

FINAL RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 30 August 1985, at 3.30 p.m.

President:

Mr. Mario A. Cámpora

(Argentina)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. A. BELAID
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. M.A. CAMPORA Mr. G. PARINI
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. R. BUTLER Mr. R. ROWE Ms. J. COURTNEY
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. J. RAEYMAECKERS
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. B. KONSTANINOV Mr. R. DEYANOV
<u>Burma:</u>	
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. A. BEESLEY Mr. A. DESPRES Mr. E. MORRIS Mr. R. SUTHERLAND
<u>China:</u>	Mr. QIAN JIADONG Ms. WANG SHIYUN Mr. LIU ZHONGREN
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mr. P. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. M. VEJVODA Mr. A. CIMA
<u>Egypt:</u>	Mr. S. ALFARARGI Mr. M. BADR Mr. F. MONIB
<u>Ethiopia:</u>	Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. J. JESSEL
Mr. G. MONTASSIER

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. ROSE
Mr. F. SAYATZ

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. W. GERMANN

Hungary:

Mr. F. GAJDA

India:

Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. S. SUTOWARDOYO
Mr. A. MASBAR
Mr. F. QASIM

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Italy:

Mr. F. PIAGESSE
Mr. M. PAVESE
Mr. G. ADORNI-BRACESI

Japan:

Mr. R. IMAI
Mr. K. KUDO
Mr. M. SATO

Kenya:

Mr. P.N. MWAURA

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA

Mongolia:

Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Netherlands:

Mr. R.J. VAN SCHAIK
Mr. J. MILDERS

Nigeria:

Pakistan:

Mr. Z. AKRAM

Peru:

Mr. J. GONZALES TERRONES

Poland:

Mr. J. RYCHLAK

Mr. J. CIALOWICZ

Romania:

Mr. V. FAUR

Sri Lanka:

Mr. J. DHANAPALA

Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM

Sweden:

Mr. R. EKEUS

Mr. L.E. WINGREN

Mr. H. BERGLUND

Ms. E. BONNIER

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELIAN

Mr. A.N. KASHIRIN

Mr. G. BERDENNIKOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. R.J.S. EDIS

Mr. D. SLINN

United States of America:

Mr. R. LEVINE

Mr. T. BARTHELEMY

Mr. D. DORN

Mr. A. LIEBOWITZ

Ms. M. WINSTON

Mr. B. O'CONNEL

Mr. R. NELSON

Venezuela:

Mr. O. GARCIA GARCIA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. K. VIDAS

Mr. M. MIHALOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. O.N. MONSHEMVULA

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

Mr. M. KOMATINA

Deputy Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 335th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference will today adopt its annual report to the General Assembly of the United Nations. The secretariat has today circulated the draft annual report contained in document CD/WP.192/Rev.2. As promised at yesterday's plenary meeting, the draft report in all languages was placed in delegations' boxes at 9.30 a.m., earlier than hoped. The draft report has now again been circulated in the conference room.

Document CD/WP.192/Rev.2 contains the technical parts of the report as well as the draft substantive paragraphs for the agenda items on which ad hoc committees were not set up. The reports of the ad hoc committees which were adopted yesterday will be an integral part of the annual report. As I informed you at an informal meeting held at the beginning of this week, the secretariat will insert them in the report once it has been adopted when it is submitted for processing as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament. The secretariat will then also fill in the remaining blank spaces. Any technical or drafting mistake in the various languages should be pointed out directly to the secretariat. There is no need to discuss these matters now.

Some members have put their names down to speak before we adopt the annual report to the General Assembly of the United Nations. I now intend to invite them to take the floor. I therefore give the floor to the representative of Algeria, Mr. Belaid.

Mr. BELAID (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. President, may I first of all convey to you the Algerian delegation's gratitude for the dedicated and able manner in which you have presided over the Conference this month. Your contribution to the work of the Conference honours your country, Argentina, with which Algeria maintains relations of friendship and co-operation which are in every way exemplary.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to thank, on behalf of Ambassador Ould-Rouis, all the representatives who wished him success in his new duties.

As our Conference prepares to close its annual session, I should like to make some remarks on the work accomplished during this period.

The first conclusion that we must draw is that the results of this work have certainly not fulfilled even our most modest expectations.

