preparation, consultations should be conducted within the framework of our Committee to determine the set of questions to be considered and decided, and to reach agreement on organizational aspects of the conduct of the negotiations".

In the light of the various comments which have been heard in this forum on the socialist proposals, it would appear that the two main criticisms to which they have given rise are the following:

(1) They do not take sufficient account of the provision in paragraph 29 of the Final Document that the adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such a manner as to ensure that "no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage"; and

(2) The proposals do not recognize the primary role which ought to be played by the measures of verification and control, and do not concern themselves with the practical possibilities for their application.

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I do not think that this is the right time for trying to determine whether or not these are valid criticisms. We would venture to suggest that for that purpose, when the second part of our current session opens next June, we might take as our point of departure the provisions of paragraphs 49 and 50 of the Final Document which, it will be recalled, are drafted in these terms:

"The process of nuclear disarmament should be carried out in such a way, and requires measures to ensure, that the security of all States is guaranteed at progressively lower levels of nuclear armaments, taking into account the relative qualitative and quantitative importance of the existing arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States and other States concerned.

"The achievement of nuclear disarmament will require urgent negotiation of agreements at appropriate stages and with adequate measures of verification satisfactory to the States concerned for:

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

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

(c) A comprehensive, phased programme with agreed time-frames, whenever feasible, 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.

Consideration can be given in the course of the negotiations to mutual and agreed limitation or prohibition, without prejudice to the security of any State, of any types of nuclear armaments."

The provisions in the paragraphs which I have just quoted and which, as we all know, were adopted by consensus, might provide us with a sound basis for constructive consultations and negotiations. The proposals by the socialist States might be compared with those paragraphs in order to determine in which respects they are in full agreement with them and in which respects and to what extent they differ from them.

We believe that this may be a suitable procedure if, as we venture to hope, it is genuinely desired that the Committee on Disarmament should fulfil its duty concerning what has been said and repeated over and over again, that the disarmament which should have top priority is nuclear disarmament.

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There may be many other possible approaches for considering the proposals in working paper CD/4, and the same might be said about the General Assembly's recommendations in its resolution 33/91 H aiming at the prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes, but what my delegation would find unthinkable is that an attempt might be made merely to shelve them, especially if it is remembered that in the coming twelve months we shall have to begin working out a comprehensive disarmament programme designed, as stated in paragraph 10 of the decalogue already adopted "to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control", in which nuclear disarmament will unquestionably figure prominently.

Surely, it cannot have been in vain that the special General Assembly devoted to disarmament unanimously adopted statements as categorical and forceful as that in paragraph 42 of the Final Document in which Member States "declare that they will respect the objectives and principles stated above" and that they will "make every effort faithfully to carry out the Programme of Action", and that appearing at the end of paragraph 17 of the same document, which reads as follows:

"The pressing need now is to translate into practical terms the provisions of this Final Document and to proceed along the road of binding and effective international agreements in the field of disarmament."

My delegation refuses to believe that, having proclaimed such truths urbi et orbi, we might be reluctant to deal with nuclear weapons, whose mere existence threatens, as the Assembly said "the very survival of mankind" and the accumulation of which — to quote again from the Final Document — "today constitutes much more of a threat than a protection for the future" of mankind.

Mr. THOMSON (Australia): I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for conveying to the Swedish delegation the profound condolences of my delegation, among other members of the Committee, to Mrs. Thorsson in her time of sorrow.

In resolution A/33/91H, the United Nations General Assembly in 1978 requested the Committee on Disarmament "to consider urgently the question of an adequately verified cessation and prohibition of the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices".

The Australian delegation believes that the Committee on Disarmament could not claim to have really begun consideration of "cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" unless it also drew attention to the need for an adequately verified international convention on "the cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes" as a necessary and inevitable preliminary step.

(Mr. Thomson, Australia)

In his statement at the Special Session on Disarmament on 5 June 1978, the Australian Prime Minister pointed to the need for an international agreement to halt the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons and suggested that this agreement should be the subject of early discussion among nuclear weapon States and included in the Programme of Action of the Final Document. It was included. Paragraph 50 of the Final Document states:

"The achievement of nuclear disarmament will require urgent negotiation of agreements at appropriate stages and with adequate measures of verification satisfactory to the States concerned for:

- (a) Cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapon systems;
- (b) Cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes;
- (c) A comprehensive, phased programme with agreed time frames, whenever feasible, 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."

More recently, this same point was taken up in this Committee by the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Peacock, in his opening statement on 27 January 1979.

"... As part of the effort to enhance further the restraints on both the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Committee could profitably turn its attention to the proposal for an agreement halting the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons purposes. Such an agreement would be a further barrier to the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries by preventing the development of untested nuclear weapons. It would also place a limit on the quantity of fissionable material available to the nuclear-weapon States for weapons production and thus be an effective measure towards scaling down the nuclear arms race.

Australia does not underestimate the difficulties of implementing and verifying an international agreement of this kind. We acknowledge that it would involve the development of an adequate system of full-scope safeguards accepted by both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States."

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The Australian delegation does not believe that the Committee on Disarmament can undertake any serious consideration of item 2 of the 1979 agenda -- "cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" -- without examining the possibility of an international convention halting the production of fissionable material for nuclear weapons purposes. The Australian delegation considers that "the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament" can only take place as the result of a step-by-step process of negotiation. It is quite unrealistic to consider the final goal of the Committee's work -- cessation of the nuclear-arms race and disarmament -- without first considering the means by which this goal is to be achieved. Such a step-by-step process would include a number of very important elements:

- . a continuing pattern of bilateral limitation and reduction of nuclear arsenals by the super Powers under the umbrella of SALT
- a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty
- the strengthening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and
- as an intrinsic aspect of controls on both horizontal and vertical proliferation, an international treaty on the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons purposes.

The Australian delegation is under no illusions concerning the sensitivity and complexity of an international convention to halt the production of fissionable material for nuclear-weapon purposes. Such a convention would clearly involve the development of a comprehensive system of full-scope safeguards to be administered by the IAEA, and the application of such a safeguards regime to all peaceful nuclear facilities in both non-nuclear weapon States and nuclear-weapon States. It would also entail the conversion to peaceful purposes or closing down of all military enrichment and reprocessing plants in nuclear-weapon States, together with adequate verification measures.

Verification procedures would be an integral part of such an international convention. The leader of the United Kingdom delegation at the opening meeting of this Committee, Lord Goronwy-Roberts, drew the Committee's attention to this aspect when he pointed out that an agreement prohibiting the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes would require stringent inspection to ensure that States were not producing or diverting such materials for nuclear weapons. In this context, the Australian delegation particularly welcomes the intention of Canada, announced by Mr. G.A.H. Pearson during the inaugural meetings of the Committee on Disarmament, to explore various aspects and methods of verification, and we look forward to seeing the papers relating to these issues which Canada hopes to table here at an appropriate stage.

(Mr. Thomson, Australia)

My delegation is not recommending that, in the context of item 2 of the 1979 agenda, the Committee on Disarmament should immediately begin negotiating an international convention to prohibit the production of fissionable material for nuclear-weapons purposes. We concede that, before the conclusion of a Comprehensive Test-Ban agreement and further progress in the SALT process, such an attempt would be premature. What we do recommend is that, if the Committee is to give adequate consideration to agenda item 2, it must examine the measures through which the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament are to be achieved. A convention prohibiting the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes would be a significant practical measure towards this end.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, may I take this opportunity of my first intervention in a plenary meeting of the Committee since relinquishing the Chair, to express my warmest congratulations to you in assuming what I know personally to be the onerous responsibilities of the Chair. We all recognize Belgium's significant contributions in the field of disarmament and arms control, and I believe that it is fitting that a Belgian representative should have presided over the Committee in the adoption of its first agenda and programme of work.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Australia for his statement.

I would also like to say to Ambassador Thomson that I appreciate his kind words about my country and myself.

Mr. de la GORCE (France) (translated from French): First of all I should like to associate myself with the preceding speakers who have expressed their sympathy and condolences to Mrs. Thorsson on the bereavement she has suffered.

Today our Committee is turning to its programme of work; this is an important occasion, since it gives us an opportunity to assess what has been accomplished so far and to think about what we can contribute in the few days left before the closure of this first part of our annual session.

We have spent almost three months on the drafting of our rules of procedure and the adoption of our agenda and programme of work. These discussions seemed long and we were often tempted to think that it would have been preferable to begin to deal with substantive questions sooner. However, the weeks we have devoted to this preparatory phase have not been wasted. The serious tone of our discussions, their detailed nature and sometimes even the difficulties encountered have shown

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the desire of all participants to create on a firm basis the conditions and framework for our future work, taking full account of the Committee's essential assignment as a negotiating body.

