

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIRST MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 14 February 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. S. Turbanski (Poland)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. A. TAFFAR

Argentina:

Mr. J.C. CARASALES

Mr. R. GARCIA MORITAN

Mr. R. VILLAMEROSA

Australia:

Mr. R. BUTLER

Ms. J. COURTNEY

Mr. R. ROWE

Belgium:

Mr. M. DE PASSE

Mr. J-M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA

Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. TELLALOV

Mr. K. PRAMOV

Mr. P. POPTCHEV

Mr. KOBARELOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

U THAN TUN

Canada:

Mr. J.A. BEESLEY

Mr. G.R. SKINNER

China:

Mr. QIAN JIADONG

Ms. WANG ZHIYUN

Mr. LIANG DEFENG

Mr. YANG MINGLIANG

Mr. ZHANG WEIDONG

Cuba:

Mr. P. NUNEZ MOSQUERA

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. VEJVODA

Mr. A. CIMA

Egypt:

Mr. S. ALFARARGI
Mr. I. HASSAN
Mr. A. MAHER ABBAS
Mr. F. MONIB
Ms. W. BASSIM

Ethiopia:

Mr. F. YOHANNES
Ms. K. SINEGIORGIS

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. H. RENIE
Mr. G. MONTASSIER

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. F. SAYATZ

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. W.E. VAN DEN HAGEN

Hungary:

Mr. D. MEISZTER
Mr. F. GAJDA
Mr. T. TOTH

India:

Mr. M. DUBEY
Mr. S.K. SARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. S. SUTOWARDOYO
Ms. P. RAMADHAN
Mr. B. DARMOSUTANTO
Mr. ANDRADJATI
Ms. R. TANZIL

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Dr. N.K. KAMYAB
Mr. F.S. SIRJANI

Italy:

Mr. B. CAERAS
Mr. M. PAVESE

Japan:

Mr. R. IMAI
Mr. M. KONISHI
Mr. K. TANAKA
Mr. T. KAWAKITA
Mr. T. ISHIGURI

Kenya:Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA
Ms. M. DE LOS ANGELOS ROMERO

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. M. CHRAIBI
Mr. O. HILALE

Netherlands:

Mr. J. RAMAKER
Mr. R.J. AKKERMAN

Nigeria:

Mr. O.O. GEORGE
Mr. K.P. OBOH
Mr. L.O. AKINDELE
Mr. C.V. UDEDIBIA

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AHMAD
Mr. K. NIAZ

Peru:

Mr. J. MORELLI PANDO
Mr. C. CASTILLO RAMIREZ
Mr. A. THORNBERRY NAGGY

Poland:

Mr. S. TURBANSKI
Mr. T. STROJWAS
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ

Romania:

Mr. I. DATCU
Mr. T. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. J. DHANAPALA
Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM

Sweden:

Mr. R. EKEUS
Ms. E. BONNIER
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Ms. A. LAU-ERIKSSON
Mr. J. LUNDIN
Mr. J. PRAWITZ

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELIAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOPIEV
Mr. L.A. NAUMOV
Mr. T.F. DMITRITCHEV
Mr. V.V. LOSCHININ
Mr. Y. KOSTENKO
Mr. S.V. KOBYSH
Mr. P.Y. SKOMOROKHIN

United Kingdom:

Mr. R. LUCE
Dr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE
Mr. B.P. NOBLE
Mr. J.F. GORDON
Mr. D.A. SLINN
Dr. G. COOPER
Mr. R. JAMES
Mr. R. OSBORNE

United States of America:

Hon. L.G. FIELDS
Ms. K.C. CRITTENBURGER
Mr. L. MADSEN
Mr. P. CORDEN
Mr. R. NORMAN
Mr. J. DOESBURG
Mr. J. HOGAN
Mr. R. WATERS
Mr. N. CARERRA
Mr. CASTEN

Venezuela:

Mr. A. LOPEZ OLIVER

Yugoslavia:

Mr. K. VIDAS

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. G. OSIL

Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament
and Personal Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERSATEGUI

The PRESIDENT: The Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

[Speaking in Russian] Distinguished representatives, dear comrades, before addressing the items on our agenda allow me, on behalf of the Conference and personally as its President, and also as representative of Poland, to convey to the delegation of the USSR our deep sympathy and sincere condolences on the occasion of the death of Yuri V. Andropov, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

I would request the Soviet delegation to convey our heartfelt sympathy to the Government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people.

To the last moments of his life Yuri Andropov steadfastly supported efforts aimed at preventing nuclear war and the arms race, and for the good of peace throughout the world.

Peace-loving people everywhere have lost in him a great defender of peace and of peaceful co-operation among people.

Socialist Poland and the Polish people will remember Yuri V. Andropov as their staunch friend.

[Resuming in English] May I now invite the Conference to rise and observe a minute of silence in memory of the late General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, His Excellency Yuri Andropov.

May I now give the floor to the representative of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, the delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic would like to convey to the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on behalf of the group of Socialist countries their profound condolences on the death of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov.

The Soviet Union and all progressive people have lost in him an outstanding fighter for peace and social progress, for mutual understanding and co-operation among peoples and for the ideal of disarmament. Under the leadership of Comrade Andropov, the Soviet Union continued actively to carry out a Leninist peace-loving policy aimed at eliminating war from world society and creating the conditions for peaceful constructive labour.

The memory of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov will forever remain in the hearts of the peoples of our countries, which will in the future too actively support peaceful Soviet foreign policy and closely co-operate with the Soviet Union in the cause of building socialism.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Ekéus.

Mr. EKEUS (Sweden): Mr. President, permit me, on behalf of the delegations of the Group of 21, to turn to the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and express our deep regret at the announcement of the death of President Yuri V. Andropov.

I would like to ask the Soviet delegation to convey our message of condolence to its Government. While expressing our profound sympathy we rest assured that the leadership of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, carrying the heavy and responsible burden of a major Power, will continue to play a constructive role in our important, common work to further global disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sweden for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Mr. President, as convener of the Western Group of member States of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of February, I have been asked to make the following statement on behalf of that Group.

We wish to convey to Ambassador Victor Issraelyan, Head of the Delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Conference on Disarmament, our condolences on the death of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov, the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

President Andropov's tenure of office was short and for much of it he was afflicted by illness. Nevertheless, he carried the heavy burden of leadership of a great Power.

As many Western leaders have already said, we must look into the future and strive to solve our common problems through dialogue and above all seek, together, to maintain peace and security.

We would be grateful if Ambassador Issraelyan could convey these expressions of condolence to his Government, to the Soviet people, and particularly to the family of the late President Andropov.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Qian Jiadong.

Mr. QIAN JIADONG (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, it was with deep regret that we learnt of the untimely passing away of Yuri Andropov, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Allow me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation and in my own name, to express our profound condolences to the Soviet delegation, and to extend our sympathy and solicitude to the members of the late President's family.

A delegation headed by Vice-premier Wan Li representing the Chinese Government is now in Moscow attending the funeral of President Andropov. And a message of condolences has been sent jointly by the Chairman of the Chinese People's Republic, Li Xiannian, and the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Peng Zhen. It is China's hope that relations between China and the Soviet Union will be further promoted through the joint efforts of the two countries.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement. Does any other member wish to take the floor at this stage?

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, allow me on behalf of the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to express our sincere appreciation to you, Comrade President, and to all the delegations and colleagues who have conveyed to us their condolences concerning the death of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov.

Y.V. Andropov had a short span as leader of the Communist Party and Soviet State. In that time, however, following the Leninist course of foreign policy, he devoted all his strength and accomplishments to the implementation of the Peace Programme -- a programme for the elimination of the threat of nuclear war and for the consolidation of peace and the security of peoples. These matters, which are close to the heart of every person on this Earth, were at the centre of his tireless activity.