The fact that the Conference is today unable to present a concrete result on the priority items on its agenda, namely nuclear questions, is sufficient to explain this frustration, that has also been expressed by numerous delegations.

No action has been taken in the light of the new developments this year which could have given impetus to the work of the Conference on the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests.

Consequently, on this question, the Conference must confine itself to drafting a report which is virtually identical to that of the two previous years in regard to the obstacles and difficulties already encountered in the past.

(Mr. Belaid, Algeria)

Although there is no need to recall the high importance that the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests would have for the start of effective disarmament, it is once again open to question whether certain nuclear Powers are really willing to initiate such a process.

In this respect, it is significant to note that the very item entitled "Cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament" has still not been considered, even in summary fashion, by the Conference.

The international community, which had legitimately hoped for a positive result from the consideration of the question of the prevention of nuclear war in this year of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and of the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will have been finally disappointed in its expectations.

Due to the fact that certain delegations are opposed to an approach aimed at apprehending the danger of nuclear war as it really exists, all the efforts that have been agreed upon to permit the Conference to begin serious work on this crucial question -- starting from the lowest common denominator -- have been to no avail.

We hope that the painstaking exercise in which the drafting group engaged on this agenda item will help the Conference next year to draw the only feasible conclusion, namely the need to establish a subsidiary body in which all the delegations will be able to express their points of view in a constructive and fruitful manner.

Mr. President, although the outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Committees can be described as encouraging in comparison with previous sessions of the Conference, it is nevertheless insufficient to suggest the beginning of a decisive breakthrough.

The progress achieved by the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons in the drafting of joint texts for a future convention remains limited in this respect, if we bear in mind the important questions that are outstanding.

The possibilities for broader agreement that were not exploited during the negotiations, and the difficulties that arose during the finalization of the work of the present session, clearly show that only mutual understanding and the requisite political will could enable the Ad Hoc Committee to carry out its task of drafting a convention on chemical weapons.

Within the context of its mandate, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space has made possible an exchange of views from which it appears that there is a widely shared belief that this environment should be reserved for exclusively peaceful purposes for the benefit of all States and all peoples.

It is to be hoped that the difficulties encountered in the adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee will not turn out to be an advance indication of difficulties in the commencement of substantive work on the drafting of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Belaid, Algeria)

During the present session, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament has given delegations an opportunity to overcome some difficulties and to draft agreed new paragraphs.

Although a consensus on other paragraphs is within our reach, it must be recognized that there are still differences of opinion concerning certain questions. Consequently, the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee will be of considerable importance. We hope that every effort will be made to submit to the forty-first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations a real draft comprehensive programme of disarmament.

Mr. President, the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons has undoubtedly carried out useful work during the present session. The significance that the overwhelming majority of delegations have attached to the question of the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities is an encouraging factor for the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee. This achievement needs to be preserved and consolidated during future negotiations.

Finally, in regard to the work on so-called negative security assurances, it must be admitted that no new element likely to break the deadlock on this question has been noted during the present session.

Although we would have liked to justify the deadlock in the Ad Hoc Committee by the short period of time allocated to its work, we are all aware that the real explanation lies in the unwillingness of certain nuclear Powers to associate themselves with an approach that would take due account of the legitimate anxieties of non-nuclear-weapon States.

Our evaluation of the work of the Conference is in no way based on a pessimistic attitude. On the contrary, it is a manifestation of our wish to see this unique and irreplaceable negotiating body fully discharge the role assigned to it. It also reflects our concern that, seven years after the adoption of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, no progress has been made in this respect and the consensus reached on that occasion is gradually being eroded.

Nevertheless, we hope that the obstacles in the way of the commencement of substantive negotiations on a number of points, particularly the nuclear issues, will eventually be removed in order to enable the Conference to shoulder its responsibilities and to act effectively in furtherance of the higher interests of mankind as a whole.

Thank you.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Algeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Edis.

Mr. EDIS (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I should like to say first that we have admired the skill and professionalism with which you have conducted our proceedings during this month, and what I have to say now about a section of the report is in no way intended to be a reflection on you personally.