For practical reasons, which are bound up with the constraints of the timetable, we have chosen two agenda items for our programme of work -- chemical weapons, the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament -- with no illusions as to our limitations.

First of all, time and circumstances allow us to deal with these two questions in only a partial, preliminary and, as it were, exploratory fashion. Moreover, these questions are not the same in terms of the contribution that our Committee can make.

Chemical weapons have been the subject of many studies and of very elaborate proposals, particularly in the body that preceded this one. Specific proposals have been submitted at this session of the Committee. In short, this question is one that is ripe for discussion, and the General Assembly has asked the Committee to take it up at its first session.

The question is then -- as everyone here realizes -- whether such a negotiation, which is regarded as desirable and a matter of priority from the point of view of this Committee's function, should be postponed any further and, as it were, left in cold storage pending the outcome of the joint initiative announced in 1974 by two of the Member States.

We are not, of course, doubting the firm desire to make progress and the extreme seriousness with which these two friendly countries have continued their efforts to fulfil their self-imposed task.

However, the two negotiating parties should also realize that this bilateral undertaking cannot indefinitely pre-empt all multilateral discussions on the question and thus suspend the Committee's competence in the matter.

This is why the French delegation has received with interest the various contributions submitted at this session by several members of this Committee with the object of organizing the discussions and guiding them to concrete negotiations.

In this context, it also welcomed the recent initiatives taken by the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany with a view to organizing seminars on certain aspects of the verification problems linked with such

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negotiations. These exercises were themselves most instructive and will therefore be useful for future discussions on the substance of a convention. The exchange of views in this Committee next week on the conclusions that can be drawn from these visits should, therefore, be regarded as a preface to the more searching discussions on the negotiation of a convention on chemical weapons that are to take place when we resume our work in June.

The nuclear issue is quite different, and the specific proposal submitted to us by the delegations of several socialist countries itself reflects this difference, in that it is concerned not with the substance of the problem but with the modalities of negotiation, with "negotiation about a negotiation". The question is under what conditions the negotiation might start, and whether those conditions are fulfilled.

This brings us to a brief review of the features that now characterize the nuclear problem.

My country's views on the subject were stated by the President of the French Republic, in his address to the General Assembly at its special session, and by our Minister for Foreign Affairs when he addressed this Committee. What I am about to say reflects largely their statements.

The first of these features, and one that is fully recognized by the sponsors of document CD/4, is the vastness and complexity of the problem.

The problem has been with us for a third of a century. Owing to the stockpiling of weapons and their growing sophistication, and to the diversity of strategic situations, the problem has become a good deal more difficult. The consequence is that approaches differ, as we saw once again during the discussions at the special session. The actual terms of the Final Document are testimony of the complexity and diversity of the factors to be taken into account.

At the same time, it is common knowledge that in the vast area that stretches over most of the northern hemisphere the nuclear weapon has become an integral part of the over-all military balance. The generous but unrealistic attempt to ensure security through the abolition of the nuclear weapon alone, regardless of the broader political and military context, would compromise this balance and so jeopardize security.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

That being so, the size and constant technical improvement of the arsenals at the disposal of the two principal nuclear Powers are at the heart of the problem. And because they have recognized this fundamental reality and the dangers it implies, these two Powers, by dint of efforts which we have acknowledged, have developed their own approach. My country welcomed this, while realizing that the results in terms of effective reductions of nuclear armaments will materialize only in stages and after long and complex negotiations.

Against such a background, what might be France's possible contribution? Our answer is unequivocal. If, as a result of substantial reductions in these arsenals, the disproportion between the nuclear forces of these Powers and the force that we intend to maintain to guarantee security and ensure the credibility of our deterrent should change radically, we might consider drawing the appropriate conclusions.

We know that, as things stand at present, nuclear weapons cannot be isolated from the general process of disarmament, which must take account of all military resources, the diversity of regional situations and the right of all to security.

Last year, when the General Assembly considered the recommendations adopted at the special session, it drew a most relevant conclusion by recommending that the agenda of the Disarmament Commission should include, in addition to the priority consideration of the constituent parts of a global disarmament programme, the consideration of various aspects of the arms race, and in particular nuclear disarmament.

Under these circumstances, is it desirable for our Committee, whose real *raison d'être* is negotiation, to carry on a discussion that will normally take place in the Disarmament Commission, whose deliberative function has been affirmed by the Assembly? It is in the light of that discussion in the Commission that it might appear advisable for this Committee to take up, at the appropriate time and under the appropriate circumstances, the one or other aspect of the problem we are discussing.

Mr. BENSMAIL (Algeria) (translated from French): As this is the first time I am taking the floor under your chairmanship, I should like first of all to express my satisfaction at seeing you occupy this high office at a crucial stage of our Committee's work and to wish you every success in your task. I should also like to take this occasion to express once more to your predecessor, Ambassador Thomson of Australia, my appreciation of the patience and perseverance which he displayed throughout the laborious and intensive negotiations that led to the adoption of the Disarmament Committee's agenda.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, also to express to the Yugoslav delegation the deep grief and sympathy we feel with regard to the tragic events that have just taken place in Yugoslavia.

I would also like to ask the Swedish delegation to transmit our sincere condolences to Mrs. Thorsson on her recent bereavement.

The Disarmament Committee will have devoted practically the entire first part of its annual session to the examination and adoption of its rules of procedure and its agenda. This betokens the importance which all Member States attach to the elaboration of a set of rules to govern the Committee's work and to the adoption of a general framework for its activities and of an agenda listing the matters selected for consideration during this year. It is also a token of the general interest shown in our Committee's work by all its member States after the democratization of all organs dealing with disarmament since the holding of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Disarmament Committee has decided to devote the few days remaining at its disposal before the end of the first part of its session to the consideration of two important issues, namely: chemical weapons and nuclear disarmament.

We are pleased that the Committee has chosen the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament as a topic for reflection. The priority nature of this issue was duly recognized in the Final Document of the tenth special session and we feel bound to express our gratitude to the delegations of the States of Eastern Europe for having taken the initiative of submitting for our Committee's consideration a document concerning negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles

(Mr. Bensmail, Algeria)

until they have been completely destroyed. Owing to the constant enlargement and sophistication of nuclear arsenals this problem is becoming more and more urgent, for, as the United Nations General Assembly emphasized in the Final Document of its special session, on disarmament, existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth. It is therefore more than ever necessary to avert forever the risk of a war involving the use of nuclear weapons, to halt the nuclear arms race and to proceed to the implementation of concrete measures of nuclear disarmament. The goal of ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed will, of course, be difficult to achieve all at once. This is why appropriate measures, such as the cessation of the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, cessation of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and gradual reduction of the accumulated stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, should be implemented by stages. It goes without saying that all these measures will necessitate the elaboration of mutually acceptable verification measures. The initiative of a group of socialist States therefore deserves special attention on the part of members of our Committee, which should show itself to be capable of fully playing its role as a multilateral organ for negotiating disarmament measures.

Among the other items on the agenda for this year there is one matter to which my Government attaches special importance.

I refer to the preparation of an international convention on guarantees to be given to non-nuclear States. In this connexion we wish to reaffirm that non-nuclear-weapon States, and particularly the non-aligned countries which deliberately hold themselves aloof from the military alliances formed round the principal nuclear Powers, are entitled, since they have of their own accord forsworn the acquisition of nuclear weapons, to formulate demands with regard to the establishment of an adequate system of security guarantees.

At its special session the United Nations General Assembly recognized that nuclear-weapon States should take measures to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons. Moreover, while noting the unilateral declarations made by certain nuclear Powers at that special session,

(Mr. Bensmail, Algeria)

the General Assembly urgently requested them to make "effective arrangements, as appropriate, to assure non-nuclear-weapon States". Algeria has always maintained that such assurances should be given in a multilateral context and should have legal force. Furthermore, at its thirty-third regular session the General Assembly adopted two resolutions submitted by the USSR and Pakistan, respectively. Although different in certain respects, both resolutions have the same objective, that of ensuring on an international scale that guarantees which are effective and have legal force are given to non-nuclear-weapon States. Under the terms of those two resolutions, our Committee is requested to consider the draft conventions submitted by Pakistan and the USSR and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. My delegation is grateful to the delegation of Pakistan for submitting document CD/10, which constitutes a sound basis for commencing discussions on this issue, and will comment upon the document when it is considered by the Committee during the second part of the session.

