

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 14 July 1987 at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. T. Terrefe

(Ethiopia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 421st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

To begin with, I should like to welcome our distinguished visitors at this plenary meeting. I am very happy to greet the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Mr. David Mellor, Q.C., M.P., who is addressing the Conference for the first time since he took over his important functions. His predecessor, Mr. Timothy Renton, contributed effectively to our substantive work each time that he visited us. I am sure that the Conference will listen to the Minister of State with special interest and I wish him a successful visit to Geneva.

His Excellency the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Mr. Nguyen Di Nien, is addressing the Conference in connection with agenda item 8, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". The Deputy Minister is also in the Conference for the first time, and I wish to thank him for the interest he shows in our work. I am very happy to see him here today amongst us and the Conference will listen to him with interest.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference today continues its consideration of agenda item 4, entitled "Chemical weapons". In accordance with Rule 30 of its Rules of Procedure, however, any member wishing to do so, may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers for today, the representatives of the United Kingdom, Viet Nam and Mexico. I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, Mr. David Mellor.

Mr. MELLOR (United Kingdom): Mr. President, may I begin by saying that it is a very real honour for me to address this distinguished body, and under your presidency, knowing of your own experience of disarmament, which dates back to the predecessor of this Conference and, indeed, to the first United Nations special session on disarmament. I approach my task with some humility, knowing that I am in the presence of so many experts upon this subject and that I myself have only come to these responsibilities after nearly five years as a Minister carrying responsibility in Home Affairs in my country, so I feel a little like the minor Italian composer who was much distressed by the death of Rossini, a very much greater composer, and was so moved by the death of this great man that he composed a funeral ode which was performed at a memorial service to Rossini. After the performance, he wanted to know how it had gone, so he went to see one of his colleagues who had been in the audience, another composer, and he said, "Well, what did you think of it?" and the fellow Italian composer looked a little embarrassed, shuffled his feet, but, being at heart a diplomat, finally said, "Well, perhaps it might have been better if you had died and he had written the music". So if any of you feel that way about my speech, I shall quite understand. So let me congratulate you, Mr. President, and also your immediate predecessor, Ambassador Alfarargi of Egypt, on his successful presidency of the Conference.

Perhaps I could also say what a pleasure it was for me to meet so many of the Ambassadors and other senior figures here at our reception yesterday evening. If I may say so, it creates a very good impression upon a visitor of the shared endeavour that is the keystone of the work of this Conference that

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people meet together in a friendly spirit at receptions like these. I am sure that the personal relationships that are forged in such receptions do aid and assist the detailed work that has to go in within this hall and elsewhere, and I take away, if I may say so, an extremely favourable impression of the spirit of co-operation that plainly exists around this table.

The British Government began its third term of office following our General Election last month and, of course, I welcome this opportunity to tell the Conference once again, as I know my predecessor will have done last year, that the British Government will continue to attach the highest priority to arms control. All of us face a demanding challenge: not just to reduce the world's massive stockpiles of weaponry, but also to increase and enhance mutual security. No challenge is greater. No challenge is more important, and I am pleased and honoured to have the chance to make my own contribution.

I hope that I can begin, and carry with me everyone around this table, when I pay a particular tribute to Dr. Ian Cromartie, who is, of course, as you will all know and sadly, retiring as Head of the British delegation. It is no idle compliment to praise his efforts at this Conference over the past five years, not least his sterling work in the chemical negotiations as Chairman in 1986. He will be much missed by this Conference, and by none more than my own colleagues. The experience and expertise that Dr. Cromartie built up over the years set high standards for the rest of us. I will try to live up to those standards today, when I shall be introducing a new British initiative in the field of chemical weapons.

May I first of all try to set out Britain's overall approach to arms control. We seek enhanced security, at lower levels of armaments and forces, through mutual, balanced and effectively verifiable agreements. Those may be familiar objectives. But I want to restate them at the outset. Sometimes we read statements, implying that the Governments of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have a special devotion to peace, a special understanding of what peace means. That remains to be proven. A peace race may be preferable to an arms race. But in the search for security and lasting peace, the British Government takes second place to no one.

At our recent General Election, the British people voted, as they will continue to vote, overwhelmingly for peace. Of course they want peace. But they also want security, from threats or bullying or blackmail. Of course the British people want nuclear stockpiles reduced, to make Europe safer. But they do not want just to make Europe safer for conventional war. Of course the British people want relations between East and West to improve. But not at any price -- and certainly not if it implies compromising their basic beliefs in freedom and justice. In short, the British people take a very straightforward view of the basic issues of East/West relations and arms control and they have again endorsed the British Government's approach. It is practical, steady and realistic and, I hope, it is also energetic, positive and ambitious.

But arms control is not an isolated endeavour. It cannot proceed on some elevated plane, divorced from all that happens in the rest of the world. Success in arms control is, and must be, linked to the much wider climate of

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international relations. And, above all, to relations between East and West. Divorce can be fatal. And even separation can be damaging. Our basic aims in arms control must depend on the general climate of East/West relations.

The British Government has played its part in improving that climate. For instance, our Foreign Secretary has made a point of visiting every country in Eastern Europe (except Albania) to stimulate dialogue and to exchange ideas and his efforts paved the way for the Prime Minister's highly successful visit to Moscow at the end of March. Such political contacts are invaluable. They can provide clearer views of the hopes and intentions of each side. They can help to replace confrontation with co-operation. They can increase confidence and trust. But the building of trust and confidence takes more than contacts alone. Today's huge stockpiles of weapons do not exist because of mistrust alone. They exist because of profound differences between two very different systems.

The Warsaw Pact Communiqué issued in Berlin last month stated that "the initiative of the socialist countries is designed to overcome any confrontational approach and to assert civilized standards and an atmosphere of openness, transparency and trust in international relations". Very fine words. But what is the reality? Abroad we see some 5 million people driven out of their own country of Afghanistan. Within the countries of the Warsaw Pact we cannot ignore those actions which directly threaten trust and confidence and which seem designed to emphasize the differences between us. To give you an example, this year people living in Britain will make over 25 million visits abroad. Those who prevent their citizens leaving their own country must understand the effect of such controls on mutual confidence.