(Mr. Edis, United Kingdom)

The section of the report which I refer to is section III C, in CD/WP.192/Rev.1, on the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters, which is paragraphs 69 to 93 of the draft report, starting on page 26 of the English text.

In our view, this section of the draft report makes sorry reading. It is rambling, it is disjointed, and in some cases, it is unfactual. It reads like a catalogue of recrimination. What a report of this nature should rather have contained was a balanced and factual account of views expressed and this should have been a relatively simple undertaking. The report of the Secretary-General in CD/603, summarizing the views of States on the prevention of nuclear war and related matters and the original draft prepared by the secretariat for this section of the report, in Working Paper CD/196, shows what could have been achieved. Unfortunately, in the course of the revision of the secretariat's draft, unjustified allegations and innuendoes were inserted and necessitated some reply on the part of those countries whose views were being maligned. This section of the report is, in our view, an unworthy and undignified document for this Conference to submit to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Having given our view on this section of the report, I wish to state that we will not stand in the way of the adoption of the report because of the severe pressure of time on our work.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his statement. If no other delegation wishes to take the floor before the adoption of the report of the Conference, I shall now submit it to the Conference for consideration. Does any other delegation wish to speak at this time? I submit to the Conference for adoption the draft annual report to the General Assembly of the United Nations as contained in document CD/WP.192/Rev.2. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the annual report.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I have on my list to speak after the adoption of the report the representative of Canada, Ambassador Beesley. I give the floor to Ambassador Beesley.

Mr. BEESLEY (Canada): Mr. President, on the closing day of the session, and as I am speaking for the first time under your presidency, I would like to join all those who have already congratulated you in having contributed so much to the success of the 1985 session by your skilful and firm leadership, particularly during this difficult month which included the adoption of the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly.

May I also take this opportunity to bid farewell to three friends and colleagues who are leaving us this year: Ambassador Alessi of Italy, Ambassador Dubey of India, and my neighbour to my right, Ambassador Maung Maung Gyi of Burma. I would like to offer them my very best wishes in their future functions.

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

In my statement today, I will address briefly the question of possible improvements in the procedures and processes of the Conference on Disarmament which might enable us all to concentrate more time and energy in the future to substantive issues, and less on procedures. In so doing I am not speaking as Western Co-ordinator.

On 4 April this year I noted the extent to which the Conference on Disarmament becomes mired in procedural discussions. Since then other delegations have made similar comments, most recently the delegations of Brazil and Venezuela. No one suggests that even a wholly perfect process would necessarily achieve a breakthrough in any of the negotiations going on in the Conference, but it does seem increasingly clear that the procedural gridlock which arises repeatedly in the Conference reflects, to some degree, our own agreed procedures.

An article which will be published shortly in the United Nations periodical "Disarmament" reads in part as follows:

"Some of the procedural problems of the Conference on Disarmament are:

(a) the rigid application to procedure as well as substance of its rule of decision by consensus, applied in practice as a rule of unanimity, permitting the veto by any delegation of procedural decisions such as mandates of subsidiary bodies and other similar issues;

(b) the Presidency of the Conference changes each month, thereby greatly adding to the difficulties inherent in the important role of the President in attempting to direct debate, co-ordinate consultations and structure negotiations;

(c) the subsidiary organs of the Conference, with only very few and occasional exceptions, must be established anew at the opening of each spring session, resulting in sometimes lengthy negotiations not always leading to the re-establishment of a pre-existing subsidiary organ;

(d) the Chairmanships of subsidiary organs (both ad hoc committees and working groups) if and when they are established, change each year in almost every case, thus greatly adding to the problems of the Chairmen in charge of negotiations on complex technical and controversial issues;

(e) on procedural questions (and sometimes on substance) the Conference on Disarmament emulates other United Nations organs through its institutionalization of 'group dynamics', pursuant to which the 'Western' and 'Socialist' and 'Group of 21' (with only China as the exception) all speak through single spokesmen or co-ordinators, who themselves change at least once each year, thus virtually ensuring the least common denominator approach to many questions;"

I would now add to these points, another, namely:

(f) the report writing exercise appears to have become gradually more cumbersome and time consuming every year, to the point where the Conference spends a disproportionate amount of time to produce a report which may well confuse its intended readers rather than present a clear and factual record of the work done during the session.