According to the programme of work we have adopted, we shall have to deal with the question of chemical weapons -- universally recognized as a priority issue, for in the Final Document adopted by the tenth special session the General Assembly itself affirmed that "The complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction represent one of the most urgent measures of disarmament. Consequently, the conclusion of a convention to this end, on which negotiations have been going on for several years, is one of the most urgent tasks of multilateral negotiations". The General Assembly's concern was not exhausted by this affirmation, since in its resolution 33/59 A, adopted by consensus at the thirty-third session, it expressly requested the Committee on Disarmament to undertake, at the beginning of its 1979 session, negotiations with a view to elaborating an agreement on the prohibition and destruction of all chemical weapons. Hence the priority status of this issue cannot be challenged.

My delegation shares the disappointment of many other delegations at the absence of progress in the consideration of the question of chemical weapons within the principal international negotiating forum. Yet, since 1972, there has been no shortage of initiatives, for three draft conventions on chemical weapons have been presented in the CCD by the socialist countries, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

(Mr. Bensmail, Algeria)

In addition, in 1974 the United States and the Soviet Union announced their intention to present to the CCD a joint initiative on the subject, and since 1976 these two States have held bilateral talks for this purpose. Lastly, a substantial amount of work was accomplished in the CCD with regard to the chemical weapons question, and a group of non-aligned and neutral countries members of the CCD stated their position in that respect in working paper CCD/400.

The Group of 21 recently took a further step in the desired direction by submitting to the Disarmament Committee document CD/11 of 9 April 1979. The object of this initiative is to set in motion the process of negotiations on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction by the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group, open to the participation of all States members of the Committee, with a view to elaborating a draft convention on that question. In discharging its responsibility the Ad Hoc Working Group would have as a basic text for its work the proposals and working papers on a convention on chemical weapons presented to the Committee and its predecessor. As regards the bilateral talks between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Ad Hoc Working Group should be kept fully informed of their progress and a report indicating areas in which agreement has been reached as well as issues which are still outstanding should be submitted to the Committee as soon as possible. In my delegation's view, negotiations in the Committee do not have to be preceded by the conclusion of the bilateral talks; it considers, on the contrary, that they may proceed parallel with the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The principal task of the Ad Hoc Working Group whose establishment we are proposing will be to identify areas of agreement and possible new elements of importance for the formulation of the scope and verification of a chemical weapons convention. We hope, therefore, that the Committee will give all due attention to the proposal submitted by the Group of 21 and that it will entrust to the Ad Hoc Working Group the task of elaborating a draft convention on chemical weapons, thus demonstrating the importance to be attached to the General Assembly's recommendations.

(Mr. Bensmail, Algeria)

The slowness which has characterized the progress of our work to date has perhaps been necessary. Efforts to achieve disarmament have had to be resumed in a new, more democratic, more representative setting and in the fresh spirit infused by the tenth special session. Now that the general structure of our activities has been defined with all necessary care we should, with equal care, get down to the real work of negotiating disarmament measures. The spirit of dialogue and understanding which we have witnessed in our Committee so far leads us to believe that the task entrusted to us is not an impossible one and that we shall succeed in fulfilling the international community's expectations.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Algeria for his statement, and for his appreciative words about myself and my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, my delegation would also like to thank you for associating it with the condolences which you have so eloquently expressed to Mrs. Thorsson on her sad bereavement.

Permit me to associate my delegation with the several other delegations which have already expressed their congratulations to you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Committee. The substantial progress that we have achieved under your guidance is both a tribute to your skill and an assurance of success in the remaining sessions of this Committee. At the same time, I should like to place on record the deep admiration felt by my delegation for the skill and patience with which your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Thomson of Australia, brought to a successful conclusion the complicated and important task to which the Committee addressed itself last month. Perhaps distinguished members of the Committee are not aware of the fact that during Ambassador Thomson's tenure, Pakistan and Australia were locked in bloody battles on the cricket fields of Melbourne and Perth, and I can pay no greater tribute to Ambassador Thomson's impartiality and equanimity as Chairman than to report that he was neither rough with my delegation when Pakistan won the first match nor indulgent when we lost the second.

The Pakistan delegation is most gratified that the Committee on Disarmament has finally concluded its consideration of organizational matters and has today initiated substantive examination of the item on the "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". My purpose today is not to speak directly to this item since I have had a previous opportunity in the Committee to express my

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

country's views on the question of nuclear disarmament and on the proposal presented by the socialist countries in document CD/4. Today, the Pakistan delegation would like to introduce the paper it has submitted on the question of security assurances to non-nuclear countries against the nuclear threat, contained in document CD/10, and to make some observations on items related to the subject.

The question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States has been on the disarmament agenda for more than a decade. Despite this, and despite the numerous proposals submitted by the non-nuclear-weapon States, in various forums, no effective and concrete solution has been evolved so far to provide credible assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States against exposure to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

But there have been encouraging developments. Resolution 31/189-C of the General Assembly, which was reaffirmed a year later at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly, has by overwhelming majorities, endorsed a specific formula for the kind of security assurances to be provided by the nuclear Powers to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Furthermore, at the tenth special session, the unilateral declarations of some of the nuclear Powers were clearly serious attempts to respond to the pre-occupations of the non-nuclear States. But, with one exception, these declarations were not considered as sufficiently credible by the non-nuclear-weapon States. Therefore, in paragraph 59 of the Final Document of the Special Session, the nuclear Powers were called on to conclude -- and I repeat, to conclude -- effective arrangements, as appropriate, to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Pakistan believes that such "effective arrangements" to assure non-nuclear-weapon States can best be provided in an international instrument with binding legal effect. The question of security assurances is not bilateral in its scope and effect; it has global implications impinging on the security of all States. Secondly, to be at all credible, such assurances must be extended in legally binding form. Any other modality would fall short of the test of credibility. Unilateral declarations, however positive they may sound, are statements of governmental policy, and, as I have said before, policies, like Governments, are apt to change. Such unilateral declarations are even less satisfactory when they are hedged by various reservations and limitations.

We are gratified that this point of view is endorsed by the Soviet Union, which already took a concrete initiative for the adoption of an international convention

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

on the subject of security guarantees at the last session of the General Assembly. The two resolutions on this subject adopted by the General Assembly, resolution 33/72 A and resolution 33/72 L, while confirming the decision of the special session, have called upon this Committee to consider the draft conventions circulated by Pakistan and the Soviet Union in the General Assembly together with other proposals and suggestions designed to achieve the same objective of providing non-nuclear-weapon States with effective assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The paper circulated as document CD/10 reflects Pakistan's current thinking on the subject of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The draft convention annexed to this document is identical to the one circulated by Pakistan at the last General Assembly. The main features of its preamble and seven articles are: first, it starts from the premise that the best assurances of security against the nuclear threat is the total prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the achievement of nuclear disarmament; secondly, that the extension of legal and international assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States is an obligation on the nuclear Powers arising from their claim, at least for the time being, to retain nuclear weapons, and thirdly, that the existence of the opposing global alliance systems under which the option to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States is kept open, must not form an insuperable obstacle to the extension of security assurances to those non-nuclear States which are not parties to these alliances. The Pakistan delegation believes that this draft Convention not only reflects the aspirations of the non-nuclear-weapon States to enhance their security against the nuclear menace but also deals in a balanced and realistic manner with the problem of reconciling the existence of nuclear armaments and the need to make a first move towards the prohibition of their use. It, therefore, provides a sound basis on which to begin negotiations on the question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

The Pakistan delegation is very much encouraged by the unanimous inclusion on the agenda of the Committee for 1979 of the item entitled "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". The very formulation of the item upholds the view, which is shared by the vast majority of the membership of this Committee and of the General Assembly, that a binding international instrument should be negotiated on this subject. My delegation is, therefore, prepared to consider all ideas and proposals on the subject, and to enter into negotiations with other delegations, especially the delegation of the Soviet Union, in the Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

We believe that the consideration of this subject in our Committee should begin on the basis of the agreement reached at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, i.e. in paragraph 59 of the Final Document, as supplemented by the two resolutions of the thirty-third General Assembly session. Therefore, our deliberations and subsequent negotiations could usefully focus on two points: firstly, the scope and nature of the guarantee to be provided to the non-nuclear-weapon States, and secondly, the precise "effective" and "international" form in which it could be extended. My delegation would suggest that the Committee should begin its consideration of these points in a general debate for a week or two, when it reconvenes in June. Thereafter, an ad hoc working group, or some other informal mechanism could be set up to begin consideration of specific approaches and concrete texts proposed on this subject.