In the present difficult international circumstances, the USSR considers it to be its foremost duty to champion the cause of protecting peace on earth. The Soviet people are a convinced opponent of the settlement of international disputes by force. Our ideal is a world without war. The Soviet State will in future too firmly and steadfastly carry into practice the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence.

The Soviet Union's active foreign policy is directed at preserving mankind from the threat of nuclear war. "We shall not stray a single step from this policy" declared Mr. Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, at the extraordinary plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the CPSU held in Moscow yesterday.

The Soviet Union is fully alive to its responsibility for the preservation of peace and once again reaffirms its readiness to conduct serious, equal and constructive talks, its readiness to do everything to avert the threat of war and to ensure lasting peace and security for the present and future generations.

Once again I would ask you, Comrade President, to convey our profound appreciation to all those who expressed condolences to the Soviet people.

The PRESIDENT: May I now turn to today's agenda by extending a warm welcome in the Conference to the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Mr. Richard Luce, M.P., who will address the Conference today as first speaker.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Australia and Sri Lanka. I now give the floor to the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Mr. Richard Luce M.P.

Mr. LUCE (United Kingdom): Mr. President, today leaders from many countries including my own are in Moscow to pay their last respects to the late President Andropov, and in addition to associating myself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Australia, I wish to extend to the Soviet delegation on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, our sincere condolences.

It is a pleasure for me to be here today in the Conference on Disarmament under your Presidency and to be among people who share a common dedication to the cause of disarmament, and of whom many have distinguished themselves in seeking that goal. I am confident that your wise guidance will help the Conference to deal successfully with the weighty responsibilities which the international community has entrusted to it. It is a pleasure also for me this morning to pay a tribute to the able and effective leadership of the distinguished representative of Peru during the last month of the Committee on Disarmament.

In addressing the Conference on Disarmament for the first time, I will begin by reiterating the message from the British Government which I took to the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly in October. The United Kingdom is resolutely committed to the search for security through disarmament. We stand ready to make whatever contribution we can towards achieving progress. But such progress towards disarmament can only be achieved by patient, persistent negotiation between governments. The British Government therefore attaches great importance to this negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament. The 40 nations represented here, drawn from every continent, have the opportunity to negotiate their way towards greater security, not just for themselves, but for the world as a whole.

Successive British Governments have long been committed to a two-fold policy for defence and security. On the one hand, we are determined to prevent war by ensuring that our defence forces are adequate to deter any potential attacker. On the other hand, we see as clearly as anyone the pressing need to strengthen peace by reducing the present levels of armaments. The only sensible way to do this is through the careful negotiation of balanced and verifiable agreements which will enhance peace and security. Can the world be made safer by declaration? By unbalanced agreements or agreements which do not provide adequate assurance of compliance? My Government's answer is no. To suggest that it can is to delude not only ourselves but all those peoples of the world who fervently long for disarmament. Some may argue that our approach is cautious. I would respond that it is realistic, that it makes sense. We must reduce misunderstanding and rebuild trust. We must find areas of agreement and build on them; we must seek to advance from what we can agree today to what we might agree tomorrow; but we should not try to run before we can walk.

The British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, and Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, have been making very clear in recent months our wish for a deeper and broader dialogue with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe. In that spirit, Mrs. Thatcher has just visited Hungary. In Budapest she stressed that Britain and her allies positively want agreements to reduce arms. "The need is urgent", she said. "Weapons that were fiction yesterday are fact today, and will be overtaken tomorrow". In their Declaration of Brussels on 9 December 1983, the 16 Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic Alliance jointly declared their wish for a better relationship between East and West. My Government therefore welcomed President Reagan's

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speech last month calling for a serious and constructive dialogue with the Soviet Union. Equally we welcomed the late President Andropov's response, that dialogue is the policy of the Soviet Union. President Andropov added that the dialogue should not be conducted for the sake of dialogue. We agree. That it should be directed at the attainment of concrete accords. We agree. That it should be conducted honestly, and no attempts should be made to use it for selfish aims. Again we agree. Let us determine, on this particular day, that the commencement of this dialogue should not be delayed.

Against this welcome backdrop of agreement, I hope the Soviet Union will not misinterpret the intentions of the United States and its allies. No State, including the Soviet Union, can afford to negotiate from weakness. But negotiation to establish a balance must not be confused with seeking superiority. That is not our intention. The NATO countries respect the legitimate security interests of the Soviet Union and its allies, and do not aspire to superiority over them. But we expect in return respect for our legitimate security interests, and will not accept that others should be superior to us. One country's security must not be pursued at the expense of the security of others. That is the way to destroy, not to enhance, trust and confidence.

Nothing is more damaging to the mutual confidence needed for arms control than the existence of doubts about compliance with existing agreements; not just with their letter, but also with their spirit. Recent reports suggest that there is a lesson to be learned, particularly about the need for adequate verification arrangements. A serious effort must now be made to negotiate new and better agreements which reduce the scope for ambiguity to the minimum, which provide the maximum incentive for strict compliance, and which therefore will create for all parties the confidence essential for their acceptance. Let me stress the need to create confidence by providing for adequate verification in arms control agreements; failure to fulfil this need will only result in the erosion of confidence and the failure of our efforts.

Mr. President, much attention has been focused recently on the new Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, in which a number of the Governments represented here are taking part. In its first stage, the work of that Conference is essentially concerned with increasing mutual understanding and trust, through the negotiation, according to the agreed mandate, of a set of militarily significant, politically binding and adequately verifiable confidence-building measures, applicable throughout Europe. If all the participants approach it in a realistic and practical spirit, the Stockholm Conference could contribute an essential ingredient -- increased mutual confidence -- towards the success of other negotiations on disarmament including the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Nowhere is mutual confidence more necessary than in agreements to limit and reduce nuclear weapons. My Government is very conscious of the importance which many delegations, especially those of non-nuclear-weapon States, attach to achieving reductions in nuclear weapons. The British Government is firmly committed to this goal. The first priority is for the

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Soviet Union and the United States, which control between them over 90 per cent of the nuclear weapons on this planet, to negotiate deep reductions in their arsenals. A year ago, when the Committee on Disarmament began its session, the hopes of the world resided in the two bilateral United States-Soviet negotiations on the reduction of strategic and intermediate-range nuclear arms, then taking place in this city of Geneva. These talks have been broken off, to our great regret. It can only be to the advantage of the Soviet Union; and indeed to the advantage of the world as a whole, that these negotiations should be resumed as soon as possible and that they should achieve quickly the concrete results that we all want to see.

It is sometimes stated that the NATO allies must return to the situation that existed before the beginning of the deployment of the Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. But this would be to revert to the previous, dangerously unbalanced situation, in which the Soviet Union had a monopoly in intermediate-range nuclear missiles. That would be unacceptable. On the other hand, the NATO allies have made clear, time and again, that they are ready to halt, modify or reverse the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles at any time that agreement with the Soviet Union warrants this. Furthermore, in October last year the NATO Allies decided to withdraw another 1,400 nuclear warheads from Europe, in addition to the 1,000 warheads already removed since 1979. Even if all the planned number of cruise and Pershing II missiles have to be deployed, five NATO warheads will have been removed for every one deployed. When this withdrawal has been accomplished, NATO's nuclear stockpile will be at its lowest level for over 20 years. What stronger evidence could there be of the seriousness of NATO's commitment to arms reductions? We look to the Soviet Union and its allies to substantiate in an equally practical way its proclaimed policy of disarmament.