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

The article already mentioned goes on to say:

"The question arises whether any radical changes in the procedures of the Conference on Disarmament can be made in the light of its history, owing its origin, as it does, to the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament."

I offer these observations in a constructive spirit and certainly as no intentional criticism of any delegation or any group of delegations. I suggest that we all might usefully reflect on these questions during the intersessional period, particularly their cumulative effect on our work which can give rise to the wholly false impression that we may at times be more concerned with process than progress. Let us leave with some optimism for the future based, however, on a determination to do better.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Canada for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): Three years ago, on the final day of our 1982 session, on 17 September, our distinguished colleague from Brazil, Ambassador de Souza e Silva, took the floor to voice his dismay about the procedure that had been applied during that year, but also during preceding years, in the establishment of the annual report. He noted that the "annual reports of the Conference have serious flaws that we should endeavour to correct". He called the drafting process "a baroque exercise in futility" and noted that the final text, despite an incredible investment of time, usually did not satisfy any delegation. He suggested at that point, very concretely, that the Chairman of the then Committee on Disarmament, should appoint, at the beginning of the subsequent session, a small group to work informally on the rationalization of the format of the annual report. My delegation supported Ambassador de Souza e Silva then and would now like to voice its regret that no follow-up action had been taken at the time.

This year, again, the drafting procedure for the report has given rise to substantial dismay on my part, and on the part of my delegation, as well as others. I think the reasons are relatively simple: we do not have firmly established ground rules for the exercise, ground rules that, once set and accepted, could then in a spirit of solidarity be abided by, by all.

Let me give two examples of the lack of ground rules. In this year's exercise, in one particular chapter that was already alluded to, there are lengthy verbatim citations from other United Nations documents, despite the insistence of several delegations that these be cut out and replaced by mere documentary references. We should agree that such verbatim citation of pages is costly and wasteful. Another bad habit which my delegation has observed, and particularly this year, is that delegations do not concentrate on giving an adequate and balanced reflection of what has actually been said or done over the year but that they want to insert in the report what they think they should have said or should have done. Thereby the report has very little to do with actual proceedings and very much with polemics and confrontation. Much of the report as we have it before us now is a matter of pure invention, containing elements that cannot be found in any of the documents the Conference has produced over the year; and I regret to say that one group of countries among us has been particularly inventive in that respect.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

The Brazilian suggestion was not retained at the time, but I think that now it is even more urgent that we do something concrete about it. I would like to suggest -- now, at the end of our annual session -- that early next year, in the framework of the Group of Wise Men, which should be re-established to think about our procedures, the establishment of some fair and basic ground rules for the establishment of our future report should be taken in hand.

Let me conclude with a brief remark regarding your own contribution to our work. You have led us with great skill, with exquisite courtesy, with a firm but gentle hand. Your mode of work has proved to be particularly effective. You have had, of course, exemplary assistance from a competent secretariat. You have now concluded, Mr. President, the first month of your tenure as the representative of your country. It is the impression of my delegation that the record that you have established over this month augurs extremely well for your future stay among us, and we are gratified that Argentina will, again, be represented by an outstanding delegate.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany for his statement and especially for the very kind words addressed to the President.

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): We have just adopted the report on the 1985 session of the Conference on Disarmament, which, from the point of view of the Soviet delegation, correctly reflects the work of the five subsidiary bodies, and this is our main achievement, as well as the discussion of other points, indeed of priority items of the agenda, on which it was impossible to set up a subsidiary body because of the position of one group of States. I have a single remark on the section of the report which concerns agenda item 3. It also does not satisfy us completely, because it attributes an importance that is surprisingly out of proportion to reality to a draft resolution of the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly which was not put to the vote, was of little interest here in the Conference and which nevertheless occupied, to put it bluntly, an undeservedly large space in agenda item 3 in our report.