So I believe that we in the West want to get across to such countries a fundamental message: Yes, we want peace; Yes, we do not reject co-operation, but trust is an indivisible element in our relations. Confidence cannot be created in isolated stages. Like security, it is a seamless robe. And every time we find cause for mistrust, that re-emphasizes the need for adequate defences; that weakens the basis for co-operation; and that delays progress in arms control. But yet progress does come. And at present, and I welcome this, we do seem to be on the verge of some important developments.

Last month, the North Atlantic Council confirmed the priorities that were set last December; and they are these: to achieve an Intermediate Nuclear Forces agreement in the near future; to reduce United States and Soviet strategic offensive weapons by fifty per cent; to eliminate all chemical weapons completely; and to establish conventional security in Europe by redressing imbalances in this area which are a particular concern to NATO. We also agreed to consider the further development of a comprehensive concept of arms control. This will, I hope, help to identify how best to make progress in these and other areas -- again, towards that basic goal of strengthening security at lower levels of arms and armed forces. This programme is ambitious and far-reaching. If it could be achieved, East/West relations would be transformed for the better and I hope it represents common ground between all of us here.

(Mr. Mellor, United Kingdom)

May I deal in greater detail with the key issues as I see them, and I want to take in turn nuclear, conventional and then chemical weapons. Each can be treated on its own merits. But we cannot ignore the relationship between them. Progress in one can help to promote success elsewhere. But it cannot be allowed to damage our overall security.

On the subject of nuclear weapons, I will start with a fundamental truth, about security. This Conference hardly needs reminding of the peace that we have enjoyed in Europe for the past 40 years, compared with the 150 or so wars that have occurred outside our continent over the same period. We continue to believe that nuclear deterrence -- or nuclear security, as it is better described -- has a role to play in preserving this peace. And for that we need and will continue to need nuclear weapons. But we do not need them at the current inflated level; we can do with many less. And, as we make progress, we can discard the sterile and outdated arguments which have plagued the international debate in the past. The unilateralist approach to nuclear weapons has been consistently rejected by the British public and by Western opinion. I doubt whether it ever had much attraction elsewhere. We are all mutilateralist disarmers now. And we can all engage in the deeper debate -- not in slogans and flag-waving -- about what is crucial to ensure our mutual security.

Let me turn to the nuclear negotiations now in train, which inevitably lie beyond the direct control of this Conference, and whose pace and scope are largely determined by events outside this hall. First and foremost, we have been encouraged by recent progress in the United States-Soviet Union talks here in Geneva. The two super-Powers have between them some 95 per cent of the world's nuclear weapons, as well as the greatest potential for expanding military activity from outer space. We all have an interest in these negotiations. We all look to their success.

The bilateral talks are directed at major reductions in nuclear weapons, on a scale never seen before. Make no mistake: an agreement to abolish Long Range Intermediate Nuclear Forces and shorter-range systems down to 500 kms would represent a great step forward in nuclear arms control. That is why we accord it the highest priority. We welcomed the signs of Soviet realism last year. Then they began to move towards a serious agreement on longer-range INF. But let us keep the record straight. It was not the Soviet Union which proposed a global zero-zero solution in 1981. It was the United States with full support from their allies. Following the Reykjavik Summit, the prospects for an agreement again improved. But we are still urging the Soviet Union to agree to eliminate all Long Range INF missiles, and to accept global zero for shorter-range intermediate nuclear systems. Not least because this would greatly ease the verification problems. We have all heard Soviet rhetoric which calls on others to reduce nuclear weapons. This is a first-class opportunity for them to prove their sincerity. Let us hope that the agreement is signed. Let us trust that it is implemented, and can be verified effectively. That could well stimulate progress in other areas of arms control.

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But we are not there yet. The momentum must be sustained and this is no time for foot-dragging. But we now see signs of just that on the Soviet side. We see a Soviet reluctance to arrange the necessary meetings to drive the talks forward. And we must be concerned that the progress so far can be stymied at this late stage. Such artificial obstacles imply a Soviet approach which we, our allies and the rest of the world would find hard to understand -- and harder still to accept. I fervently trust that such obstacles will be removed forthwith.

Turning to the Strategic Defence Initiative, I confirm our welcome that the Soviet Union has dropped its earlier linkage between Long Range Intermediate Nuclear Forces. The United Kingdom continues to see the United States SDI programme as prudent. Mrs. Thatcher agreed with President Reagan at Camp David in November 1986 that there was a need to press ahead with the SDI research programme, which is permitted by the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. But it is just that, a research programme. And it matches the Soviet Union's activities in this field over many years.

I turn now to strategic nuclear arms. Both sides have accepted the target in principle of cutting them by half. I spoke of this target earlier as one of NATO's priorities. It remains that. Progress in INF should not divert us from the need for equal, and now greater efforts in the strategic field. We hope that the Soviet Union will now respond positively to the United States draft treaty which lies on the table. Failure to do so, or even further delay, would be a damaging indictment of Soviet intentions.

If we were able to implement both such agreements, we could indeed be proud of our success in bequeathing to future generations a less nuclear, but still safer world.

Finally, I come to constraints on nuclear testing. A nuclear test ban has long been one of the subjects on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda and you all know far better than I that, following the 1977-1980 negotiations, a committee of this Conference considered the subject for two years. I regret it has not been possible since then to agree a mandate for further discussion.

Meanwhile, the group of scientific experts has continued its very valuable work. I hope that this will continue free from any sort of politicization. The scientific group demonstrates how the Conference on Disarmament can best contribute to the discussion of nuclear testing constraints. The 1977-1980 negotiations were not brought to a successful conclusion. Nor is it useful to see those negotiations necessarily as the starting point for what we now need to do. Instead, I believe that the Conference on Disarmament should look to its own strengths, the sort of discussions which resolve technical problems and expose remaining difficulties. The present group does just this in the technical field. A committee could perform the same role in relation to other issues. Among them is the need to address verification problems. These remain unresolved, despite ill-informed claims to the contrary. Such a prospect was laid down in the Western programme of work and, indeed, in the draft mandate proposed earlier by the distinguished Czechoslovak delegate, Ambassador Vejvoda. Both were acceptable to us.

(Mr. Mellor, United Kingdom)

Progress in reducing nuclear weapons -- that is our aim. And we do not exclude constraints on nuclear testing as well. Far from it. We very much welcome the separate United States-Soviet talks on these. We hope they will soon be able to ratify their two treaties from the 1970s, before moving on to other constraints. This step-by-step process is the right way to make substantive and lasting progress. It also takes full account of real security concerns. And the Conference on Disarmament can make its contribution to this process by deciding soon how to structure its own discussion.