I should now like to make a few observations on the related subject of nuclear non-proliferation. My delegation has followed with the greatest interest the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of India before this Committee on 3 April 1979. At the outset, I wish to emphasize that my delegation's reply to Ambassador Garekhan's remarks are not in any way intended to be polemical but, on the contrary, is a response and a continuation of what is already beginning to constitute a sober and serious dialogue, worthy of the dignity of this Committee and the important purpose for which it was constituted. It is, therefore, the hope of my delegation that the debate will continue to be guided by these objectives and that it will attract the interest and participation of other delegations.

There are many points in the statement made by Ambassador Garekhan which I can endorse. Pakistan agrees that non-proliferation of nuclear weapons involves both the reversal of the nuclear-arms race and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. But we would desist from drawing the rather drastic, if not purposeless, conclusion that unless nuclear disarmament is instantaneously and universally achieved, nothing can or should be done to check the spread of nuclear weapons. Indeed, further pursuits of such a line of argument could render infructuous almost all the work of our Committee. Secondly, Pakistan also endorses, and will continue to uphold staunchly, the principles contained in the Final Document for the exercise of the inalienable right of all countries freely to develop and acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. As is perhaps known to the distinguished

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

members of the Committee, Pakistan was the first to propose the adoption of these principles at the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. Thirdly, we also subscribe to the concept, contained in the Final Document, that international safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities should be applied through the IAEA on a non-discriminatory basis. The primary danger of proliferation today arises from the selective application or non-application of safeguards.

My delegation has noted with gratification that the statement of Ambassador Garekhan contained a reiteration of pledge of the distinguished Prime Minister of India not to manufacture nuclear weapons. My Government has already expressed appreciation of this statement, but unilateral declarations, no matter how solemnly they may be made, cannot form a credible basis for a non-proliferation policy, either at the international or at the regional level. Such commitments must be undertaken in a legally binding and verifiable form. Pakistan is prepared to give such commitments simultaneously with India. For this purpose, Pakistan has suggested that India and Pakistan accept international or bilateral inspection of their nuclear facilities on a reciprocal basis; or that both simultaneously accept the application of full-scope safeguards to all their nuclear activities, or that both jointly ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We would be most happy if India would respond positively to any of these initiatives and suggestions.

My delegation makes no apology for once again bringing to the notice of this Committee in general and of the distinguished Indian delegation in particular the request that it should seriously consider the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, we feel, provides the best means of assuring against nuclear proliferation at the present time. This regional concept possesses none of the discriminatory features of international non-proliferation efforts and treats each participating State equally and without distinction.

I am aware that Ambassador Garekhan, in his statement, expressed doubts on whether the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones was a disarmament measure, since it does not involve the actual dismantling of any nuclear weapons. I would submit, with respect, that while the value of the argument is doubtful even in semantic terms, it possesses for our Committee implications of serious consequence, for it attempts to remove from the purview of our consideration one of the most

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

effective instruments and methods of nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, as we understand it, the SALT II accord may also not entail any actual dismantling of nuclear weapons; yet surely, no one doubts the importance of this accord for the objective of disarmament. Nor can we exclude the consideration of nuclear-weapon-free zones in this Committee merely because they have been the subject of a prior study by the previous negotiating body. Chemical weapons too have been the subject of numerous studies. No-one can seriously argue thereby that chemical weapons should not be considered in this Committee.

It is obvious that for the effective as well as juridical creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the voluntary consent and participation of all the significant regional States is necessary. But in our view, the absence of prior unanimity among all the States in a region does not preclude the international community from examining and encouraging the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Indeed, it is incumbent upon us to take note of the reality of the dangers of proliferation as they exist today, especially in such regions as Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. Should the African countries give up their endeavour to keep their continent free of nuclear weapons merely because South Africa entertains nuclear ambitions? Or should the intransigence of Israel constitute a veto on the search for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East?

In South Asia, the danger is perhaps even more acute, especially as the region has already witnessed and felt the impact of a nuclear explosion. I would submit, therefore, that it is not the "persistent efforts" made for the creation of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia which should give rise to doubts, but it is rather the persistent opposition to the universally endorsed imperative of preventing the spread of nuclear armaments, that constitute matters of so much concern.

My delegation was surprised to note the remark of Ambassador Garekhan that it is not for this Committee or for the United Nations to impose negotiations for a nuclear-weapon-free zone. I may mention in passing that in the case of the African and Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zones, a role has been envisaged for the Security Council. But in the case of South Asia, there is, in our view, no question of imposition, because a nuclear-weapon-free zone will fit precisely into the unilaterally declared intentions of all the States in the region. As you are aware, the leaders of all the States in the region have unequivocally declared

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their intention not to produce nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia would accordingly provide a regional and binding instrument to give collective expression to these policies.

Therefore, it remains our hope that the Government of India will reconsider its position on the proposal for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia. At the very least, we hope that India will respond positively to the proposal recently made by the President of Pakistan to the Prime Minister of India that the countries of South Asia adopt a joint declaration, having international status and a binding character, which would renounce the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

The goal of nuclear non-proliferation can be achieved through a global response, promoted within the United Nations on the basis of universality, non-discrimination and the sovereign equality of States. To approach the problem on a subjective or selective basis and to apply different standards to different States, to submit to expediency rather than principle, will promote regional imbalances, imperil peace and security in many regions of the world and thereby subvert the goal of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. In this context my delegation takes an extremely serious view of the discriminatory practice of some major Powers in their treatment of various non-nuclear weapon States. It seems incomprehensible to us that a country which has exploded a nuclear device, possesses a clear capability to manufacture nuclear weapons, and has rejected the application of international safeguards to its nuclear fuel cycle facilities, including plutonium reprocessing and uranium enrichment plants; continues to receive nuclear and other form of assistance; whilst on the other hand, a country which has subjected its nuclear facilities to international inspection, and has expressed its willingness to extend concrete mutual pledges for non-proliferation, is to be denied even economic development assistance. It is heartening to note some reassuring signs that public opinion is not unappreciative of this vital aspect and the imperative of adopting a non-discriminatory approach to deal with the issue of non-proliferation in South Asia. Pakistan, for its part, has offered many alternative ways and means of ensuring against the spread of nuclear weapons in South Asia and we would be happy to receive a positive response to these initiatives.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his statement and for his kind words about me and my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I would first like to express the thanks of the delegation of the United States to you for conveying, on behalf of all of us, your expressions of condolence to Mme Thorsson in her recent sad bereavement. We, of course, want to do this in our own right as well, as we all feel the burden of it.

Today marks the very first day that this Committee will officially devote to the subject of the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament. This is not a new concern for the nations of the world. Indeed, our distinguished colleague from Nigeria reminded us on 10 April that the first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, a resolution which was adopted by consensus, urged the elimination of atomic weapons from national arsenals. This objective has been restated and reaffirmed by leaders of all States in many fora, and the United States, for its part, is well aware of the special responsibility carried by the major nuclear-weapon States for nuclear disarmament. The experience of the last decade, however, demonstrates that reaching agreement on ultimate objectives is a far simpler task than negotiating the accords which in fact will bring us closer to those objectives.

Too often our statements of ultimate objectives, with which we all agree, have been interpreted as predictions that these objectives can be obtained in the immediate future. When this fails to happen, we all share a sense of disappointment. For some, this disappointment is perhaps tinged with suspicion about the motives of the negotiating parties.

It is in this context that the United States delegation would refer to the process which, it is hoped, will soon lead to the second agreement generally referred to as SALT II, a comprehensive agreement on limiting strategic offensive nuclear arms.

SALT II has provided an excellent example of the inherent difficulties in nuclear-arms control and how by patient, painstaking work, these difficulties can be overcome. In the United States and elsewhere, it has been attacked by some because of the limits it will impose. SALT II has been criticized by others because the limits and constraints it will impose are deemed insufficient, not worth the effort it has taken to achieve what has been accomplished thus far. Still others have belittled the agreement, asserting that technological advances have rendered its provisions irrelevant. One might comment that an agreement with such a variety of distinguished critics cannot be all bad. I wish to speak to each of these criticisms, and in the process of doing this, to provide some insights into United States perceptions and objectives regarding nuclear-arms control.

(Mr. Fisher, United States of America)

The SALT negotiations symbolize the recognition by the United States and the Soviet Union that unrestrained nuclear-arms competition carries with it the danger of increased risk of nuclear holocaust. I recognize also the technological revolution created by nuclear weapons. In the pre-nuclear era, the military forces of a country -- whether regarded as offensive or defensive -- served not only to deter attack, but if deterrence failed, to defend the homeland. Today; it is difficult to envisage the results of an exchange of nuclear weapons. We know that it would be an unprecedented catastrophe for mankind, and many have asked the question: "Would the survivors envy the dead?" Deterrence of nuclear war has thus become the foremost national security objective of the United States.