In the absence of such negotiations, my Government strongly doubts whether realistic, balanced and verifiable measures of nuclear disarmament could be negotiated in this Conference. But we cannot accept that difficulties or lack of progress in one field should be used as an excuse to prevent progress in another. To create artificial linkages between the different topics under discussion in the Conference on Disarmament, making one the hostage of another, is a recipe for stalemate. We must instead redouble our efforts and concentrate our resources where progress really is possible.

We recognize that in certain areas of multilateral disarmament this Conference has a key role to play, a role which its predecessor the Committee on Disarmament found difficulty in fulfilling. It is my Government's hope that the change of name will be accompanied by a change of approach. As the Committee becomes the Conference, it is an appropriate moment to consider how the record can be improved. The Committee on Disarmament had sadly little to show for those five years of intensive effort, which have been chronicled at such length in its annual reports.

To those not involved in the day-to-day work here, the impression has sometimes been given that procedural issues have been accorded greater importance than matters of substance. Last year work in the Committee was

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delayed for weeks because of disagreement over the agenda; every year there have been difficulties over the establishment of subsidiary bodies. It sometimes appears that a willingness to accept the establishment of a working group is taken as the yardstick of whether a delegation, or indeed a government, is prepared to undertake serious negotiation. But this is not the case. The fact that delegations may support the setting up of working groups on particular subjects is no evidence that they are willing genuinely to negotiate, and to give substance rather than shadow to the negotiating process. The establishment of a working group is no guarantee of a successful negotiation, as we all know only too well. If it were, we should by now have a Treaty on Radiological Weapons and a Chemical Weapons Convention. We have neither of those things, in spite of the enormous amount of time and resources which have been devoted to them. We must, therefore, learn our lesson from past experience. We must turn our attention to what underlies the failure so far of these working groups to produce concrete results, instead of continuing our arguments about procedures.

It is the view of my Government that evidence of serious intention with respect to negotiations comes not from support for the formation of ever more working groups, but from a demonstrated willingness to explore in depth subjects of immediate relevance; to establish principles and the main outlines on which a negotiation can be conducted in good faith; and to seek genuine, balanced and verifiable agreements which are acceptable to all parties.

But the lack of results over five years cannot be placed solely at the door of the Committee. Passing a resolution in the General Assembly calling for negotiations on this subject, or a working group on that, does not of itself create the necessary conditions for successful negotiation, especially if the General Assembly disregards the wishes of some States whose interests are at stake. The Committee on Disarmament did not work in a vacuum. Nor will this Conference. We will only be able to negotiate agreements affecting the security of our countries if there is a firm foundation of mutual confidence and trust. That foundation needs to be laid and built up by deepening and extending the dialogue between States with differing views, and especially between East and West.

I will now review some of the topics under consideration by this Conference. I made it clear in my statement to the First Committee that the United Kingdom believes that serious attention should be paid to preventing an arms race in outer space and that we are willing to pursue opportunities for agreements which would truly enhance security. We support the formation of a working group on outer space in the Conference on Disarmament, but we believe that for the time being it would be premature to charge this working group with negotiations. Its first task should instead be to examine existing agreements imposing obligations affecting outer space and to establish areas where further negotiations might take place. We therefore believe that the right course to pursue is to establish a working group with a mandate such as that accepted by most delegations in the last session. If the Soviet Union and its allies now join us in agreement, work can begin without delay.

My Government also supported the formation of a working group on a comprehensive nuclear-test ban which would concentrate on a detailed examination on issues relating to verification, the major point of difficulty which has frustrated all attempts at negotiation so far. We believed, and we continue to believe, that unless a measure of agreement is reached on this fundamental point, negotiations will not be successful. In the working group last year the

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United Kingdom delegation contributed two substantive working papers, one of which has yet to be discussed. We were disappointed that other delegations refused to engage in serious discussions on the grounds that these were precluded by the terms of the mandate. But as has been noted many times any limitation on the discussion was self-imposed. Changing the mandate will solve no problems. It would do no one any service to pretend that we can begin to negotiate the language of a treaty when we remain so far apart on basic principles.

Rapid agreement should however be possible on a Radiological Weapons Treaty. My Government has been disappointed to see how little progress has been made in four years of negotiation in the Committee on Disarmament. A Radiological Weapons Treaty would perhaps be only a modest step forward but it would be one with a definite place in a corpus of arms control agreements. Unfortunately the drafts which have been prepared in each of the last three years have been rejected by a small group of delegations. We would see little point in repeating once again the same sterile exercise of negotiating detailed language unless we see evidence of a new attitude and a new approach to this subject. We hope that the Conference will provide the Working Group with advice as to the ways in which progress could best be achieved.

One major difficulty has been the linkage made between a Radiological Weapons Treaty and the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. We do not accept that a convincing case has been made that the latter subject should be dealt with in the same instrument as a ban on radiological weapons; it should instead be studied on its own merits. In the first instance it seems to us that we should concentrate on an attempt to define further those types of nuclear facilities to which any prohibition might apply. We have given some thought to the possibility that existing international legislation might give us some guidance and at an appropriate time the United Kingdom delegation hopes to put forward some suggestions in this regard. We hope that these suggestions will be regarded as a positive contribution to this debate.

The question of the prevention of nuclear war is a subject which deserves consideration by the Conference on Disarmament. But it is important that such consideration should be set in an appropriate context. There is a very wide range of possible measures which could have implications for the prevention of war and hence of nuclear war. It does not make practical sense for a working group to be set up and begin negotiation before the topics on which negotiations might take place have been defined. There can be no substitute for careful analysis of the problem and careful assessment of possible areas for further work. We should devote our efforts in the first instance to the selection of topics where positive results can be expected. This is why last year Western delegations suggested that we should begin by having a series of in-depth discussions on the possible scope of further work. If that offer had been taken up we should have been in a better position today to assess the prospects for successful negotiations. Once again we hope that instead of wasting time on debates about procedure we can embark without delay on discussion which will help to clarify the way ahead.

I come now to a subject of overriding importance to my Government: the completion of a Convention banning all chemical weapons forever. We take very seriously the growing danger posed by these weapons. Not only do some countries hold large and increasing stocks of these frightful weapons but recent evidence clearly points to their use by some governments, in defiance of international condemnation. There is no reason why the Conference on Disarmament should not make rapid progress in negotiating a total ban on these abhorrent weapons, as

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Mrs. Thatcher urged in Budapest a few days ago. The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, recalled in Stockholm last month that Britain has taken a leading role in efforts to secure disarmament in this field. As he said, we see no reason to depart from the objective, which we have set ourselves in this Conference on Disarmament, of a total and fully verifiable ban on chemical warfare, to be applied worldwide. My Government therefore warmly welcomes the intention of the United States, announced by Secretary Schultz in Stockholm, to submit to this Conference in the near future a draft comprehensive treaty with those aims.

Almost 60 years ago, in 1925, the Geneva Protocol was signed in this city. Its authors perhaps believed they had done what was necessary, by prohibiting the use of chemical weapons, to remove forever the scourge which had blighted so many lives in the First World War. The 1925 Protocol occupies a worthy place in the corpus of international agreements designed to prevent human suffering. But it does not ban the manufacture or stockpiling of chemical weapons, nor provide for verification of compliance, which is so vital to ensuring trust. The duty of this Conference is to build upon the foundation provided by the Protocol and to ensure that a new Convention, banning chemical weapons from the face of the earth, is established without delay.