With regard to some considerations on the organization of work, I should like to support some remarks expressed by Ambassador Beesley, and I stress that I mean Ambassador Beesley of Canada. It seems to me that we could indeed make better use of the intersessional period. I would hope that you, Mr. President, might use this period somewhat more effectively, bearing in mind that, if not all, at least the majority of your colleagues will be in New York with you and some issues, in the provisional agenda at least, could already be discussed in New York. I recall that in past years the Secretary-General of our Conference as a rule convened such meetings once, and I think the intersessional activity has been confined to this. I believe that this could be done more frequently and more effectively. But what issues even in the provisional agenda could be discussed? In this connection, and remembering what occurred this year, I cannot but express regret at a new, negative phenomenon concerning the appointment of chairmen. You will all certainly well remember that, for instance, the decision on the creation of a subsidiary body on radiological weapons was taken, if my memory does not fail me, at the beginning of March. But we appointed the Chairman of the Committee either in the middle or at the end of April. Ambassador Butler may be able to

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

specify the date, but I think that I have it approximately right. In other words, for more than a month the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons did no work only because we could not agree on a Chairman. Unfortunately, this deplorable situation also occurred in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. It again took more than a month after the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee to settle the question of its Chairman. I do not want today to go into the reasons why, or whom to blame. Let us leave that aside. I think that all or at least most will agree with me that this is not normal. A committee exists, its mandate has been agreed on, and we cannot agree on a chairman. Perhaps this question of chairmen is one on which active consultations could take place during the intersessional period. We could get a rough idea of what subsidiary bodies we will have next year: if not all those which functioned this year, obviously the majority of them will continue their work for the simple reason that not one of the Ad Hoc Committees has completed its work. Of course, the question of agreeing on mandates is considerably more difficult. All the same, perhaps by the beginning of the next session you and your colleague on your left, Ambassador Butler, could already gain a fuller view of the feelings and positions of States members of the Conference, so as not to start from scratch at the end of January or beginning of February, and conduct energetic consultations on mandates too in the course of this intersessional period, and particularly during the period when General Assembly resolutions will be adopted. We all know very well that most resolutions contain specific mandates, and I do not rule out that there may be resolutions containing mandates which are adopted by consensus, which makes this matter easier. In a word, in my opinion, there is a possibility of active work by the President of the Conference and the Secretary-General during the intersessional period. The Soviet delegation will wholeheartedly co-operate with you.

Finally, we should like to convey to you, Mr. President, the representative of a friendly country, Argentina, our appreciation for your wise guidance of the work of the Conference in August. I must say that you have had no easy task. For reasons known to everyone, August is the most difficult month in the work of the Conference. This year it was particularly difficult because for a week the work of this Conference was paralleled by that of another important conference, the Third Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. You have displayed outstanding diplomatic ability and talent, like the captain of a great ocean liner who after many months sailing has skilfully tied up at the dock, so to speak, by completing the report. We are most grateful to you. We should also like to address our thanks to the distinguished Ambassador Komatina, and his deputy Vicente Berasategui, without whose invaluable assistance our ship, the Conference, would probably be lost. Indeed, the organization of our work was good and I should like to thank all the secretariat staff who served the Conference. I would be ready to enumerate their names, but I will not hold up the attention of delegations and will merely refer to document CD/INF.I/Rev.13, pages 1 and 2, where you will find the names of all our heroes, as it were, our workers who have served us in the course of this year. In addition, the Conference is greatly obliged to translators and interpreters, whose work has unfailingly met a high standard of quality and professionalism. I should like to thank them very much through you, Mr. President. Finally, again through you I should like to convey to all our colleagues our thanks and wish those who are going on holiday to enjoy their rest and those who have to work -- success in their work.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement and especially for his kind words addressed to the President.

Mr. KANT SHARMA (India): Taking a cue from the distinguished Ambassador of the Soviet Union who spoke just before, I would hesitate to detain this august body any more. For that reason I would simply associate my delegation with the words just spoken by the Ambassador of the Soviet Union in gratitude for the work done by you, Sir, by the distinguished Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference, and the secretariat in concluding our work for this 1985 session.

Having done that, I would now like to return very briefly and, of course, very hesitantly, to a point which has been raised today. I am hesitant because my delegation does not think that the point about how the report should be written or how, this year, our report was written, is a matter for discussion in this Conference. My delegation has been hesitant because, by opening a wide-scale discussion on this issue we lower the nature of the debate in this Conference to a totally different level altogether. But since comments have been made, and since expressions such as, and I quote, "unworthy of the Conference" or allusions such as "inventions" have been made in this meeting today, I thought one should make a few observations, so that the record of the Conference does not only show singular concern on the part of a few delegations about how a thing was done or how the work of the Conference was reported, without there being any comment on what was being reported.