To make our deterrent credible, and to ensure that others do not derive political advantages from perceived disparities in military forces, the United States has established essential equivalence in strategic forces as a second objective. We speak of essential equivalence because we realize that the strategic forces of our country and of the Soviet Union will never be absolutely identical. Each has developed its own forces in a different geographic, political, historical and technological environment. Each side has advantages in certain areas which are offset by advantages of the other side in different areas. Thus, when examined using only one type of static criteria, the disparity between the two forces may appear markedly different when one looks at the entire picture. Nevertheless, the concerns of those who worry about possible imbalances between the two forces are real and are an undeniable factor in the problem of achieving a SALT agreement.

I should now like to speak to the criticisms of those who think the limits contained in SALT II are inadequate. Many have reminded us of the remarks made by President Carter on 7 October 1977, at the United Nations: "The United States is willing to go as far as possible, consistent with our security interests, in limiting and reducing nuclear weapons. On a reciprocal basis we are willing now to reduce them by 10 per cent, by 20 per cent, even by 50 per cent. Then we will work for further reductions to a world truly free of nuclear weapons." I should like to recall that the United States expressed its willingness in March 1977 to accept reductions greater than those we expect to be incorporated in SALT II.

Specifically we proposed, among other things, at that time that:

- the authorized number of strategic delivery vehicles (heavy bombers, ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers) drop from 2,400 down to 1,800-2,000;
- the authorized MIRV launchers be reduced from 1,320 to 1,100-1,200;
- the authorized number of MIRV launchers of ICBIs, not limited in the Vladivostok understandings, be restricted to no more than 550;
- modifications to existing ICBIs be prohibited and the introduction of new ones be banned.

(Mr. Fisher, United States of America)

When we compare these specific United States proposals to the proposed Vladivostok limits and to the emerging SALT II accord, we find that progress was not as great as we had wished, but that it was nevertheless real. Was this degree of progress worth the effort? I think the answer is clearly yes, and when we think of SALT as a process which will not end with SALT II, the answer must be yes.

Finally, I wish to speak to the concerns of those who fear that technological advances will render meaningless the quantitative limits imposed under SALT II. I would begin by noting that the danger to an arms control regime posed by technological advance can be severe. Those of us who remember the naval limitations of the 1920s also remember that the aircraft carrier dealt more effectively with the capital ship than any arms control agreement could have done. On the ground and in the air, the internal combustion engine combined with wireless communications, accomplished a revolution in military strategy and tactics in only two decades. The United States is aware of the dangers posed by technological advances. Last year, for example, we had proposed that SALT II prohibit modifications to existing ICBMs and bar the introductions of new ones. While this particular aspect of the United States position did not prove negotiable in its entirety, the SALT II agreement will, in fact contain very significant qualitative restraints. It will establish restrictions on the degree to which the two parties will be permitted to exploit technological advances to load additional warheads on a given type of missile, whether ICBM or SLBM. Further, it will allow each side to develop only one new type of ICBM. Each of these constraints is significant in itself. Together, they constitute an important contribution to strategic stability and to slowing the qualitative arms race. Moreover, the United States hopes these qualitative restraints will act to strengthen the significance of the quantitative limits in SALT.

My remarks today have been limited and, I trust, reasonably brief. I have offered no new sweeping proposals. I have spoken to only a few aspects of the SALT negotiations. I have left for a future date observations regarding other essential steps toward nuclear disarmament such as a comprehensive test ban, and SALT III. And if I have disappointed some, I trust I have misled none. The process of nuclear disarmament is and will remain difficult. It is perhaps all too easy to underestimate these difficulties. Therefore, I would conclude my remarks today with one request addressed to each representative here.

Before making any judgments as to how to proceed toward nuclear disarmament, before becoming committed to sweeping schemes which articulate desirable objectives without addressing the hard, practical problems that must be faced, I ask you to

(Mr. Fisher, United States of America)

reflect on the considerations I have just outlined. At the same time I would ask you to recognize that a process is at work, and that, as imperfect as it may be, the process leading to SALT II and to further agreements can result in achievements of major importance and, even more significantly, can lay the foundation for practical and rational progress toward the goal all of us share -- complete nuclear disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to mention that I still have five speakers on my list, and it will obviously not be possible to hear them all before 1 p.m.

May I suggest therefore that we hear the next speaker, Ambassador Fein, and then break off and resume this afternoon.

Mr. FEIN (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, we are grateful to you for having conveyed, through Ambassador Lidgard, our condolences to Mrs. Thorsson, with which we are most sincerely associated. Sir, since this is the first time that I take the floor in a formal meeting of our Committee this month, may I therefore express to you, Ambassador Noterdaeme, my greatest personal and official satisfaction at seeing you, a most worthy representative of your country, with which my own is closely related in so many respects, occupying the presidency of this Committee. You have our warmest wishes for success in the difficult task that the presidency entails. We also have a debt of gratitude to Ambassador Thomson of Australia for his tremendous and successful efforts as your predecessor. I also take pleasure in welcoming in our midst the new representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Summerhayes, and the representative of Zaire, Ambassador Kamanda wa Kamanda.

Today I wish to make a few, preliminary, remarks concerning nuclear disarmament on which subject we have agreed to concentrate during this period of our session.

Of course, these remarks are not preliminary in the sense that my Government has not already made known its views concerning nuclear disarmament on previous occasions. My remarks are preliminary in the sense of our Committee now starting to deal with this subject under agenda item 2.

I intend to discuss very briefly working document CD/4, presented by a number of members of this Committee, but I also intend to make some additional comments. It is evident that not all aspects of this highly complicated matter can be dealt with in detail because of the regrettably short time available to prepare this part of the session of the Committee on Disarmament.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

First of all, my delegation does not consider that it is beyond the scope of this Committee to deal with matters related to halting the nuclear-arms race and to work for nuclear disarmament. Indeed, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament developed several treaties dealing with different aspects of the nuclear arms race and we hope to conclude in the near future a treaty banning all nuclear-weapons tests. However, as I said in my first statement this year (CD/PV.6), we must carefully select which questions can better be discussed bilaterally, which regionally and which in a world-wide forum. In the nuclear field, important matters are discussed elsewhere, e.g. in SALT. It would seem ill advised to disturb such processes with parallel and overlapping talks in this Committee. We must carefully select our topics. One of these has been, of course, the comprehensive test ban, although also in this case we are waiting -- rather impatiently I might add -- for the conclusion of the trilateral talks.

I also would like to remark that nuclear disarmament matters cannot be separated from other disarmament discussions. Indeed, security considerations of different regions have to be recognized in that respect. I noted that the distinguished delegate of the Soviet Union on 5 April stressed that total military arsenals, including conventional weapons, have to be taken into account.

It is in particular on the question of selection that my delegation is somewhat puzzled by the proposal contained in CD/4 and the explanation given to it by its sponsors. The proposal seems rather broad and imprecise, which raises questions as to its usefulness. Document CD/4 mentions the cessation of the production of all nuclear weapons and their destruction without indicating in what stages this should happen, who would participate in the different stages, how this process can be reconciled with SALT and other forums and, last but not least, how all this could be verified.

Now, it seems possible that the co-sponsors of document CD/4 have an open mind as to how to solve these problems and only want to stimulate discussions in this Committee on how to tackle the nuclear disarmament problem. In that spirit, my delegation is willing to make a modest contribution.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

In particular with respect to the important verification question it is perhaps worthwhile, even at this early stage, to consider the implications of verifying a halt in the production of nuclear warheads and the destruction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons. A full-scope safeguards system is in any case necessary to ensure that no nuclear materials are diverted from peaceful uses. But that would not be enough. The matter is, of course, of such importance that one would have to make absolutely certain that no nuclear weapons are produced any more and that existing nuclear weapons are destroyed. This would mean, inter alia, that one would need to know where all nuclear-weapons production facilities are and that these are dismantled or in any case have stopped production. It would also mean that possibilities have to be created to trace all stockpiles of nuclear weapons, and this would require a rather intrusive kind of verification. Considering our discussions until now on the verification question, I do not entertain great hopes that all countries involved would accept such kind of verification.

A more indirect, but in the end probably effective, way of halting the production of nuclear weapons would be the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. This proposal was made a long time ago and has always been supported by my Government. Canada has recently pursued this idea again. The great advantage of the proposal is that an internationally accepted system to verify the measure is already in existence: the nuclear safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Indeed, application of this system to the whole peaceful nuclear fuel cycle of the nuclear-weapon States and transfer of all military enrichment and reprocessing plants to the peaceful cycle would make it possible to verify the halting of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes, at least in theory.