My own country relinquished its chemical weapons a quarter of a century ago. Regrettably, others did not follow suit. In the case of the Soviet Union, the capacity to wage chemical warfare has steadily increased. My Government welcomes the recent signs of renewed Soviet interest in banning chemical weapons, to the extent that these represent an acknowledgement that the time has come to reach an agreement banning the manufacture, stockpiling and use of these dreadful weapons. But I ask the delegations represented here today -- does a regional ban on such easily transported weapons as chemical weapons make any sense? Why should Europe have priority in benefiting from a chemical weapons ban, when all the disturbing reports in recent years of use of chemical warfare have come from various parts of Asia? A regional approach to this problem would be a poor second best, and humanity deserves better than second best.

My Government regrets that the Committee on Disarmament was unable in 1983 to conclude a Convention to outlaw these abominable weapons. Despite many constructive proposals from the Western delegations, including the British paper on the important issue of verification of non-production of chemical weapons, which my predecessor introduced on 10 March last year, the Committee completed its deliberations last year empty-handed.

The key to an effective Convention is effective verification. The working groups made progress last year; it is my earnest hope that they will proceed much faster this session and next. No price in effort is too great to pay for agreement. The United Kingdom stands ready to do everything possible to help to advance these negotiations towards agreement. We intend to pursue vigorously in the detailed negotiations that lie ahead the points in our paper tabled last March on verification of non-production, designed to ensure that chemical weapons are not being produced after the destruction of existing stockpiles. This will be a key element in assuring international confidence in the Treaty. We shall also play our part in trying to reach agreement on verification of destruction of stockpiles, of destruction of production facilities and of permitted production of super-toxic substances for protective purposes. I hope that all delegations will adopt a positive position on these vital issues, and will present practical proposals to this end. If they do, then this Conference will be on the brink of success.

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If the Convention is to convince international opinion that full compliance will be ensured, my Government believes that it must contain a combination of routine on-site inspection and the possibility of fact-finding procedures to investigate any doubt which may arise about compliance. Without such procedures, there would be no means of resolving doubt. And doubt breeds uncertainty, destroys confidence and provokes recrimination, which would in turn undermine the Convention.

To complement the other verification proposals now on the table, I am pleased to introduce today a new British Working Paper entitled "Verification and Compliance -- the Challenge Element". It is generally accepted that the Convention should contain a provision for challenge by any party. The aim of the paper is to suggest how challenges could be handled effectively in order to maintain confidence in the Convention. For this purpose it would clearly be important to ensure that action, including, if necessary, on-site inspection should follow a challenge without delay. This paper is the latest in a series of initiatives which successive British governments have taken in their earnest endeavour to achieve a chemical weapons ban. In 1976 we tabled a draft Treaty. Two years ago my predecessor tabled a paper on compliance. Last year he also introduced a proposal on verification of non-production of chemical weapons. It is our hope that this latest initiative will strengthen the present basis for an agreement.

The international community has placed squarely upon this Conference the heavy responsibility to agree a convention banning chemical weapons completely. Such weapons should have no place on the face of this earth. I urge this Conference to discharge its responsibility with despatch, and to present at the earliest possible moment to the United Nations an effective Convention for signature and ratification. An achievement in this area would not only be valuable in itself but would also do much to enhance the confidence that is needed for agreement in other fields.

The opening of a new session of this body under a new name, the Conference on Disarmament, provides us with an opportunity for a new start. We must lay the foundations of a new era of practical co-operation in the field of disarmament. I have this morning set out the approach we would favour in the Conference; a realistic, pragmatic, concrete approach which treats each subject on its own merits and in which we take account of each delegation's legitimate concerns. Our objective is not to add to the mountains of words and declaration. It is to secure real progress in making the world a safer place for all. That means a genuine readiness to compromise, and to reach agreements which will last. We are ready to proceed on this path and hope that all other delegations will join us.

On behalf of Her Majesty's Government, I reaffirm today our firm commitment to the most vigorous pursuit of dialogue and arms control. We hope the Soviet Union, as well, will soon demonstrate its good faith by returning to its empty chair at the nuclear arms negotiations. We must work together to find solutions to these vital problems. Solutions will not be easy; they may not be swift; we must not be seduced by the short-term gain, only to lose sight of our long-term goals. In building a solid bastion against misunderstanding, mistrust and conflict we need to lay our bricks with care, each in its proper place. But now is the time to get down to serious work, to lay aside the empty gestures of yesterday, and to make a start on tomorrow. We can afford to do no less. The world in 1984 expects us to do more.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his important statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Tellalov.

Mr. TELLALOV (Bulgaria) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, allow me, through you, to convey to the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Victor Levonovich Issraelyan, and to all our comrades members of the Soviet delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, the most sincere and profound condolences of the Bulgarian delegation on the occasion of the death of the outstanding Soviet leader Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov.

In joining in the great sorrow, I should like to express our admiration for the life and deeds of this true son of the Soviet people and accomplished Leninist leader.

The shining example of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov and of his struggle for peace and for the happiness of people will forever be preserved in the hearts of millions throughout the world.

Comrade President, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of this important post and to express my utmost satisfaction with the fact that the opening of the first session of the Conference on Disarmament is linked with fraternal Socialist Poland and personally with you, Comrade Turbanski. I am impressed with the competent way in which you have commenced the solution of the numerous and complex issues of the organization of work and I wish you success in this direction.

I would like to join you, Comrade President, in extending the Bulgarian delegation's welcome to Mr. Richard Luce, MP, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Office of the United Kingdom.

May I avail myself of this opportunity to express gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Morello, the Representative of Peru, for his activities in the concluding phase of last year's session and during the intersessional period.

I should like also to greet our new colleagues, the Representatives of Hungary, Cuba, Australia, Belgium, Ethiopia, Egypt, Indonesia, Canada, and Sri Lanka, wishing them fruitful work and offering them our co-operation.

The member States of the Conference on Disarmament bear today a particularly large responsibility before the whole of mankind. It is their willingness and ability to tackle issues in a responsible, statesmanlike way and their readiness to seek and find mutually acceptable decisions that can bring about the solution of global issues, above all the primary issue of the present-day world -- the prevention of nuclear war. This is why, at the start of this session, it is necessary and appropriate to make an assessment of all factors which have an impact upon and define the environment in which the Conference on Disarmament is to work, and to evaluate the prospects for a purposeful and result-oriented outcome.

The international situation is extremely tense and even dangerous. The cause for this lies in the militaristic and confrontational policies pursued over the last few years by the leading circles in the United States and some other Western countries.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

On these matters the distinguished representative of the USSR, Ambassador V.L. Israelyan, spoke in a comprehensive and soundly argued manner at the first meeting. My delegation shares these evaluations and the concern they conveyed.

Some of the colleagues who took the floor before me thought it necessary to call on us not to touch upon, in our statements, the international situation and the causes for its deterioration. Is it possible, however, to close our eyes to the facts? There is one State which has set as its primary goal the achievement of world supremacy. As it follows this road, this State disregards and tramples upon the interests and aspirations of those countries and peoples which profess other ideas and political systems. The aggression against Grenada and the use of force in other countries and regions is but a new encroachment upon the sacred sovereign right of peoples to settle their own affairs. The armaments of that Power have reached colossal dimensions, and its military budget is growing at an unprecedented pace. A beginning is being made to a decades-long programme for military use of outer space. A so-called "policy of peace from the position of strength" is being proclaimed.

The entire machinery of international negotiations on disarmament, including the Soviet-United States negotiations, were made hostage to those militaristic plans.

The deployment of new United States missiles in Western Europe has created a qualitatively new situation. Certain statements heard so far attempted to convince us that the decision to deploy those missiles had been taken in accordance with the will of their peoples! Yet it would be enough to recall the unprecedentedly large mass rallies held last autumn in many Western countries, which demonstrated the desire for peace and the right to life without the shadow of new missiles.

In our view, the danger has strongly increased in that the nuclear missiles stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy could be used to launch a first strike against the USSR, against my country and the other Socialist countries. And this is jeopardizing the security not only of the Socialist countries but of all European countries; it is jeopardizing world peace.