May I turn now to conventional weapons. We do not want to see controls on nuclear weapons -- as I have consistently emphasized -- but we cannot ignore the threat and the damage caused by conventional weapons. We remember only too well the history of Europe for more of the last 1,000 years. It is a history of one appalling war after another. We are determined it shall not be repeated. May I remind you of some wise words of Lord Carrington who said last December, "So many arms control discussions seem concerned only with nuclear weapons ... they almost seem to suggest that conventional warfare is acceptable. But no one who lived through the last World War would agree".

I am young enough to have missed the last War in Europe. But let me make one thing perfectly clear. The British Government and its NATO allies are not in the business of making Europe safe for yet another conventional war. That would be epic folly, a step backwards into darkness and despair. I have already spoken of the role for nuclear weapons in preserving security in Europe. As we move towards reducing nuclear weapons of different categories, the need to do something about huge and costly conventional armies -- equipped with ever more destructive weaponry -- becomes increasingly urgent. This is why it is so important to redress the existing conventional imbalances. By our estimates these favour the Warsaw Pact three to one in tanks; over three to one in artillery; almost two to one in tactical aircraft. And since the early 1970s we have seen the Warsaw Pact forces configured not for defending Eastern European soil, but instead able to initiate a surprise attack and all-out invasion of Western Europe.

For some months now in Vienna we have been discussing the possibility of establishing a new negotiating forum for conventional arms control negotiations, to cover the whole of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. At their Reykjavik meeting last month, NATO Ministers made proposals designed to take this forward through two distinct negotiations, both within the CSCE framework; one among all 35 European countries, on measures to build confidence in the military field; and the other among the 23 members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, to achieve stability at lower levels of forces. A Western mandate for further work on confidence-building was tabled in Vienna on 10 July. And we hope in the near future to make formal proposals for the conventional stability negotiations.

Stability and security mean eliminating disparities. We were encouraged to note what Mr. Gorbachev said at a Moscow forum in February: "Should there be inequality in any elements, we must redress the situation, not by letting the one short of some elements build them up, but by having the one with more scale them down". We endorse this approach whole-heartedly. But, of course,

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I say again, it needs to be translated into action, because action speaks so much louder than words. However, so far there has been no agreement on the size of inequalities. Warsaw Pact countries have not made available the essential facts and figures about their forces and, if "glasnost" is to mean anything in this area, this must be put right.

Meanwhile, Warsaw Pact representatives have proposed discussions aimed at ensuring that military doctrine is essentially defensive. Now, as everyone knows, NATO has declared for a number of years that none of its weapons will ever be used except to respond to attack. It is self-evident, it is beyond any semblance of doubt, that our forces and those of our allies are not deployed or designed to invade anyone else's territory. These NATO declarations can actually be tested. Information on our force numbers and dispositions is freely available. But the Warsaw Pact does not provide the same sort of information on its forces. If it did, we might be better placed to assess their declared aim on doctrine. This is not an area for debate or abstract theorizing. It requires practical and verifiable agreements affecting actual forces on the ground.

These problems, of course, have been with us for many years. We will not solve them overnight. But the disappointing lack of progress in the Mutual and Balanced Forced Reduction talks in Vienna shows those obstacles all too clearly. Nevertheless, we still hope for progress in that forum. This would provide the best possible start for new negotiations on conventional stability.

Mr. President, I hope I am not overstaying my welcome and you will not regret your kindness in inviting me to come here, but I did want my contribution to be comprehensive, to set out the totality of our stance and to conclude with an area that I think is well known around this table, is one where we particularly want to see progress made and where we particularly feel that in the United Kingdom we might have a role to play in bringing agreement about, and so it is to chemical weapons that I turn finally and perhaps most relevantly to the concerns of the distinguished Ambassadors around this table.

Chemical weapons are, of course, the classic example of the futility of unilateral gestures. The United Kingdom gave up its chemical weapons capability in the 1950s and the United States stopped making such weapons in 1969. But it was only in April this year that the Soviet Union announced they had finally ceased production. And even if this is so, the West now faces a truly massive Soviet stockpile. Very few countries are prepared to admit their possession of chemical weapons, but the reports of the spread of such weapons are too frequent and too insistent to ignore.

I would like to pay tribute to the valuable work that has been done at this Conference. Our aim for chemical weapons is particularly ambitious. It is not to set limits. It is not to freeze existing levels. It is to abolish them completely, in an effective, verifiable, global ban. You were kind enough, Mr. President, to mention my predecessor, Timothy Renton, and since he spoke at this Conference last year we have seen encouraging progress: substantial areas of agreement on the destruction of chemical weapons and of their means of production; and acceptance of the importance of a verification

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régime for civil chemical production. The momentum that developed last year under Dr. Cromartie has been maintained under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus and I was pleased to have the opportunity of an informal talk with him yesterday. I am heartened by the warm reception for the British paper on challenge inspection that we tabled last year and many problems of principle seem set for resolution. Nevertheless, as the solutions to some of our differences of principle become clearer, so it becomes more important to think through all the practical implications. Permit me to mention two areas in particular.

In the first place, we all accept the need to verify that chemical weapons are not secretly produced and that precursors made in the civil industry are not diverted or abused. But, at the same time, we recognize the need to reconcile the objectives of the convention with the legitimate concerns of civil industry if the convention is to be acceptable to all. This inevitably means looking at very detailed issues. The seminar held here in Geneva last week for representatives from many national chemical industries gave an opportunity for detailed and practical discussions of this crucial area. We must now build on this experience. We must agree among ourselves such crucial questions as those chemicals we wish to see subject to verifications; those levels of production which should concern the convention; and how to update the overall régime to take account of advances in science.

My second example has perhaps received less attention in the past. Once all the negotiating problems have been resolved, we have to move quickly and effectively from an agreed convention to implementing an actual global ban, which actually works in the way the negotiators intend. We in the United Kingdom have in the past stressed the case for having an international organization able to carry out this all-important task of overseeing implementation. Progress has been made. But we now need to give further thought to how the organization can be set up, so that everything necessary is done in good time.