There are a number of practical problems, such as the question of military propulsion reactors, but these problems are, if the political will exists, probably solvable. An important advantage of the proposal is that all countries, nuclear-weapons States and non-nuclear-weapons States, would accept the same type of verification, removing a discriminatory feature of present safeguards application.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Unfortunately, document CD/4 does not give any hint of how to tackle the basic verification problem. The main sponsor has not given any practical indication that it is willing to accept nuclear safeguards on its peaceful nuclear facilities, safeguards which are applied all over the world. Perhaps I may mention that in the first NPT Review Conference some hope was raised that the Soviet Union was changing its mind: it accepted in the final document of that Conference the following sentence: "The Conference emphasises the necessity for the States party to the Treaty that have not yet done so to conclude as soon as possible safeguards agreements with the IAEA." You may note that no distinction is made between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in this sentence. Since that time, however, our expectations in this field have not been fulfilled, although in the meantime three other nuclear-weapon States have accepted IAEA safeguards.

Now, if one is not even willing to consider the application of well defined verification measures on peaceful nuclear activities, how can we undertake negotiations on disarmament measures which require even more intrusive verification? I would very much hope we can find a solution, but we would need some more information from the sponsors of CD/4 to create the necessary confidence that success in the end can be achieved.

I will not say much about the question of participation of all nuclear-weapon States in possible discussions on nuclear disarmament: that is for them to decide. It would seem strange, however, to prepare negotiations between all nuclear-weapon States without the participation of all.

We were happy to note that document CD/4 clearly recognizes that the nuclear-weapon States would participate in diverse ways in the different stages of the nuclear disarmament process. Indeed, participation of all nuclear-weapon States in discussions on nuclear disarmament -- certainly a worthwhile goal -- must not imply that the two main Powers have less responsibility for effective measures in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of the Netherlands for his statement, and I would like to assure him that I greatly appreciate the cordial words he had to say about me and about Belgium. I would add that I also appreciate the tribute he paid to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

In the interests of our work it seems to me that we should suspend our debate at this point. I would suggest that we resume this afternoon, at whatever time you think convenient.

Would you be ready to resume the work this afternoon at 3 or 3.30 p.m. if this suggestion meets with your approval?

I am of course at the disposal of the members of the Committee.

Mr. LIDGARD (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, since we have just been informed that there will be consultations in our group at 3 o'clock, would it be possible to hold the meeting at 3.45?

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Could we recommence this afternoon at 3.45 p.m.?

Mr. Simard suggests 4 p.m. That being so, I would like to suggest that, to give delegations wishing to hold consultations sufficient time to do so, we should resume our work at 4 p.m.

If there are no comments, I shall suspend the meeting now. It will resume this afternoon at 4 p.m., as agreed.

I declare the plenary meeting suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 4 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I now invite the distinguished delegates to resume the work of our twenty-eighth plenary meeting.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): At the outset of my statement I should like to associate myself with the words of condolences which you yourself, Mr. Chairman, and other speakers have expressed to the leader of the delegation of Sweden.

It gives me great pleasure to take the floor under the chairmanship of a distinguished representative of Belgium -- a country with which Poland has traditionally enjoyed fruitful co-operation, especially in the field of European security and disarmament. I would also like to take this opportunity to express to our chairman for the month of March, Ambassador Thomson of Australia, the appreciation of my delegation for the wisdom, skill and courtesy with which he approached the difficult assignments of his office last month.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

May I also take this occasion to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Summerhayes of the United Kingdom and Ambassador Kamanda Wa Kamanda of Zaire. I look forward to fruitful co-operation with both of them in the pursuit of our common objectives.

In my brief intervention today I should like to address some problems relative to item 2 of the Committee's agenda for 1979 — the question of cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament. In fact, as one of the co-sponsors of document CD/4, I have already had the occasion to comment on various aspects of nuclear disarmament and on specific issues raised in the proposal of the socialist countries.

However, I believe that in the light of the broad interest in and the considerable support of many delegations for the ideas advanced in that document, further comments would be quite in order. Such comments would appear to us fully justified also in view of opinions which were on the more sceptical side.

The international community has long recognized the pre-eminence of measures of nuclear disarmament by according highest priority to efforts in that regard. The most authoritative statements in that respect have been formulated, of course, at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. As it will be recalled, paragraph 20 of the Final Document states in part:

"... effective measures of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war have the highest priority. To this end, it is imperative to remove the threat of nuclear weapons, to halt and reverse the nuclear-arms race until the total elimination of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems has been achieved, and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons".

In the considered view of the Polish delegation, the initiative concerning negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed fully responds to the recommendations of the United Nations General Assembly made at the special session and the thirty-third regular session. Failure to examine that proposal would be entirely unwarranted. The Committee on Disarmament would be unable to explain or to justify at the United Nations and to public opinion at large its inaction on a proposal of that scope. Consequently, we must not accept arguments that there is no need to examine the proposal of the socialist countries, that it can be dismissed, in fact, as a concept with only "superficial attractions".

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

Indeed, in the opinion of the co-sponsors of CD/4, the Committee is duty bound to make an honest and constructive effort to explore all aspects of that proposal. That means, first of all, going beyond superficial or hasty judgements. Unless we do just that, we will not be able to say whether the proposed course of action is or is not realistic. At this moment the empty chair on the other side of this negotiating table reminds me of the saying that "even the longest march must commence with the first step".

The first step -- as we see it -- would be to start a process of consultations between the co-sponsors on one hand and individual interested States or groups of States, members of the Committee, on the other. In his interesting statement earlier this morning, the distinguished representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Fein, formulated precisely this sort of question which can and should clarify the course of consultations we have in mind. Obviously, one would be hard put to provide clarifications and answers without first knowing what doubts our partners might have, and what questions they may want to ask. Therefore, we suggest, let us think what terms of reference should we adopt for our consultations and how we could most effectively pursue them. We might usefully apply our minds, for instance, to consider what should be the form and scope of such future negotiations, who and at what stages, apart from the nuclear-weapon Powers, should be involved in them in the first place. Obviously, there are important States whose conventional military potential will need to be taken into account in such negotiations if the principles of undiminished security and of balance of power are to be respected.

The argument that the absence of the representatives of the People's Republic of China from this Committee somehow detracts from the practical value of the measures proposed in document CD/4 does not quite hold. For one thing, the special session has recognized the right of China to participate in the work of the Committee. This right has been acknowledged by that country which, as a matter of fact, reserved its seat at the conference table. The nameplate on the table and the fact that the People's Republic of China has requested to be listed among members of the Committee would indicate that its representatives are not far away, that they can be easily contacted and that the position of that country can be easily established on any matter, including the problem of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

During the current session of the Committee, which regrettably focused its attention primarily on matters of procedure, there were many delegations, including those of Algeria, Mexico and Sweden, which placed considerable emphasis on effective measures of nuclear disarmament. Sharing fully their concern about the course of the nuclear-arms race and about the prospects of nuclear disarmament, the socialist countries have submitted a document which seeks to translate those pre-occupations and concerns into practical and workable proposals. The Polish delegation is confident that the summer session of the Committee will provide a better climate and more opportunity to turn the debate which we have just initiated into concrete and constructive consultations on how to promote the objectives of document CD/4. It is the view of my delegation that the extent to which we shall succeed in this task will be a measure of the efficacy of our Committee.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Poland for his statement. I would also like to thank him for his kind remarks about me and my country, and also about my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

Mr. ENE (Romania) (translated from French): I would like to associate myself, first of all, with the deep sympathy and condolences which you, Mr. Chairman, and other speakers expressed earlier today to Mrs. Thorsson, the distinguished representative of Sweden, and which we all share on this day of mourning.

Mr. Chairman, before beginning my statement, allow me to say that the Romanian delegation is particularly happy to be participating in the work of this Committee under your chairmanship, as an eminent diplomat and the distinguished representative of a friendly country.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express to Ambassador Thomson of Australia our profound appreciation of the manner in which he guided the preparation of our Committee's agenda up to its final conclusion, an operation which will greatly facilitate our work in the years to come. We thank him very specially for the democratic spirit in which he conducted the proceedings. On this basis, the Committee can now start to consider the substantive problems it has to solve.

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

In my statement today I should like to offer some preliminary thoughts on the item of our agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament".

The inclusion of this item in the agenda of the present session constitutes, in the opinion of the Romanian delegation, encouraging guidance for our Committee's activities. We like to think that the acceptance of this item reflects the Committee's decision to tackle firmly the crucial area of disarmament, namely nuclear disarmament.