Whose advantage shall we be serving if we do not speak out on this reality of our time? This would only benefit those who want to conceal the truth from world public opinion, who want to mislead the public to believe that something serious is being done in the field of disarmament. The balance-sheet of the work in this forum for the last five years bears witness, however, to something else.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is dwelling, and indeed quite briefly, upon some underlying international issues not out of love for rhetoric but as an expression of the fact that it shares the profound anxiety felt today by peoples and governments over the possibility of sliding towards the abyss of nuclear catastrophe.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

At this juncture I should like to quote from a speech delivered by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov. It conveys in a nut-shell the philosophy of my country in its policy for peace and disarmament at the current stage. I quote:

"The fight for peace is now waged in the phase of an established military strategic balance between the two social systems, when each has the necessary economic, scientific and technical potentialities to restore the balance in case it is unilaterally disrupted. Consequently, it is now not enough to fight for peace in general. A qualitatively new political consciousness must be formed in millions upon millions of people, by taking into consideration the historically established realities. Life itself imperatively demands the waging of a struggle for maintaining the military strategic balance on an ever lower level, so as to come to general and complete disarmament. And this struggle must be made an integral part of the struggle for a lasting and equitable peace".

The attitude of every responsible government towards the current dangerous state of affairs has to find a relevant reflection in the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

This is the reason why we consider that attention at the forthcoming session ought to be centred upon the efforts to reach measures for the prevention of nuclear war, for nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. By bringing these tasks to the forefront as well as, of course, the achievement of an agreement for general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and a chemical weapons ban, we will be acting in full conformity with the decisions of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly concerning the priorities of the current session.

This approach is obviously shared by a number of other delegations, as has become apparent in the statements, inter alia, of the distinguished representatives of Mexico and Sweden.

Actually, Comrade President, judging from declarations made lately at a high level in certain Western States, it appears that in the position of those States one might expect a new understanding, for instance, on the admissibility of nuclear war. It is therefore with good reason that such questions arise as: could it be considered that the doctrines of "limited nuclear war", "first nuclear-strike capability", "the defence directives for 1984-88" and other similar doctrines and directives preached until very recently, have been cancelled? If this were the case, then right at this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament the United States and their allies should have no difficulties in entering into serious negotiations in order to assume obligations at least on two issues that are of immediate importance for arresting the dangerous escalation of nuclear confrontation. I have in mind only the non-first-use of nuclear weapons and the freezing of nuclear arsenals.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

Regrettably, however, the United States position continues to be notable for the absence of any readiness to supplement nice words with concrete deeds.

To the causes of a global political nature and the causes stemming from the rapid development of modern military technology which prompt the proposals for our Conference to deal with nuclear issues on a priority basis, another motive of importance is added today, namely, the absence of bilateral talks between the USSR and the United States on the limitation of the nuclear-arms race. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is now the only forum whose agenda envisages negotiations on the basic aspects of nuclear weapons. Consequently, we endorse the proposal already submitted here on the setting up of subsidiary bodies on the issues of the prevention of nuclear war, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. As to the subsidiary body on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, it is high time that its mandate be enlarged in a mode allowing it to proceed directly to the drafting of a relevant international agreement.

In connection with the method of work which the Conference is to apply on the issue of the prevention of nuclear war, a question which was already raised comes up again: what should be the substance of the work concerning this issue? The Bulgarian delegation is resolutely against an approach advocating theoretical discussions only, discussions that would be devoid of any practical orientation whatsoever. What we are advocating is that the respective subsidiary body should take up the identification and elaboration of concrete measures on the prevention of nuclear war. A number of countries have already presented their proposals for measures which embrace primarily political measures as well as international legal ones. As we see it, part of these measures ought to be adopted on a priority basis that brooks no delay, so as to blunt the edge of the nuclear threat.

By recommending that the work of this Conference should focus on the nuclear issues, my delegation at the same time advocates that we take further the efforts on other important agenda items, the prohibition of chemical weapons in particular. As a whole, the positions of the various States are fully known. For this reason, it is first of decisive importance at this stage to proceed to the formulation of a Convention. In practical terms this should mean that individual drafts and formulae represent no more than one element in the complex and multilateral process of drafting a convention. What the Conference needs at this stage are common, mutually acceptable texts on the various sections of a convention; and secondly, not to demonstrate a one-sided approach. Otherwise, even the best of intentions will be interpreted solely as misleading manoeuvres.

Taking up another point, I should like to stress the unfavourable impression which has been created so far by the approach of NATO member States towards the proposal of the socialist countries to free Europe from chemical weapons. On the one hand, the Western States seem not to deny the positive rational element in this new proposal, while on the other, they do not want to commit themselves on its implementation. To put into practice such partial measures of a regional nature would only assist the efforts exerted in this forum, which are aimed at the early conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons, something that remains the ultimate goal of the member States of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

The silence of the Western States on the proposals of the Socialist countries in the field of international security and disarmament has become a characteristic of their foreign policy. At a session last October in Sofia, the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty Organization noted that the NATO member States will make a serious mistake in underestimating the significance of the various declarations and positions of the Socialist countries and by continuing to refuse to give a positive reaction to their proposals. We have to state once again that such an attitude is blocking the dialogue on the issues of the cessation of the arms race, regardless whether it is being conducted in Stockholm, Vienna or Geneva.

On the exceedingly important issue of nuclear disarmament in Europe, the People's Republic of Bulgaria is pleased to take note of the fact that the Soviet Union remains loyal to its Peace Programme, and is again ready to resolve this problem providing the United States and NATO manifest their readiness to return to the situation existing before the beginning of the deployment of the Pershing II and Cruise missiles. As a European country we are concerned with the solution of this problem, before the arms race in Europe has attained a new, more dangerous level.

With respect to the strengthening of confidence and security in the Balkans and the gradual transformation of Europe into a continent free from nuclear weapons, a genuine step would be the setting up of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Balkans. The People's Republic of Bulgaria will continue to work consistently, actively and constructively for the implementation of such a zone.

In the course of the session and, in conformity with the programme of work, my delegation will take a stand not only on the issues I have dwelled upon, but also on all others which are going to figure in our agenda -- radiological weapons, "negative" security assurances, the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, etc. The socialist countries intend to submit a document which will reflect, among others, our viewpoint on the organization of work, on the subsidiary bodies and their mandates. My delegation is for the setting up of working bodies on all agenda items. We await with interest and will welcome from its very inception any initiative on the part of Western States which is aimed at the achievement of mutually acceptable decisions on all items of this session's agenda.

May I assure you, Comrade President, that the Bulgarian delegation will do its utmost to assist the process of initiation and intensification of negotiations in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement and for the kind and friendly words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Mr. President, may I offer you congratulations on your election as the first President of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation is convinced that you will guide our work with determination and sensitivity. It is particularly pleasing to Australia to see Poland occupy the Presidency. There are strong links between Australia and Poland: for many Australians their first contact with Poland in the modern period was when they went there to help defend Poland from aggression four decades ago. Today, as we look into the future, one of the sources of energy and creativity in the young Australian population is that a good number of today's young Australians, men and women, are of Polish origin. I want to thank you too for the very warm words of welcome you expressed to me as the new Head of the Australian delegation to this Conference on Disarmament. The same expressions of gratitude go to other colleagues who have expressed similar good wishes. My delegation too was very grateful for the work of our former Chairman, Ambassador Morelli Pando of Peru, and was very pleased to see this morning the United Kingdom Minister of State, Mr. Richard Luce, at our Conference table.

Mr. President it is six months since this Conference last met. They have been eventful and, in some respects, disturbing months.