That is why I am tabling today a new United Kingdom paper, which I think has been distributed, entitled "Making the chemical weapons ban effective". It contains our detailed ideas on what is needed. The paper suggests that some aspects can be left in the hands of a Preparatory Commission. However, the paper also notes that further work is needed here, in the Ad hoc Committee. We must ensure that adequate verification technology is available. And we have to obtain a clearer idea of the likely size and cost of the permanent staff of the organization.

Once more, openness should not mean more rhetoric but more disclosure. What we need is not more speeches, but more facts and figures. We need to know what other Governments have, where they have it and what they do with it. Now is the time, I believe, for all delegations, including those which have declined in the past, to indicate their likely future declarations. Only in this way can realistic estimates be prepared. And only in this way can the crucial confidence in this mutual endeavour be established. The new United Kingdom paper provides the framework within which, we hope, good intentions can be translated into effective action.

(Mr. Mellor, United Kingdom)

Our negotiations on chemical weapons could lead to a treaty of both immediate and historic importance. The use of these weapons by Iraq in the Gulf conflict has emphasized how urgently a total ban is needed. These weapons are a dreadful scourge that threatens the whole international community. Let us get rid of them, once and for all.

In conclusion could I just say this:

"No man is an island", one of our poets said, and nor is any one area of arms control an island unto itself. Lack of progress in one area can stultify efforts in other areas. But the reverse is also true. One new breakthrough can build up momentum in other negotiations. And, as I have already described, this momentum has been generated in several of the current negotiations. What we now need is not a vicious circle of ever-increasing weapons stocks and obdurate rhetoric, but a virtuous circle of growing mutual confidence and steady, sensible arms reductions. Public interest and hopes in arms control are running high. Those of us who actually negotiate have a responsibility to the international community to turn these hopes into realities, to translate political opportunities into practical action.

I hope that what I have said today will make clear beyond peradventure that the United Kingdom does not shirk its international responsibilities. This British Government have played a full and active part in arms control. And, as we enter our third term of office, that is what we will continue to do.

May I thank you, Mr. President, and your distinguished colleagues for their patience and may I say that I shall leave Geneva with the warmest memories of the reception I have received and the valuable conversations I have had and that I wish you, and all of your colleagues, nothing but success in the vital work ahead.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to the President.

I am sure that all members of the Conference have learnt with regret the information given to us by the Minister of State concerning the departure of Ambassador Ian Cromartie, C.M.G. Ambassador Cromartie not only represented his country with outstanding diplomatic ability, but also served this Conference with distinction, having contributed significantly to our work on a number of delicate issues and, in particular, as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The Conference will certainly miss him. I should like to ask the Minister of State to convey to Ambassador and Mrs. Cromartie our best wishes for their future.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, His Excellency Nguyen Di Nien.

Mr. NGUYEN Di Nien (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam): At the outset, I wish to express my deep satisfaction at seeing the presidency for this month of our very important Conference assumed by the representative of heroic Ethiopia, with which my country maintains close fraternal relations. I am convinced that, with your dedication and diplomatic skills, you will facilitate the success of the negotiations that take place within the framework of this Conference. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Conference for giving me the opportunity to speak today.

With regard to the question of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, our representative in Geneva has on various occasions presented the views held by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Allow me today to elaborate our positions on a number of issues to which my country attaches great importance.

On the threshold of the third millennium, we are faced with options for the future: the survival of mankind or its destruction. And the answer is not simple. To our dissatisfaction, a tense and complicated international situation still prevails. In their continued search for military superiority, some forces are accelerating the arms race, especially the nuclear arms race, attempting to spread it to outer space. While it needs only one per cent of the existing nuclear arsenals to make our Earth a dead and frozen planet forever, more nuclear weapons and various other types of weapons of mass destruction are being stockpiled. With the very high pace of development of military technology, it is leaving less and less time for peoples, States and politicians to become aware of the real danger and the limits of mankind's possibilities for stopping the slide towards the nuclear abyss. The choice for the future, therefore, must be made boldly and responsibly by all States together, regardless of their social systems and levels of economic development. The time has come for us all to make jointly the greatest possible efforts towards ridding the world of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

In the nuclear age, every State must adopt new thinking on security. Experience of the past decades shows that the concept of security through nuclear deterrence, the notions of war as a means of attaining political objectives are outdated and if continued would only lead to an all-out conflagration. Our concept of security is based on that of a comprehensive security system providing for equal security for all States in a nuclear-free, demilitarized world with non-violence in international relations. We share the view of the Non-aligned Movement that the peace and security of a State cannot be ensured through the accumulations of armaments.

The threat of a nuclear war can only be permanently removed by completely abolishing nuclear weapons from our planet. We hold that it is incumbent on all States, first of all, nuclear-weapon States, to contribute to this effort. The all-embracing programme for total abolition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction by the end of this century put forth by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, M.S. Gorbachev, constitutes an important contribution to the process of radical and comprehensive disarmament, displays a new political thinking and great responsibility for the destiny of mankind. The Eighth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Harare has welcomed this highly important proposal.

(Mr. Nguyen Di Nien, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)

Facing the serious challenges constituted by the continued nuclear arms race, an ever broader and stronger movement is developing the world over for peace, against nuclear war and against the militarization of outer space. A clear expression of this may be found in the Mexico Declaration of the leaders of the six countries representing four continents, in the Political Declaration of the Eighth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries and in the New Delhi Joint Statement by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Prime Minister of India on a nuclear-free world with non-violence in international relations. The trend towards the establishment of nuclear-free zones developing in many parts of our globe such as South East Asia, Africa, Northern Europe, Central Europe and the Balkans displays the desire and determination of the majority of countries to strive for a nuclear-free world.

While sparing no efforts to contribute to the achievement of the final objective, namely general and complete disarmament, we are in favour of step-by-step disarmament and a realistic approach to that process. As viewed by the overwhelming majority of nations, a halt to nuclear tests, which would be most crucial and effective in checking the nuclear arms race, is a matter of the highest priority. Regrettably, negotiations on a ban on nuclear tests have remained deadlocked despite the fact that within the past two years one nuclear-weapon State has four times extended its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. It is clear to all who are responsible for this deadlock. In the continued tense situation, we urge all States, and first of all the forty members of this Conference on Disarmament, to join efforts to bring about a breakthrough on this extremely important issue.