Romania has always and methodically supported the banning of nuclear weapons, the halting of their production and their eventual destruction as a fundamental requirement of international life and has always held that negotiations on disarmament should accord top priority to nuclear disarmament.

The urgency of such measures was highlighted by the recent special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament. The Final Document states that "nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization" (para. 47) and that "in the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility" (para. 48).

Accordingly, the Romanian delegation, together with many other delegations, welcomed the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in document CD/4 concerning the start of negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed, and associated itself with that proposal.

We consider, that the prompt commencement of such negotiations would provide evidence of the sense of responsibility with which the Committee intends to carry out its mandate and would, at the same time, testify to the political will of all Member States to respect and to transform into reality the moral and political commitments they have assumed through the Final Document of the special session. In paragraph 42 Member States declare "that they will respect the objectives and principles (of the Final Document) and make every effort faithfully to carry out the Programme of Action".

The further point to be stressed is that nuclear disarmament represents a legal obligation for States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which have pledged themselves to continue in good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to ending the nuclear armaments race at an early date and to

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

nuclear disarmament. The second Conference to examine the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, scheduled for 1980, preparations for which have already started in another room in this very building, will deal in detail with this aspect of the problem.

We do not, of course, fail to appreciate, nor do we in any way simplify, the complexity of achieving this objective. At the same time, however, we think that the existing situation in the field of nuclear disarmament is wholly unjustifiable. Since the time when the United Nations took its first decision, to which the distinguished representative of Nigeria referred a few days ago-- resolution No. 1 (I) of 24 January 1946, envisaging the elimination of atomic weapons from State arsenals-- there have been at least 100 other resolutions making every sort of appeal for ending the nuclear armaments race, but so far there has been no genuine negotiation on nuclear disarmament. As we have already emphasized, although we are fully aware of their importance, neither the ending of nuclear experiments, nor the safety guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States, nor other measures which are being negotiated in other forums, including the SALT Agreements-- to which Romania attaches special significance-- constitute measures of nuclear disarmament.

For all these reasons we consider that our Committee is faced with a particularly important duty. If it wishes to discharge that duty, it cannot limit itself to formal discussions but should pass, without further delay, to specific action.

In our view, such action aimed at ending the production of nuclear weapons and their complete destruction should proceed by stages, graduating from the simple to the complex and taking into consideration, at each stage, the viewpoints of all Parties, without prejudicing the security of any State. Apprehensions as to the complexity of the subject should not lead us to immobility. To affirm willingness to negotiate in the field of disarmament and taking action in that direction in no way affect the military equilibrium. Quite the contrary, that approach would tend to enhance mutual political and military trust.

The Romanian delegation endorses the proposal that, at this first stage, the Committee should organize a broad exchange of views and consultations on

(Mr. Ene, Romania)

ways and means of starting the negotiations. For this purpose, we think that at least four stages would have to be envisaged:

First, draw up an inventory of the problems and concerns which might arise for the various States concerning the commencement of concrete action aimed at ending and reversing the nuclear-arms race. This inventory might be the outcome of the informal discussions to be organized, in the course of which each State will have the opportunity to present its points of view, provided that it is motivated by the sincere desire to identify what it considers as real obstacles in the way of such negotiations.

Secondly, it would be necessary to arrange the problems thus identified in a systematic sequence, so that they may be dealt with in a logical, gradual order. This operation might be carried out by means of a constructive effort to translate the conclusions resulting from the free exchange of views into an action plan. Some of these problems might be found to touch on related fields that might even facilitate the negotiation process. Such proposals might be entrusted, for implementation, to the United Nations or other international forums. We are thinking, in this connexion, of pre-occupations such as that referred to by my own delegation, namely, that pari passu with negotiations on the ending of nuclear weapon production action should be taken with a view to the definitive banning of the use of nuclear weapons and the renunciation by all States of the use or threat of force. There are still other measures achievement of which could be facilitated by an approach in a broader international framework.

Thirdly, it will be necessary to establish the modalities and the framework for the negotiations.

Lastly, in the following stage, a programme of negotiation should be drawn up.

All these ideas are of a preliminary nature. The Romanian delegation will be ready to consider any other method of work conducive to the mobilization of constructive efforts within our Committee. It is nevertheless obvious that all we might achieve in the few days left of this part of the session will be, at most, the beginning of an exchange of views. We consider, therefore, that our discussions and consultations should be continued formally or informally in the Committee during the second part of the session.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Romania for his statement, and for the kind words he said about me as well as the tribute he paid to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

Mrs. BORODOWSKY (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, you have already expressed our condolences to Mrs. Thorsson on behalf of the Committee. On behalf of my delegation I would like to ask the distinguished Ambassador to Sweden to convey our sympathy to her.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish you, Mr. Chairman, well in the responsible task of presiding over the work of the Committee during the month of April. Your country, like mine, is a new member of this disarmament negotiating body, which means that its work is for us a matter of learning and gaining experience. We are sure that the fruits of its labour will benefit us in our future work. We should like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Ambassador Thomson, the distinguished representative of Australia, which is also one of the "new countries" on the Committee; thanks to his dedication during the month of March, we now have an agenda which will enable us to accomplish the complicated and delicate task facing us.

We wish to request our sister delegation, the delegation of Yugoslavia, to transmit to its people and Government our country's sympathy on the tragic natural disasters which have caused irreparable losses of human life and material damage in Yugoslavia. Events such as these oblige us to reflect on the work we should carry out here. The international community expects us to achieve measures which will prevent events which -- unlike the others -- can and should be controlled by man, namely disarmament measures.

Our work programme for this first session includes two important items, namely questions connected with nuclear disarmament and chemical weapons. In his statement on 6 February 1979, Dr. Pelegrín Torras, our Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, set forth Cuba's opinion on the first item, supporting the proposal of the socialist countries in document CD/4 and stressing the importance of that document for the Committee's consideration.

Because these working meetings will be devoted to the nuclear issue, my delegation wishes to emphasize the urgency and priority nature of this matter in negotiations on disarmament. In the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament it is clearly stated that top priority in the negotiations on disarmament must be given to nuclear disarmament.

(Mrs. Borodowsky, Cuba)

In that document, paragraphs 47, 48, 49 and 50 indicate the guidelines to be followed on the question of nuclear disarmament; these guidelines should not be interpreted to suit a particular convenience but should be taken to reflect the universal interest.

In this connexion, the proposal in document CD/4 may provide an appropriate basis for the Committee to deal with the nuclear problem. We do not believe that this question will convert this body into a forum of political polemics, as has been suggested; in any case, it is difficult and impracticable to draw the line of demarcation between the field of negotiations and the political debate: at times, the two merge and are one and the same thing. We consider -- as other delegations have stated -- that the proposal in question contains specific points for initiating substantive disarmament negotiations on this matter. On analysing document CD/4 in greater detail, my delegation considers that the fundamental point, that is to say, the item on the nuclear problem, is quite explicit: "Negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed".

We agree with the statements made by Comrade Issraelyan, the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, that not all nuclear disarmament questions can be solved rapidly but that the main thing is to make a start. If we drop the subject, if we do not begin because it is difficult, complicated, etc., then no results will ever be achieved. We repeat: what matters is to make a start and surely there is no more auspicious way -- now that this Committee, under agenda item 2 "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", has adopted the Programme of Work for the first part of this year's session -- than to begin by looking at a precise and specific document.

This document refers to various stages of questions connected with the central item, all of which were mentioned in one way or another in the course of negotiations on the Committee's agenda, such as the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, cessation of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes, etc. The document is, therefore, in keeping with interests expressed here by various delegations in specific points connected with the nuclear issue.

(Mrs. Borodowsky, Cuba)

The document also has the advantage of not being a restricted proposal, since in referring to the stages of the negotiations it takes into account so important a problem as the security of all States. The very wording of the paragraph determines which should be the appropriate measures at each stage of the negotiations and, above all, it emphasizes the quantitative and qualitative importance of existing arsenals of nuclear States and the degree of participation of those States.

As to the need for the participation of all nuclear States in the process of nuclear disarmament, this is obvious, but we cannot wait indefinitely, that is to say, until China sees fit to join in this process. Its negative policy of not participating in the disarmament negotiations cannot stop all those countries which respond positively to the demands of the international community that we should work towards general and complete disarmament.