The aspect on which two delegations, at least, of a group made comments, was about the work of the Conference and the report, more importantly, of that work with regard to item 3 of the agenda of the Conference, "Prevention of nuclear war". On 30 July, just one month before, we had a plenary discussion on that subject and a proposal was tabled for decision. I am struck by the contrast in the performance on 30 July and on 30 August. On 30 July one group spoke with remarkable precision, with concise views, hardly a few lines, on a substantive decision which this Conference was required to take. Then there were speakers from the other groups who tried to emphasise their own point of view, not one, but several, and this concerned the substantive aspect of the work of the Conference on a proposal, and on what the Conference should have done on an important issue. But then, when the report was being written, the same subject matter, the same substantive aspects were reflected in a totally different manner. Now, on 30 August, we hear very elaborate comments, very deep seated concern about the nature of the writing of the report. The fact is, that somehow the rules of procedure of the Conference do not subject the writing of the report to the rule of consensus. Had it been so, we probably would not even have the privilege of writing our report because we have noticed, in the past, at least for the past three years, that on any matter of substantive interest, when the crucial issues of items 1, 2 or 3 of the agenda are concerned, we encounter remarkable procedural reservations which are subjected to the rule of consensus. When we seek an ad hoc committee, an ad hoc committee is not supported; when we have a mandate, the mandate is not supported; and even in another framework, that of going further in the Conference, to actually come to grips with the issues involved, they are not accepted by a group of delegations. On the other hand, when we get down to report writing we are accosted with the request for a decision with a very firm position, that balance should be reflected, that all delegations in this Conference should strive to show a balance in the views. The problem which lies at the root of our report, which I agree cannot be a decent report, cannot be a very concise document, is because this balance is the fundamental

(Mr. Kant Sharma, India)

requirement of this report, which is enforced through the rule of consensus, and because of that enforcement, delegations which are in a very large majority cannot even express their views without there having to be responses to each aspect of their views.

Furthermore, we have heard today about factuality and inventiveness. In a Conference which works on the rule of consensus, even facts do not have a factual nature, because one group's facts are, in the view of other groups, mere inventions, and one group's views in another group's view are mere allusions which are not accurate. In such a situation we cannot but have a free-wheeling report, which is what we have, and my delegation for one, in spite of all the flaws in it, would still abide by a practice which gives each delegation the right to give whatever it likes to say in this report. That is the only way we have of presenting to the outside world what we have done in this Conference. Any other constraint on this report would, I am afraid, only detract from the objective work of that report. We are not concerned here with the readability of the prose which the report contains, after all we are subjected to six languages and interpretations and differences of view. So the purpose of my intervention, which I am afraid is a little longer than I had intended, is to emphasize the following: let us not bother about how we are reporting, but let us bother, from next year onwards, about what we are reporting. Unless we improve on what we are reporting, there is not much point in trying to expostulate on the virtues of how we are reporting.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of India for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): I had not come here this afternoon planning to speak during this plenary session, but rather, I think like others, to participate in the adoption of our report. It has been adopted and I think that is an important achievement. But I have been quite fascinated by what has been said, in particular by Ambassador Beesley, who raised, I think, some very important issues, and then by Ambassador Wegener who recalled a past statement by the Ambassador of Brazil, with regard to the conduct of our work; and then by the very constructive suggestions made by Ambassador Issraelyan. I thought I might say a few words, very briefly, and of course I am a little bit like the person who is called to a wedding ceremony in the Western tradition where we are all asked to speak now or forever hold our peace. I must speak now because, until the month of February, I will certainly have to hold my peace.