Regional peace and security is inseparable from international peace and security. The main problem confronting mankind today -- that of survival -- is equally acute and urgent for Europe, Africa, America and Asia and the Pacific. The consolidation and strengthening of peace and co-operation in any region would constitute a concrete contribution to the preservation of peace and security at global level.

Asia and the Pacific remains one of the most turbulent regions of the world. It is where for the past forty years the peoples have never really known peace, but instead have had to undergo a succession of the longest, bloodiest wars such as the Korean War, and especially the Indochina War and the Viet Nam War in which the biggest quantity of bombs and toxic chemicals, including dioxin, was used against the local populations. At present, although Asia and the Pacific on the whole has not as yet been militarized to the extent Europe has, the potential for its militarization is truly immense, and the consequences are extremely dangerous. Major nuclear Powers are situated here. Large land armies, navies and air forces have been built. In this context, the will of the peoples of Asia and the Pacific for peaceful co-existence, co-operation and friendship is growing stronger and stronger. We join many countries in supporting the initiatives of the People's Republic of Mongolia on non-use of force or threat of use of force between the States of the region; we support every effort to make the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, and South-East Asia, the South Pacific region and the Korean peninsular nuclear-weapon-free zones. Viet Nam strongly supports the initiative of the Soviet Union on the establishment of a general system of security in Asia and the Pacific aimed at consolidating peace, security and co-operation on the basis of equality and mutual benefits among States in the region.

(Mr. Nguyen Di Nien, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)

In South-East Asia, having suffered too much from war, the three Indochinese countries, more than anyone else, treasure peace and desire friendship and co-operation with other countries the world over, first of all with their neighbours. While resolutely struggling for the preservation of their independence and sovereignty, the three Indochinese countries have spared no efforts to make South-East Asia a zone of peace, stability, friendship and co-operation. We want to seek through dialogue political solutions to the problems of this region, including the question of Kampuchea, on the basis of equality, respect for each other's sovereignty and mutual understanding. On this occasion, I would like to reiterate once again our proposals to sign with all other countries in the region treaties of non-aggression and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. We would also like to re-establish good relations with China.

We can recall that in 1978, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the international community achieved, for the first time in the history of disarmament negotiations, a consensus on a Programme of Action on disarmament and established a rather comprehensive disarmament machinery with great importance attached to the Committee on Disarmament -- now the Conference on Disarmament. The consensus embodied in the Final Document of that special session reflects not only the improved international situation of the 1970s but also the international community's profound desire to attain far greater successes in the struggle to curb the arms race, for peace and disarmament. Most regrettably, as is well known, for the past ten years deadlock has prevailed in the field of disarmament and mankind is today faced with a new dangerous spiral of the arms race -- unprecedented in its intensity and scope. As far as the work of our Conference is concerned, it is a sad fact that no concrete agreement has been reached so far on any disarmament issue under negotiations here and negotiations on nuclear issues have not yet commenced under appropriate working arrangements. The expressed will of the international community to take the proper option for survival demands the utilization of all possible channels to bring about a turn in the cause of disarmament. Viet Nam concurs in the overwhelming view concerning the complementary relationship between bilateral and multilateral negotiations on disarmament. The potential of the Conference on Disarmament -- the single multilateral negotiating body with the participation of countries from all political groups as well as from different geo-political regions, including all the five nuclear-weapon States -- should be further explored. While the Soviet-United States bilateral negotiations on the medium-range missiles in Europe are in progress, it is our hope that the Conference, acting upon its mandate and proceeding from the spirit of pertinent General Assembly resolutions, most recently resolution 41/86 M adopted at the forty-first session, will bring into full play its dynamism and its very important role in order to contribute to bringing about a new and lasting period of detente, effective disarmament, international peace and co-operation not only in Europe, but also in Asia and the Pacific, as well as in the rest of the world.

We have now before us a number of practical and reasonable proposals in the nuclear and other fields to form the basis of the work of the Conference. It is increasingly clear that compliance and verification are no longer

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obstacles and should not be used as excuses to hold back or hamper negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty or on a new convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. As shown by the past realities, the effectiveness of the Conference and new breakthroughs demand the political will of all the parties involved.

For several years, Viet Nam has applied for full membership in the Conference on Disarmament. Viet Nam's activities in the Conference have testified to its seriousness and its ability to contribute to the work of the Conference. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our wish to become a full member of the Conference and our hope that we will enjoy the universal support of the Conference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam for his important statement and for the kind remarks he addressed to the Chair and to my country. I wish to inform the Conference that there has been a slight change in the list of speakers and I accordingly now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, Ambassador Tonwe.

Mr. TONWE (Nigeria): Thank you, Mr. President, but I can see that my distinguished colleague, the Ambassador of Mexico was already inscribed on the list. If the President has no objection, I will, of course, defer to the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico.

The PRESIDENT: I recognize the Ambassador of Mexico.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico): Mr. President, I was told that the distinguished representative of Nigeria has some important duties to attend to and that is why I said to the Deputy Secretary-General that I had no difficulty on leaving my place to him.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Mexico. Would the Ambassador of Nigeria now wish to take the floor?

Mr. TONWE (Nigeria): I thank you, Mr. President, and I apologize for that little hitch. I must express my gratitude also to the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico.

Last week the Nigerian delegation submitted a paper which has been circulated among all delegations as CD/768, entitled "Proposal for the immediate conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". Before I present this paper in a brief statement, permit me, as this is the first time I have taken the floor this month, to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July. The combined force of your wide diplomatic experience, your personal qualities and your outstanding professional skill have been a source of energy and encouragement for delegations during the first half of July. We have no doubt that you will continue to guide the affairs of the Conference in the right direction during the remainder of your tenure. May I also take the opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Saad Alfarargi, who, in his usual discreet and effective manner, presided over the affairs of this Conference in the month of June.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

The Nigerian paper which is before delegations was intended to take the problem of negative security assurances out of the cooler and effectively put it back on the table of the Conference. Within these two steps the Nigerian delegation has naturally had to shake off the crust of ice that had neutralized the subject over the years and attempt to update the well-known elements of a possible arrangement. In making its proposals, the Nigerian delegation has also tried to face the issues, not run away from them. We must try to be realistic and accommodating of the reconcilable views and interests of all States and groups. Above all, we have sought in a modest way to serve the cause of nuclear disarmament.