My delegation is prepared to collaborate on this question as on others that will be dealt with by the Committee, because it considers that they are all important and central to our present great concern, namely to halt the intensification of the arms race. In connexion with this specific question my delegation does not forget that paragraph 18 of the Final Document of the special session devoted to disarmament emphasizes that the most urgent objective of disarmament is to remove the threat of nuclear war.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Cuba for her statement. May I say how much I appreciated the cordial words she had to say about me, and the tribute she paid to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, the Soviet delegation has already had the opportunity to congratulate Belgium on the assumption by its representative of the post of Chairman of the Committee throughout this month. I reiterate these words of welcome to you personally. Sir, Mr. Ambassador. We have also had occasion to thank Ambassador Thomson for his skilful chairmanship in March. First of all, allow me to express my deep sympathy to the peoples of Yugoslavia in connexion with the tragic event, the earthquake in their country. We would like to thank you, Sir, for expressing on behalf of all of us our condolences to Mrs. Thorsson in connexion with her tragic family loss.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Mr. Chairman, today, the Committee on Disarmament has taken up the item "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", in accordance with the programme of work it has adopted. In this connexion, the Soviet delegation intends once again to refer to the proposal submitted by the group of socialist countries concerning negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed (document CD/4 of 1 February 1979).

First of all, we are pleased that the members of the Committee considered it necessary to include this question in the programme of work for the current part of the Committee's session and to take it as the first substantive item for discussion this year. In our view, this approach is fully justified. The problem of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament is indeed of the highest priority; on this point, all members of the Committee are basically agreed. It is no accident that nuclear questions have been given first place on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament.

We have already had occasion to express satisfaction at the fact that many delegations, and in particular those of India, Ethiopia, Sweden, Pakistan, Romania, Nigeria and others, have made a positive assessment of document CD/4. Today we have heard very interesting statements by the delegations of Mexico, Algeria, Cuba, the Netherlands and several others. We welcome the fact that the number of sponsors of document CD/4 has increased.

Particular attention should be drawn to the fact that a number of delegations have not only noted the importance of document CD/4 and of the problem of nuclear disarmament in general in the context of the Committee's agenda, but have also put forward constructive ideas. Other delegations have so far confined themselves to raising questions. One or two delegations, including delegations that have spoken today, have raised objections and expressed doubts regarding a number of the provisions in the socialist countries' proposals. The Soviet delegation and the other sponsors of document CD/4 have had an opportunity to comment on individual statements by members of the Committee and to answer certain questions.

Today I would like to refer briefly to the latest statements made in the Committee.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In his statement on 29 March last, Ambassador Ene, the representative of Romania, proposed that informal consultations be held within the framework of this Committee with a view to organizing negotiations on questions of nuclear disarmament. The purpose of these consultations would be to prepare a special "plan of negotiation". This, as he said, "would help to create a climate of work that would be propitious for the activities of the Committee as a whole". In my opinion, these ideas are correct. With regard to his proposal to the effect that, concurrently with measures aimed at ending the production of nuclear weapons and destroying them, steps should be taken to achieve the goal of a definitive ban on the use of nuclear weapons and the renunciation of the use of force, we agree with this as well. This approach to the question is fully in line with paragraph 54 of the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which states that significant progress in nuclear disarmament would be facilitated by parallel political or international legal measures to strengthen the security of States.

We listened with interest to the analysis of certain provisions of document CD/4 which was made by Ambassador Adeniji, the representative of Nigeria, in his statement on 10 April, and we are pleased that this analysis corresponds with the ideas that the sponsors of the document were trying to incorporate in it. We hope that many delegations agree with the Nigerian Ambassador that document CD/4 represents "a timely basis for starting negotiations".

We intend to study carefully Ambassador Adeniji's proposal that the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly concerning the stages for negotiations on nuclear disarmament should be used as a starting point in the proposed negotiations for the purpose of determining the range of questions to be discussed. We would like to hear more details on this proposal.

In his statement today, Ambassador Robles, the representative of Mexico, gave a positive assessment of the socialist countries' initiative and made a number of comments and proposals relating to this initiative. He suggested, in particular, that the Committee on Disarmament, in its future discussions on this question, should compare document CD/4 with the corresponding provisions of the Final Document of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. I would like to emphasize once again that, in drafting their document, the socialist countries were guided by the provisions of the Final Document. Of course, we are ready to consider constructively both these and other proposals of the Mexican delegation.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Doubts have been expressed today concerning the possibility and necessity of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. The Soviet delegation reserves the right to revert to these statements in due course. But there is one comment that we would like to answer straight away. Everyone knows that nuclear disarmament is an extremely complex issue. It is precisely for this reason that a majority is in favour of beginning negotiations without delay. However, there is another argument to the effect that since the problem is complex, there is no point in tackling it. With this point of view, of course, we cannot agree at all.

We hope that other delegations that have not yet expressed their views on the socialist countries' proposal will make a positive contribution to the discussion on the proposal to start negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

In general, speaking of the results of the discussion this spring, we can say that it has been useful. Practical discussions on document CD/4 began even before the adoption of the agenda. Now, after the adoption of the agenda, the discussion will clearly develop further. As we see it, our task is to ensure that, in the course of the present discussions, the ground is prepared for a more practical consideration of document CD/4 this summer. I have in mind a discussion on the question of the practical organization of the negotiations, and of the manner in which consultations are to be conducted within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Soviet delegation will carefully study all ideas expressed here this spring. It will proceed from the assumption that during the summer part of the Committee's session serious discussion of document CD/4 will continue and useful ideas will be put forward, both on the organizational forms of the preparations for the talks and on the substance of the issues raised in the document.

The problem of nuclear disarmament is complex, and it will not be easy to solve it. We realize that much time will be needed. However, we express the hope that discussions on document CD/4 will lead to concrete results, i.e. to the beginning, without delay, of consultations in preparation for the 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 the Soviet Union for his statement, and for the tribute he paid to my predecessor, Ambassador Thomson.

I note that the distinguished delegate of Yugoslavia wishes to take the floor.

Mr. DJOKIC (Yugoslavia): On behalf of my delegation, may I be permitted to express our most profound thanks and gratitude to the distinguished representatives of Algeria, Cuba and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as well as to the other members of the Committee for their warm authentic condolences addressed to my delegation in connexion with the great human and material losses that my country has suffered during the last few days following an extremely devastating earthquake. I would like to assure all distinguished representatives in the Committee, that my delegation appreciates very much the expressions of their sympathy and solidarity in this sad time that my country is facing now.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Distinguished delegates, I think that we have now come to the end of the list of speakers for the debate at today's plenary meeting. Are there any other delegations that wish to take the floor?

If not, may I ask you to turn your attention to the question of how we are to arrange the continuation of these discussions.

In this respect, I would mention that, when we drew up our agenda and programme of work, it was agreed to set aside several days for consideration of the first item on the programme of work, namely, nuclear disarmament. We allowed for the possibility of holding informal meetings, as is clearly the wish of the Committee. I would now like to ask the members of the Committee if this is their intention and if we should envisage the possibility of arranging informal meetings in the next few days -- in practical terms, tomorrow and Monday -- to continue the discussion we began in plenary.

May I have the views of the Committee on this question?

As I hear nothing, I would like to make the following suggestion, as it is difficult to ask delegates to decide here and now whether we are going to hold informal meetings or not.

Could we not, with your consent, adopt the following method, namely, to leave it to the delegations of the Committee, and possibly those which assume certain responsibilities within groups, to decide through informal consultations among them whether we should hold one or more informal meetings. When a consensus has emerged among the members of the Committee, I am entirely at your disposal for the organization of informal meetings. Those meetings would naturally have to be approved by all the members of the Committee.

Are you in agreement with this procedure?

I am of course at your disposal to make the necessary arrangements with regard to the convening of these meetings.

(The Chairman)

In the absence of objections to my suggestion, I take it that I may recommend it to you. If it should appear later that delegates, after holding consultations, unanimously wish to convene informal meetings, I am at the disposal of the Committee.

In the circumstances, it merely remains for me to remind you that the next plenary meeting of the Committee will be on Tuesday, 24 April, at 10.30 a.m., when we shall begin consideration of the fourth item on the year's agenda entitled "Chemical weapons".

May I also remind you that the arrangements mentioned this morning at the beginning of our discussion on the second agenda item also apply to our deliberations next week.

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the paper submitted by the distinguished representative of Pakistan, document CD/10 entitled: "Conclusion of an international convention to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". This document has been circulated to all members of the Committee.

The secretariat has asked me to inform you that documents CD/3 "Rules of procedure of the Committee on Disarmament" and CD/12 "Agenda and programme of work of the Committee on Disarmament" have now been circulated in the official working languages used at present by the Committee.

If no other delegations wish to take the floor, I have the honour to declare this plenary meeting closed.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.