I agree in large measure with some of the proposals that have been made this afternoon with regard to the functioning of this Conference and the reason is that my Government has a very definite view of the work of this Conference. It is that it should negotiate and it should negotiate in substance on the items on our agenda. That means we have very little tolerance for arguments about procedure, arguments about form, rather than work in negotiation, on substance. In that same context we have a small but growing concern about a tendency which we see, to link different subjects on our agenda and even their procedural aspects. We would prefer to see this Conference spend its significant efforts and energy, and we do spend a lot of time each year here, working, I think, quite hard, to spend that significant effort and energy negotiating in substance

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

on each of the subjects on our agenda, as they stand in their own right. We would be concerned if any of the substantive work on those subjects were to be prevented from starting, taking place even, or from making sufficient progress because the idea is put that you cannot do something on one subject unless you are doing something on another one. In other words, linkages are established, and if I may offer that as my contribution, in any review of our work in the future we would like to see agreement, pretty well established amongst us, that each subject should be worked on in the sense of true negotiations, in its own right and not unreasonably or unnecessarily linked to another. If that is done, it seems to us that it sets up what I would call false political tensions between subjects, where we all know that each subject in itself is difficult enough. The solution is not necessarily aided by setting up what I have just called some possibly false tensions between subjects. A call has been made this afternoon for some new ground rules, particularly with regard to the writing of our report. I think I can agree to that, and I heard Ambassador Issraelyan ask me, as the person sitting on your left, Mr. President (I don't know whether he meant on the left politically or geographically, but either way I am on your left and I will replace you in February) I heard him ask that we might have a look at the question of some new ground rules early in the next session. I think that is a good idea and, in consultation with others, I think we should have a hard look at that possibility. I thank him for raising that question.

May I conclude by saying that I think you have been an extraordinary and splendid President. I think you have made a marvellous début in this Conference. You have made it very hard for me to follow you in February, but I shall do my best.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Australia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

Mr. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, I did not intend to take the floor at this closing meeting, but after listening to the distinguished representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ambassador Issraelyan, and the distinguished representative of India, Mr. Kant Sharma, I feel I must endorse their words here in the Conference, and in particular stress the efficiency, fairness and style with which you have presided over the work of this Conference during the month of August. I should briefly like to oppose, as it were, the inventions -- and I say inventions in inverted commas -- which have been indicated in our report. May I express my delegation's wish that in future we will be able to show that many of the ideas contained in this document are inventions. The best way to do so would be for the First Committee of the General Assembly to adopt by consensus, with universal support, a resolution calling for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a nuclear weapon test ban: that we should all adopt by consensus a resolution calling for a freeze on present nuclear-weapon arsenals; and that we should all adopt by consensus a resolution calling for the adoption of practical measures to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war. With regard to the work of the Conference on Disarmament in 1986, the best manner by which we may show that many of these ideas are inventions would be for all the groups, all delegations, all of us to approve at the very beginning of the session the creation of subsidiary bodies with appropriate mandates to make it possible to begin negotiations on agenda items 1, 2 and 3, which are indeed the priority items before us.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

During the Conference's recess I must say that I shall be at the disposal of delegations and shall contact them in order to discuss and reflect upon the points just mentioned by some delegations concerning the best way in which to proceed during the final month of each session in drafting the annual report to the General Assembly. I should also like to make some comments on our experience during this period, in which we had the opportunity to establish important contacts, to hear various comments on the nature of the Conference and its successes and possibilities as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum available to the international community. In the present, politically difficult, international circumstances, we believe that the Conference is an essential instrument in the search for solutions to the serious problems threatening peace. None of the political currents can do without the multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is, in our view, a major step in the development of appropriate institutional arrangements for the adoption of measures to promote general and complete disarmament under effective international control. When I arrived in Geneva I heard some expressions of nostalgia for the previous multilateral negotiating bodies. I think that our procedures are by no means perfect, but it must nevertheless be recognized that they reflect a growing democratization of disarmament negotiations, above all with the abolition of what a well-known Nobel Peace Prize winner here rightly described as the "unwonted institution of the co-chairmanship". In addition, for the first time in multilateral disarmament negotiations the five nuclear-weapon Powers are seated at the same negotiating table. It is also with its present membership that the multilateral negotiating body has reached the position where the group of non-aligned and neutral countries has become a majority, which is in keeping with their representativity within the international community. We must certainly continue the efforts to perfect the organization of our work, but we must recognize that we have made significant progress in that direction.