The majority of States represented at this Conference and, indeed, of States members of the United Nations have renounced in an internationally binding agreement their sovereign right to manufacture nuclear weapons. By that singular act they have made an invaluable contribution to the cause of international peace and security. They have improved the international atmosphere and lessened international tension. It is only fair that those who have made this supreme sacrifice and have entrusted their security to fragile international discipline and the humanism of other States should at least have an unequivocal and binding international guarantee that those who have nuclear weapons will not use or threaten to use them against the former. In this connection, some of those States which have not yet signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty might decide to do so or to enter into a similar arrangement. The non-nuclear-weapon States which belong to military alliances including nuclear-weapon States or which have nuclear weapons stationed on their territories will have to concede that their special situation would require special arrangements and conditions. The Nigerian proposals do not constitute a panacea. They do not pretend to answer all the questions, but they should reactivate in a concrete manner the steps towards setting up an internationally binding agreement to prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against most non-nuclear-weapon States. Having said that, may I say that, as the base of my assignment in Geneva and Switzerland will soon come to an end, I would like to take the opportunity to say a few words about our work here over the last three years; I will be extremely brief. The Nigerian delegation believes that the problems of this Conference are well known to all the delegations. Our positions have been well elaborated and comprehensively enunciated in the past and I would not intend to go into all of them. I would only say that during this period, three years, the Conference on Disarmament has certainly provided a valuable forum for the major military actors and other countries to state their positions. The Conference has succeeded in keeping the subject of disarmament alive and served as a pressure group which has had the desired influence on the attitude of the main military rivals in their current multilateral and bilateral negotiations.

There is nothing original in my saying that the Conference on Disarmament has achieved little that is conclusive over the last three years, but we should not take that to mean that the areas of usefulness of the Conference which I have just enumerated are in any way eroded. The Conference must continue to do what it can. It must continue to enlighten international

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

public opinion. It must continue to prevent the total bilateralization of the urgent disarmament issues which have grave consequences for all States. It must continue to search its own mind for the best way to accomplish its enormous tasks.

As I leave Geneva, I would like to say how much I have enjoyed my work in this Conference and how much I have benefited from interaction with all the distinguished Ambassadors here. I thank you all for your support, understanding and friendship. I wish you all well and I look forward to working with you again in other forums in the interests of international peace and harmony.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I am sure that the Conference agrees with me in wishing him success in his future assignment. Nigeria has contributed immensely right from the start of this Conference 25 years ago and it is with great regret that we see the Ambassador go. I am sure he will be succeeded by an important and very helpful member of his delegation to this Conference. I wish him luck and good success.

I now give the floor to my last speaker for today, the representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, to those of us who, like myself, had the opportunity to appreciate your pertinent qualities and your sound knowledge in the matter of disarmament during your earlier participation as representative of Ethiopia in the work of this negotiating multilateral body, it is a source of profound satisfaction to see you presiding now over our deliberations and to offer you the unreserved co-operation of the Mexican delegation for the success of your important duties.

We should by the same token like to take this opportunity to reiterate our congratulations to your predecessors, the distinguished representatives of Egypt, Ambassador Alfarargi, and of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda, who so skillfully presided over the work of the Conference on Disarmament in the months of June and April respectively. Finally, my delegation, Mr. President, endorses what you have just said concerning the forthcoming departure of the distinguished representative of Nigeria, our esteemed colleague, Ambassador Tonwe.

A little over 15 years ago, on 10 April 1972, in London, Moscow and Washington, the Convention designed to eliminate biological and toxin weapons was opened for signature. In its preamble, the States parties to that instrument placed on record their conviction that the agreement enshrined in it represented only a first step towards the achievement of another, much broader agreement which was to be defined in article IX of the Convention in the following terms, and I quote:

"Each State party to this Convention affirms the recognized objective of effective prohibition of chemical weapons and, to this end, undertakes to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of their development,

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

production and stockpiling and for their destruction, and on appropriate measures concerning equipment and means of delivery specifically designed for the production or use of chemical agents for weapons purposes".

This is a difficult task to which our Conference has justifiably devoted a good part of its time. Thanks to everyone's devotion since, in 1984, we decided for the first time to give the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons an authentic negotiating mandate, the pace of its work has risen appreciably and the political will of its members has enabled obstacles that appeared insurmountable to be overcome. Considerable progress was achieved in 1985 and 1986, when the work of the Committee was led by Ambassadors Turbanski and Cromartie respectively, to whom I should like to express my delegation's sincere gratitude for the work done. At the same time, as regards the second of them, I should like to express how grieved we were to hear the news of his forthcoming retirement for health reasons.

We are now entering a decisive stage in our negotiations, one that has rightly been described as crucial for the success of our work. Hence, it is a source of particular satisfaction for my delegation that the job of presiding over this has fallen to the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Ekéus, who already gave proof of his exceptional diplomatic skill when he occupied the same post in 1984.

To achieve the ambitious goal we have set ourselves, we have decided that the scope of the convention should be as broad as possible. Consequently, we have identified seven basic activities which would be prohibited: the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, possession, transfer and use of chemical weapons. In addition to these, we have included the obligation for current possessors to destroy their chemical weapons arsenals as well as the facilities that produced them, thus giving the convention its nature as an authentic instrument of disarmament. There is general agreement concerning these categorical provisions, which is something that my delegation has welcomed with the greatest satisfaction.

In an attempt to cover all possible situations and taking into account the scope of the subject-matter at hand, an effort has been made to draw up all-embracing definitions. Thus, by chemical weapons are meant not only munitions and means of delivery, but also substances which pose a risk for the objectives of the convention, excluding substances produced for permitted purposes in quantities compatible with the ends for which they will be used.