The major bilateral nuclear arms negotiations in which we all have so much at stake have stopped. The nuclear arms race has continued. Expenditure on all kinds of weapons continues to increase, even though last year's global expenditure of somewhere between \$US 700 - \$US 800 billion was recognized to be beyond acceptable proportion. In too many parts of the world armed conflict continues to bring death and destruction.

Political leaders, academics, and concerned citizens everywhere, have repeatedly called for a halt to this process. The last General Assembly of the United Nations gave greater and more searching attention to disarmament and arms control than ever before. It adopted a record number of relevant resolutions. The 40 Heads of Government of the Commonwealth Countries, of which Australia is one, declared at Goa on 27 November their grave concern at the current state of international relations and the threat that is presently posed to the security of all.

This is not an exhaustive list of past recent events. I am seeking simply to draw attention to the context within which this 1984 session of the Conference on Disarmament is beginning its work. We join with others who have already noted, in this plenary debate, that the responsibility we thus face today is greater than it has ever been. Our task is urgent and the expectations held of us demand a clear response. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has called upon us to give that response.

Another fundamental part of the context in which we must work is the relationship between what is accurately described as our "bi-polar world" and the purposes, principles and institutions which make up the multilateral community of which we are the direct representatives in the field of disarmament.

Great power is held by two countries. They are uniquely able to influence our future. That power is clearly a daunting responsibility. It must be exercised in the cause of peace. Even more positively, it is in fact almost beyond our imagination to chart how much could be achieved, in terms of creative human development, if that great power were to be turned away from the arms race towards what the President of the United States recently described as "peaceful competition". The practical relationship between the exercise of that great power

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

on the one hand, and the purposes, principles and institutions of the multilateral community on the other, can be turned into a positive relationship. At present we fear that it is a relationship which is somewhat strained. Under the Charter of the United Nations and all that flows from it, and in this Conference on Disarmament, we have the possibility of forging a world that is free from the scourge of war, to use the words of the Charter that is managed on the basis of respect between nations, rejection of the use of force, and directed towards human prosperity and fulfilment. Now, if those possessing great power do not direct that power in the fullest possible way to the support of our multilateral efforts to bring about disarmament and arms control, and to give life to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, then what we can achieve in this multilateral context will be severely limited.

But it is also true that those possessing great power are not alone responsible for the course of the multilateral process, and I want that view to be very clear. The very nature of that process is one of shared responsibility and that responsibility must be accepted by all of us and exercised then in support of the maintenance of peace and security. We in this Conference constitute the single multilateral negotiating body. We are expected to negotiate arms control agreements. Our responsibility is the greater today because as others have commented such negotiations are going on in no other place. Australia sometimes detects an attitude where negotiations as such seem to be feared. This is a negative attitude and it is not shared by Australia. I ask what is there to fear in the negotiation of arms control and disarmament agreements? The common wisdom is that arms control and disarmament agreements will only be effective if they maintain security and thus are balanced, open for all to see, and fully verifiable. These are certainly the principles to which Australia attaches unqualified importance and which we believe are shared by others. We all know that any arms control or disarmament agreement which does not have these characteristics would be illusory. We have no interest in any such illusions. But why not then have the courage to start negotiating under these principles? If the negotiation is successful, that is, if it produces an agreement that is balanced and verifiable and thus enhances security then surely its acceptance would benefit us all. If the process of negotiation brought no such conclusion, then clearly it would show that we were taking the wrong approach to the particular subject at issue and would have to start again to try to find some other more creative solution.

In either case, Mr. President, I submit we have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The time for negotiations is upon us and that is certainly what is expected of us. Australia does not sweep aside or hold a utopian view of the difficulties we face but it does believe firmly that one of the worst reasons for not embarking upon a vital endeavour is that it is known in advance that the road ahead will be hard.

We believe that today what is required is a great effort of diplomacy. Some specific steps need to be taken. One of these is to strive to moderate our language. It has come to be widely recognized, especially during the course of last year, that a good deal of the problems we face have been greatly exacerbated by the language that has been used, on both sides, in talking about or describing those problems. Exaggerated claims and charges are readily seen for what they are, and more importantly, do not advance our cause, and it is a matter of regret to the delegation that such claims and charges have already been made in the opening days of this Conference. It is also true that hostile descriptions of the motives of others do little to bring about temperate behaviour but instead compound existing

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problems. Australia believes that given the present state of international relations all of us could assist greatly in changing that situation, by damping down the background noise. Perhaps we should make a conscious effort to speak more carefully, perhaps more softly, but certainly in a more conciliatory tone about the issues of great concern to us and which sometimes divide us.

Another matter of concern to my Government is the extent to which the notion of not "peaceful" but desperate competition has come to underlie and fuel the arms race. The implication of competition in arms is that there can be a winner. We all know that in the nuclear age there are no winners, only losers. Competition in arms does not ensure security. It ensures escalation, massive and increasingly draining expenditures, and growing danger. The right to self-defence is guaranteed to us all under the Charter of the United Nations but nowhere do we find similar support for the notion of superiority or of winning some kind of competition in arms. We are also deeply concerned about instances where there is an apparent inconsistency, in the statements made by some States about their commitment to disarmament, while at the same time they spend ever more on arms. States cannot remain credible under such circumstances and perhaps more practically, ever-increasing arms build-ups makes the process of arms control and disarmament negotiations even harder than it is already. Related too to expenditure on arms are the urgent needs of the developing world. It is unambiguously clear to my Government that we must make progress in disarmament to enable us to address more vigorously the problems faced by the developing countries.

Mr. President, I have spent this time addressing the context in which this Conference begins its 1984 session and drawing on recent past events. There is another event of extraordinary importance which we face in the near future, that is, the Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

My Government believes that the NPT is fundamental to the maintenance of peace and security and is a cornerstone of the present international arms control regime. Australia is determined then to play its part in ensuring that the Third NPT Review Conference succeeds. It wants to see the NPT strengthened further and come to be universally accepted. Our actions in this Conference have a direct bearing on that aspiration. We must begin to negotiate. We must be able to show progress in the field of nuclear arms control. If we do not, we will have failed our obligations under the NPT and will have foregone a great opportunity to strengthen that vital Treaty.

Another disarmament conference is to be resumed in the future -- The Conference on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions in Central Europe.

Australia is not a party to that Conference, but as a country which has twice in this century paid very dearly in the defence of Europe, both East and West, we have a very deep interest in MBFR. We urge the States concerned to seek concrete progress as soon as possible after the Conference in Vienna resumes. That is intrinsically desired by the peoples of Europe and would contribute greatly to security and an improved atmosphere in arms control negotiations generally. In addition it could assist us in bringing about a change in the nuclear-weapons situation in Europe because of the clear and acknowledged link between conventional and nuclear forces in the European theatre.

Australia attaches particular importance to three items on our conference agenda. The first of these is the need for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. This subject has been on the international agenda for over two decades.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

It has also been the subject of extensive research and academic consideration. What might such an academic, such an independent mind, coming afresh to this field suggest should be done in order to end the problems of both vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation? Such a person would presumably say that the Nation States of this world should proclaim as their principal aim the speediest possible achievement of an agreement under strict international control in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations which would put an end to the arms race and eliminate the incentive to the production and testing of nuclear weapons. Such an independent mind might also suggest that those States should seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time, and that for this purpose they should pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear-arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.

Some might consider such an approach too theoretical, too academic or not related closely enough to practical reality. The fact is, as I am sure many in this room recognized, the words I have just read are derived directly and without distortion from the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 to which the vast majority of States including those in this room are already solemnly committed, including the most powerful of those amongst us.

A comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty is a disarmament measure to which Australia accords the highest priority. Such a treaty would have a major impact on unblocking the current impasse in progress towards nuclear disarmament. A comprehensive test-ban treaty would strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty by helping to fulfil the obligations of States under article VI. It would make development of new nuclear weapons and the improvement of existing ones more difficult. It would thus have a restraining effect on vertical proliferation. A CTB universally adhered to would render horizontal proliferation more difficult by making it impossible for non-nuclear-weapon States to test nuclear devices. The conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty would constitute a major psychological boost to international efforts to control and turn around the arms race at all levels. It would contribute to a lessening of the danger of nuclear war. Members of the Conference will be aware that, for a number of years, Australia has sponsored a resolution in the First Committee of the General Assembly calling for a comprehensive ban on all nuclear test explosions. This resolution was supported at last year's General Assembly by 117 countries with no country voting against it.

That resolution paves the way for the Conference on Disarmament to carry forward its work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, not least by considering a review of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group. So far this Working Group has undertaken a useful examination of issues relating to verification of and compliance with a nuclear test-ban under its existing mandate, but more needs to be done.

Australia has participated actively in the work of this Working Group to the extent of presenting several Working Papers. One of these has outlined a proposal for an international management panel to oversee the operation of the international seismic monitoring system and any other verification system established under a future treaty. In this regard, it is our view that as much preparatory work as possible should be done on the verification and compliance system for a comprehensive test-ban treaty in order that such a system should be functioning when such a treaty enters into force. This work has been proceeding for some time under the aegis of the group of scientific experts drawn from both members and non-members of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

It is important that this work continue and we shall contribute fully to it.

The Committee on Disarmament's Working Group also considered the issue of scope during 1983, even though this was not within its mandate. It must be recognized that scope is an important issue and that to be fully effective a CTB would need to be comprehensive in scope.

The Australian Government's views on this particular aspect are encapsulated in the draft scope article (document CD/405) which we submitted to the NTB Working Group in 1983. The most effective and safest solution is to ban all nuclear tests by all States in all environments and for all time. Thus the treaty should cover peaceful nuclear explosions as well as nuclear weapons tests. We are aware that there are differences of view on many issues relating to the comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is imperative that the international community begin the process of resolving these differences and moving towards the goal that we all ultimately seek. For these reasons the Conference must review the mandate of its NTB Working Group this year to advance consideration of this important subject. We believe that United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/63 forms a suitable basis for that review.

The conclusion of an effective and verifiable convention banning chemical weapons is a goal Australia has long advocated. We are firmly of the view that to be fully effective a new Chemical Weapons Convention should be comprehensive in scope and contain a clear ban on the use of chemical weapons as well as on their development, acquisition, stockpiling, retention or transfer. We are encouraged by the outcome of the recently concluded three-week session of the Chemical Weapons Working Group in that agreement was reached on a mandate for the Group's continuing work during 1984 providing for the negotiation and formulation of a convention. We recognize that areas of divergence remain. But we believe these can be overcome especially if there is a political will to conclude a convention.

We expect that the work of the Conference will be very greatly assisted by the draft treaty for the complete and verifiable elimination of chemical weapons on a global basis which the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Schultz, has said will be presented to this Conference shortly and we applaud this American initiative. We also wish to express Australia's appreciation to the United States for conducting the workshop on the destruction of chemical weapons in Utah in November last year. We regard this workshop as having been a very constructive initiative in the important areas of techniques for and verification of stockpile destruction. It

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simply demonstrated what can and should be achieved in these areas. We can move steadily forward during our 1984 session to the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. This would be a significant achievement, and it must be done. We fully endorse the recommendation contained in the Chemical Weapons Working Group's report which would enable that work to recommence as a matter of priority at the current session of this conference.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another item on the Conference's agenda to which my Government attaches particular importance.

We are concerned that outer space is the coming area of Superpower competition and we firmly believe that limits to this competition must be set and that the arms race should not extend to outer space. The Conference should hold discussions aimed at exploring and identifying issues relevant to prevention of an arms race in outer space, and we support the establishment of a working group which would enable those issues to be addressed.

Australia voted for resolution 38/70 adopted at the last General Assembly of the United Nations. That resolution calls for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and states that this Conference, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has a primary role in the negotiation of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The General Assembly requests us to do this as a matter of priority.

Australia values its membership of this Conference. Arms control and disarmament goals are an essential part of Australian foreign policy.

Australia is a country of the West and enjoys one of the West's great historic products -- a liberal democratic political system. Australians live in liberty and cherish it. They believe that all peoples should be able to do the same because they believe that humankind's fundamental desires are freedom and the ability to pursue a decent standard of living within a framework of peace. These goals are threatened by the arms race. The Conference on Disarmament can help negotiate us out of this situation. Australia's voice is only one of 40 in this Conference, but I can assure you it will be heard because we are determined that this Conference shall not fail.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement as well as for the friendly reference to my country, the Polish-Australian relations which we have established and the kind words addressed to me as the President. I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Dhanapala.

Mr. DHANAPALA (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, I have the melancholy task today of extending the sincere condolences of my delegation to Ambassador V.L. Issraelyan and his delegation on the passing away of His Excellency Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The Government of Sri Lanka has declared today a day of national mourning and flags have been at half-mast for two days in my country in silent tribute to the late President Andropov.

This is my first statement in the Conference on Disarmament and therefore allow me at the outset to thank you and my distinguished colleagues for the warm welcome accorded to me when I joined this Conference at the commencement of this session. I am encouraged by this cordial reception and I would like to pledge my own co-operation to the distinguished members of the Conference in undertaking the tasks before us.

While congratulating you on the assumption of the office of the President of this Conference, let me also assure you of the fullest co-operation of my delegation in your arduous task of conducting the Conference for this month. I am sure that your experience as a skilful diplomat would enable you to guide this forum towards a meaningful dialogue.

I take this opportunity on behalf of my delegation to express our appreciation for the valuable services rendered to this Conference by the Ambassador of Peru. His patience and wisdom helped the Committee to accomplish many important goals during the last session.

I also join you in extending a welcome to Mr. Richard Luce MP, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom.

My country's dedication to the cause of general and complete disarmament is too well known to require repetition. It was our privilege as the then Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement to pilot the non-aligned initiative which led to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978. That special session is widely acknowledged to have been a major event in global disarmament efforts. However, we are disappointed that many of the conclusions of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament remain unimplemented. Sri Lanka continues her efforts in the international community towards the goal of disarmament and we shoulder the responsibility of being Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean as well as the World Disarmament Conference in the hope that our modest efforts will help the international community. It was only in November last year that President J.R. Jayewardene, speaking at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in New Delhi, touched on the core of Sri Lanka's approach to the question of disarmament, the philosophy of non-violence. He said, and I quote -- "It may not be accepted by everybody but somebody must say, 'let us give up arms altogether'. Not only nuclear weapons but other arms. Let us train our people in the Gospel of non-violence preached by Mahatma Gandhi, preached by the Buddha, preached by Jesus Christ, preached by Mohammed and all the great religious leaders. Why do we practise non-violence only in the Church, in the Mosque, in the Temple, why not at the Summit Commonwealth Conference. At least let us talk about it."

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

We are still at the threshold of the year 1984 which in the political satire of our time has acquired some ominous significance. The international trends that we see around us do not encourage us to reject the Cassandras who see the satirical scenarios written in the past as a realistic projection of the future. A heavy responsibility is therefore cast on us in this Conference to communicate with each other on our mutual concerns. We know that as we meet bilateral dialogue on disarmament --- INF and START in particular --- remain frozen with no prospect of an immediate thaw. We also know that military budgets in the world total approximately \$US 800 billion per annum. This Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament is therefore more important than ever before and our deliberations must be imbued with a sense of this unique role we are called upon to play. Several speakers before me have stressed that the Conference on Disarmament is the only existing forum for negotiations on nuclear issues. Not only the nuclear-weapon Powers but all of us share this realization. The true measure of our understanding of this fact must be evident in our work during this session. The change of the nomenclature of our body will be of little consequence if it is not accompanied by a sense of urgency of our task and a deepening of our commitment to the cause of general and complete disarmament which is our final goal.