It should also not be forgotten that the Conference on Disarmament is the first multilateral negotiating body which took on the responsibility of including in its agenda the consideration of essential measures to halt the arms race. When mention is made of the partial measures agreed upon in the earlier negotiating bodies as examples of effectiveness, it should also be recalled that those bodies evaded the consideration of the measures without which it is not possible to speak of genuine disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is of great importance for the non-aligned and neutral countries because in it those who, without being the authors, would nevertheless also be the victims of a nuclear holocaust can make their voices heard. It is also important for them because it gives them a voice in decisions relating to their technological independence and their legitimate demands for the cessation of a suicidal, useless and burdensome arms race. The non-aligned and neutral countries also have a special responsibility in this Conference, particularly at a time of political confrontation between military alliances. They must work for understanding and for a convergence of positions. This is an inescapable role, and it applies in particular in the case of questions where profound differences require their intervention not as mediators but as independent participants in political processes calling for dialogue and negotiation rather than confrontation and rivalry.

(The President)

The Conference on Disarmament is also important for the nuclear-weapon Powers and for those Powers which have preferred the option of military alliances. In times of crisis, and when bilateral negotiations are broken off, the Conference offers them the only available forum for global negotiations where they can air their concerns and aspirations in a search for mutually satisfactory arrangements. As militarily significant States, the members of these alliances have a primary responsibility for curbing the arms race and have no other means than the Conference on Disarmament open to them for ratifying their agreements by the international community. Any global agreement in the disarmament field requiring the endorsement of the United Nations General Assembly must be negotiated and agreed in this multilateral body so that the concerns of the various political currents in the international community are properly met.

Today we conclude the 1985 session. We have adopted the report to the fortieth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, whose singular merit is that it bears witness to intensive and difficult work. We believe that the Conference's report faithfully reflects the state of international relations and thus we trust that this report will alert the leaders, heads of State and foreign ministers who will certainly attend the fortieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations system at United Nations headquarters. We hope that this opportunity will be seized to reflect on the past, present and future of the Organization; and we also believe that disarmament, or rather the arms race, will be the priority concern of that anniversary. Perhaps, who knows, the next General Assembly will be a historic milestone, and out of the work of reflection on the part of the statesmen attending it, it will be possible to lay down new avenues for strengthening international peace and security.

Thank you very much for the co-operation I have received without exception from all representatives. I wish to mention in particular the dedication, efforts and diplomatic skill of the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees of the Conference, Ambassador Alfonso García Robles for the comprehensive programme of disarmament, Ambassador Butler for radiological weapons, Ambassador Turbanski for chemical weapons, Ambassador Ahmad for negative security assurances and Ambassador Alfarargi for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. I am profoundly grateful to all of them for the efficient manner in which they discharged the difficult duties to which I have just referred.

I am also grateful for the assistance given me by the Secretary-General of the Conference, and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Miljan Komatina, and the staff of the secretariat. I wish to mention Mr. Bensmail, Mrs. Levin, Mr. Slipchenko and Mr. Cassandra, whose work and assistance have been invaluable for the work of the Ad Hoc Committees. I must mention in particular the assistance that I have received from my friend, fellow countryman and colleague of many years' standing, Ambassador Vicente Berasategui. This expression of appreciation for the assistance I have received from the secretariat is not purely personal: I also wish to stress that the secretariat of the Conference plays a special role in this multilateral negotiating body because, in our view, it has its own institutional character, requiring a high degree of political competence from its members, which they have repeatedly displayed.

(The President)

With this closing statement, I also begin my work as a representative. I arrived to serve the Conference impartially as its President, and I shall now occupy the seat of the Argentine delegation, from which I will try to impress on our deliberations the specific approach of the Argentine Government, of which I gave you a foretaste with the message of the President of the Argentine Republic when I assumed the Presidency of the Conference. These are the closing remarks I wish to make.

We have now concluded our work for the 1985 session of the Conference on Disarmament. I now intend to adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 4 February 1986, at 10.30 a.m. As agreed by the Conference when adopting the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons contained in document CD/636, including the recommendation in paragraph 11 (c), the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons will officially resume its work on Monday, 13 January 1986, at 3 p.m., in Conference Room 5. The plenary meeting is adjourned and the 1985 session of the Conference on Disarmament is closed.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.