When the convention enters into force -- something we hope will not take too long -- the States parties will have to tell the international authority whether they possess or do not possess chemical weapons and production facilities. The possessors will then have as their first duty to provide data in respect of their arsenals. My delegation deems it essential in this respect that the State should describe the location of chemical weapons under its jurisdiction or control so that the accuracy of its declaration can be checked in situ. That is why we welcome the recent Soviet decision to agree to give the location of their arsenals and, while we understand that this involves delicate matters of national security, we hope that the State which still believes that it is not appropriate to provide this information will reconsider its position in the near future.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Once the characteristics of the arsenals are known, the basic obligation that the draft convention imposes on their owners is to destroy them. A period of 10 years is proposed for the total destruction of the chemical weapons currently in existence. My delegation has carefully considered the reasons that have been set forth to justify the length of that period, such as the capacity of destruction facilities and the precautions that will have to be taken to preserve the environment, but, despite that, it believes that the efforts to shorten that period as far as possible should continue. It seems to us excessive to have to wait at least 10 long years after the convention comes into force for the risk of a chemical war to disappear.

There is no agreement as yet on the order of destruction, a matter which is under negotiation by the main possessors of chemical weapons. As a position of principle, my delegation would like to place on record that it would prefer it if destruction began with the most dangerous weapons, so as to do away speedily with the greatest danger, and the least lethal were left till last. Unfortunately, this view is not shared by the possessors of chemical weapons, who want to keep intact until the very last minute their capacity to use the most toxic of such arms. We hope that they will reconsider this attitude, which seems to us a selfish one, and that they will give thought to the fact that confidence in the future convention depends largely on the rapid disappearance of the most significant arsenals.

We regret that it has not yet been possible to reach an agreement on production facilities. We know that the delegations concerned are continuing to hold intensive consultations on this delicate matter, and we hope that very soon they will be able to submit to us the solution they have agreed upon.

I shall now turn to two questions which, in view of their importance, will be crucial to the success of our work: I refer to what is termed "non-production" and to all that relates to verification.

As I said a moment ago, one of the paramount objectives of the convention we are now negotiating is to prevent the manufacture of chemical weapons in future. To achieve this objective, it will be inevitable to impose certain controls on civilian industry, including some restrictions on industries producing substances that might be diverted to prohibited purposes. This is something which will undoubtedly affect all States parties, whether they are possessors or not possessors of chemical weapons, developed countries or developing countries, and it has therefore been playing a preponderant role in our discussions for some time.

The substances of interest have been divided into three basic categories in keeping with the risk they entail. On the basis of this classification, a number of verification systems involving measures of varying stringency have been devised. Thus, the production of substances in schedule 1 -- mostly neurotoxic agents -- in amounts exceeding one tonne per year will be prohibited; the manufacture of compounds in schedule 2 -- key precursors -- will be subject to a strict régime of international inspections to avoid their diversion for prohibited purposes; and, finally, the production and use of the substances in schedule 3 -- those that could be used for the manufacture of chemical weapons but are employed on a large scale for legitimate peaceful activities -- will have to be declared as precisely as possible to the international authority.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To complete this system, we must consider the problem posed by the "commercial super-toxics", in other words, the highly toxic substances that are used in civilian industry, for instance, in the pharmaceutical branch and in the production of pesticides. It would appear necessary to set up for them a special category, one distinct from the three already established, in order to deal with them adequately. However, the differences of opinion that exist concerning the compounds that could be considered and the type of measures that would be applied to them have precluded our finding a solution to this issue -- which, as all parties to the negotiations recognize, is both necessary and urgent.

We all know that the present schedules cannot be exhaustive or definitive. Their first review will take place when States possessing chemical weapons declare the composition of their arsenals to the international authority. Maybe these will include chemicals which have not been considered in the course of negotiations; consideration will then have to be given to the incorporation of those substances in the schedules. Later on, if we want the convention to keep its full force, periodic updating of the schedules in the light of the progress of science and technology will be inevitable. That is why the importance has been recognized of a flexible, expeditious and reliable mechanism for this purpose. It will thus be possible to include a new chemical in the schedules, to withdraw it from them or to shift it from one schedule to another. We have worked to this end during this session and progress has been satisfactory.

My delegation considers that appropriate verification machinery is essential if an international disarmament agreement is to function effectively for all its parties. The convention on chemical weapons, of course, does not elude this general rule. Ambitious in its objectives, the draft which is now being drawn up also establishes a very broad system of verification designed to guarantee full compliance with all its provisions.

An independent international body created by the convention itself would be responsible for these very delicate tasks. This seems to us an optimum solution for ensuring the credibility of the instrument. As you will all recall, that was the course chosen by the Latin American States when, over 20 years ago, they negotiated the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the functioning of the body that was set up has been entirely satisfactory.

The problems posed by the verification of the numerous obligations the convention will impose are obviously considerable. To guarantee, on the one hand, that chemical weapons will not be produced in future and that prohibited activities will not be carried out, while taking into account, on the other hand, the protection of trade secrets and the need not to interfere excessively in national civilian activities makes the design of appropriate verification machinery even more difficult. We are all aware of the great difficulties this involves and we must strive to resolve them. Some sacrifices will be inevitable for the sake of the greater interest.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

The main body will be a consultative committee made up of all the States parties. As it is hoped that the convention will have the greatest possible number of adherents, it will not be easy for the committee to take expeditious decisions and to intervene rapidly and effectively in case of crisis. Consequently, it will be necessary to establish a subsidiary body of the committee, of limited membership and called the executive council, which will be formally subordinate to the committee and will discharge all its functions while the committee is not in session.

Serious differences of opinion have arisen in regard to the composition of the executive council. My delegation believes that the only valid criterion for the selection of the members of that body is that of equitable political and geographical distribution. Using this method, as happens in the case of other bodies in the United Nations family, each group will freely select its representatives, taking account of the parameters it deems appropriate.

As for the difficult problem of decision-making, my delegation inclines in favour of adopting the simple and unambiguous procedure of a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting. We believe that to demand consensus would seriously hinder the work of the committee and the council as it would give each of the parties a right of veto that it could exercise at any time, to the detriment of the proper functioning of the convention.

The international verification machinery that is going to be entrusted to the consultative committee and its subsidiary bodies contains two elements that will ensure its full effectiveness: on the one hand, a system of declarations and routine inspections that seeks to be as complete as possible and, on the other, a "safety net" for use only in exceptional cases -- challenge inspection -- designed to remedy possible deficiencies in the normal procedure.

In our negotiations, emphasis was, quite justifiably, placed on building a system with no loopholes, a mechanism that would give everybody full confidence that the provisions of the convention were being observed. A whole series of measures to be applied to the activities of States parties has been designed for this purpose, ranging from permanent verification of destruction of arsenals to systematic inspections, without prior notice, of civilian production facilities. My delegation is fully in favour of a strict régime in order effectively to guarantee the complete disappearance of the chemical threat.