Our first week of this session gives us no cause to believe that this sense of urgency and this deepening of commitment is apparent in the actions of this Conference. Apart from the mutual recrimination and reproach, we are in danger of delaying the commencement of our work by failure to reach agreement on the order of our business. Old debates are being revived and old arguments repeated. My delegation is disturbed by these polemics. We welcomed last year the consideration given to the prevention of nuclear war which we regard as a priority issue vitally affecting us. A focusing of attention on this subject is a reflection not only of our concerns but the concerns of millions in diverse parts of the world who are united in their fears of the horrible consequences of a nuclear war. The earnest pleadings of peace protestors and the apocalyptic visions of film-makers on the horrors and imminence of a nuclear holocaust are cries from the human heart based on the rational and empirical findings of researchers and scientists. A nuclear war is the most grotesque type of war we are capable of unleashing at the moment, and the most destructive of the human condition. We speak from different perspectives but there can ultimately be only one perspective, as potential victims of a nuclear holocaust. Are we so blase that we cannot see this self-evident logic and focus on this danger in our deliberations?

We are not at all pessimistic about the future course of our session despite the difficulties we see before us. My delegation was encouraged by the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons ably chaired by Ambassador McPhail. We are also encouraged by the promise of a draft Convention on Chemical Weapons which we welcome as a positive sign of a political will to negotiate on this issue. We hope that this negotiation will take place early and that a positive agreement to negotiate will be extended over the entire gamut of disarmament issues. My delegation is also mindful of the useful discussions that took place in previous sessions, which are a foundation on which we can build. Document CD/416, for example, reflects some of these achievements. However, the value of past achievements can only be acknowledged by making them a basis for future progress and not by regressing or standing still. A pause in disarmament negotiations or a fruitless retreading of ground already covered in our discussions here is in

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

effect a backward step. For while we talk the arms race goes on and there is no pause in the research, development and production of armaments. A pause in the manufacture and deployment of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, is what is needed.

Another cause of satisfaction to my delegation is the work accomplished at the United Nations General Assembly last year and which we have before us in document CD/428. We must pay tribute to our colleagues who were able to reach some areas of agreement and my delegation hopes we can build on these achievements. I am personally glad that unlike in previous years we were able to have one resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space -- an issue with which my delegation has been associated for some time. The voting on this resolution is also a cause for justifiable optimism although we do not minimize the task ahead. These tasks are complex and demanding of patient negotiation. They also require mutual accommodation.

My delegation welcomes the proposals made by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico for the creation of subsidiary bodies on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, prevention of nuclear war and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament while re-establishing the subsidiary bodies on chemical weapons, radiological weapons and the NTB. We must persist in our search for a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. My delegation also welcomes the proposal of the distinguished leader of the Swedish delegation for a nuclear-arms freeze between the Superpowers.

Some of the speakers who have taken the floor before me have amply illustrated the various factors which contributed to past failures in this forum. While accepting the fact that it is beneficial to reflect upon these past failures and to learn through these experiences, it is also pertinent to start this session with a new approach and a dedication to achieve substantive results. In this respect my delegation is mindful of the need to build confidence among countries who belong to different camps and different ideologies. It is indeed encouraging to note that the Conference on Disarmament in Europe at Stockholm is making progress in trying to achieve this goal. We here who represent all parts of the globe may well derive inspiration from any positive results that might come out of this dialogue.

My delegation is perturbed that varying forms of the doctrine of deterrence which ostensibly seek to achieve an elusive balance of terror continues to postulate the need for an upward trend, rather than achieving a balance at a lower level. This has not only created tension but also has consumed a considerable amount of resources that could have been otherwise productively used, particularly in developing countries. This situation could have been avoided had some restraint and desire to negotiate been shown by the parties concerned. And yet rather than displaying goodwill, understanding and flexibility there has been a display of polemical rhetoric. The time has come for those who are responsible to listen to the public outcry and approach the problem in a more sensible manner. Therefore at least those of us who are present here must now engage in a more productive dialogue without resorting to the practice of accusation and counter-accusation. Only then will this Conference be able to produce tangible results for which we have been given a mandate by the United Nations General Assembly for the sixth consecutive year.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

The Preparatory Committee of the Third Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is scheduled to meet this year. As a signatory to the Treaty, Sri Lanka attaches great importance to this event, which in our view, is an integral part of the process of nuclear disarmament. The obligation under Article VI of the Treaty to "undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith" in order to end the nuclear arms race and to achieve nuclear disarmament has not been honoured by many nuclear-weapon States. We are also perturbed by the fact that so far only 110 States have acceded to the Treaty. Therefore it is of paramount importance that the Third Review Conference reflect upon these two aspects of the Treaty to enhance the credibility of the NPT regime. It is self-evident that the initiation of multilateral negotiation of a Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty and of efforts to have wider accession to the NPT would have a mutually reinforcing effect which would facilitate the process of nuclear disarmament. The future therefore involves a political choice. If the major Powers intend to create a system that will effectively prevent proliferation over a long period of time, they must resolve to make the rules of the game more equitable. Those who have the monopoly of nuclear security must realize the incongruity of attempting to promote horizontal non-proliferation without taking effective steps to negotiate measures to halt vertical proliferation.

The United Nations General Assembly has entrusted to this body the task of conducting negotiations with foresight. We have a duty by the world community to work towards avoiding impending disaster. I refer again to the most serious threat to mankind that looms ahead of us now in the escalating, arms race in outer space. The science fiction of an arms race in outer space with its attendant dangers is fast becoming a grim reality. We must act immediately and conscientiously to avoid a situation that would lead to further destabilization and to prevent launching of an arms race into outer space. The competition in this arena not only consumes enormous resources but is also destructive to the universe in a wider sense. The entire international order may take only a few seconds to collapse in a conflict in space. In this respect it is very encouraging to note again that the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly has recommended overwhelmingly to this Conference, through its resolution 38/70, to commence negotiation with utmost urgency. Therefore it is our duty by the people of the world to set up a suitable subsidiary body to negotiate on this item.

At the commencement of my statement I expressed my concern about the deterioration of the world situation. Numerous rallies, processions, peace marches and scholastic seminars, transcending national frontiers have expressed their concern over this trend, while the quest for an elusive balance proceeds unabated. How far and for how long can "political will" lag behind this unanimity of world public opinion? This Conference cannot ignore the voiced will and articulated aspirations of the people whom they represent. Let us attune our negotiations to the expressed desires of the people of the world. Only then can we in contrast to the past five years report positively to the General Assembly in this our sixth year of existence.

I have adumbrated the general positions of my delegation as we commence our new session. As the session progresses my delegation will speak more specifically to the agenda before us.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Thank you, Comrade President. I should like to thank the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Mr. Richard Luce, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Comrade Tellalov, and the Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Mr. Dhanapala, for their condolences on the occasion of the death of Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov.

The PRESIDENT: Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? This does not seem to be the case. You will recall that, at our plenary meeting last Thursday, we agreed to hold an informal meeting of the Conference this afternoon to consider some outstanding organizational matters. If there is no objection I intend to convene that informal meeting as planned at 3.30 p.m. today. I see no objection.

It is so decided.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 16 February at 10.30 a.m. The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.