"Challenge inspection" constitutes the essential complement to the routine system. My delegation sees such inspection as an exceptional event prompted by serious doubts about compliance with the convention that have not been dispelled through normal channels. In view of the political damage that it will inevitably cause, we do not believe that it will be frequent. However, we do consider that a State's right to request such inspection if it feels it to be necessary must not be limited.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

It has not been possible to reach agreement on reasonable procedures for challenge inspection. The excessive demands of some -- the immediate opening of facilities -- together with the excessive hesitancy of others -- the subjecting of inspection to the consent of the receiving State -- have prevented the finding of an intermediate position that could satisfy one and all. For its part, my delegation remains convinced that the text drawn up in the intensive consultations held by the chairman of the relevant working group last year and which could not even be included in the Committee's report because of the opposition of one delegation constitutes an excellent negotiating basis since it contains realistic proposals and limits to the minimum the possibilities of refusing an inspection.

This is a crucial year in the preparatory work for the convention. We regret that two States members of the Conference, the United States and France, recently deemed it appropriate to take the decision to add new devices of mass destruction to those they already possess, at a time when the negotiations on the convention, in which they play a dominant role, are in their final phase.

As a State which does not possess chemical weapons, Mexico attaches great importance to the conclusion of the convention, which will definitively eliminate this lethal category of weapons of destruction. As we always try to do in similar cases, this interest of ours has been proven through facts, such as the fact that, despite our delegation's being one of the smallest accredited to the Conference on Disarmament, one of its members has this year been devoting almost all his efforts to performing the task of co-ordinator of one of the three working groups that makes up the basic structure established by the Committee in 1985. We have been doing so because we are convinced of the need to step up our efforts in order to be able to transmit to the General Assembly as soon as possible an agreement as important as the convention, whose purpose is forever to eliminate chemical weapons, undoubtedly will be. Let us hope that, in the coming year, our efforts, which began so many years ago in this negotiating body, which then bore the title of Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, will be crowned with success.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. This exhausts the list of speakers for today, unless we have someone else? I recognize the representative of the Soviet Union.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): First of all, I should like to welcome the contribution that the distinguished Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Comrade Nguyen Di Nien, made to our work by his statement. I also take note of the statement made this morning by the distinguished Minister of State of the United Kingdom, Mr. David Mellor, and it is in connection with it that I have asked for the floor. Before making my comments on that subject, I should also like to express my best wishes to the Ambassador of Nigeria, Ambassador Tonwe, who is leaving us, and to the retiring Ambassador of the United Kingdom, Mr. Cromartie.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

I do not intend to comment on the whole of Mr. Mellor's statement; I will merely limit myself to a few general remarks. The Minister of State of the United Kingdom called upon us to match words and deeds. In itself, that is correct: words and deeds should match. But I think that Mr. Mellor addressed his call in this connection to what is clearly the wrong quarter. Indeed, there is no shortage of fine words, and Mr. Mellor demonstrated that today in his statement, but what we really need is to transform these fine words into the corresponding action.

The Minister of State of the United Kingdom reminded us of the fact that NATO had declared that it would not have recourse to any of its types of weapons except in response to an attack. We can only welcome that attitude. As you know, there is a similar provision in the military doctrine of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty too. However, behind this NATO slogan there is something entirely different from what we propose. Behind these fine words uttered by the West we see the continuing accumulation of all these types of armaments. As a result, the danger of war increases and stability deteriorates.

Apart from the provision to the effect that they will not use their armaments except in response to an attack, the military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty States contains other provisions, including that concerning the non-first use of nuclear weapons. I would like to remind you that these are not simply words, but a commitment that the Soviet Union has already taken upon itself -- a unilateral commitment.

Now let us take the question of banning tests, to which the Minister of State of the United Kingdom also gave a certain amount of attention. The question of testing is at present being linked by the Western Powers both with nuclear disarmament and with the reduction of conventional weapons, so that this question -- one of the top priority, most important questions -- is being transferred into the category of long-term objectives. I think that such deeds do not match the words which we hear so often on the matter.

Mr. Mellor also referred to the question of Afghanistan. I must state in this connection that our words and deeds match completely. We have already withdrawn six regiments from Afghanistan and will recall our entire military contingent from there as soon as possible. But the solution of this problem requires reciprocity from the United States and from Afghanistan's neighbours; it requires international efforts too. The process of national reconciliation is proceeding in Afghanistan and must not be impeded.

Mr. Mellor referred to the statement made by General Secretary M.S. Gorbachev at the Moscow Forum, and in particular to his words to the effect that, where there is inequality in any elements, we must redress the situation, not through a build-up by the one who is behind, but through a build-down by the one who is in front. He welcomed these words and said they must be transformed into action. That is a question on which I would particularly like to dwell.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The question is truly an important one -- how to transform words into deeds. Words can be used to criticize each other ad infinitum. Words are an expression of intent. To transform them into deeds requires agreement. The achievement of agreement, in its turn, requires dialogue. And we do propose this dialogue, but regrettably, we do not always -- we far from always -- receive a positive response. This is also happening with the words of General Secretary Gorbachev to which the United Kingdom Minister of State referred. With a view to transforming these words into concrete deeds, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty have proposed to the NATO member States the holding of consultations to compare the military doctrines of the two alliances and, in the document on this subject which was adopted in Berlin, it is stated, and I quote, "Other possible subjects for the consultations are the existing imbalances and asymmetrical levels that have emerged in certain categories of armaments and armed forces, as well as the search for ways to eliminate them through a reduction by the side which has an advantage over the other, on the understanding that these reductions lead to ever lower levels". Thus, the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty are proposing a concrete way to transform words into deeds. But -- as I have just said, regrettably -- we have not received the NATO countries' consent to the holding of such consultations. I think that it is time for us to move from mutual reproaches to a mutual dialogue on all aspects of arms limitation and disarmament. Only such a dialogue, and not mutual reproaches, can lead us to measures, deeds, that will strengthen general security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Nazarkin of the Soviet Union for his comments. Are there any further speakers who wish to take the floor today? I see none.

Before I adjourn the plenary meeting, I should like to recall that the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear-Weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons will meet immediately afterwards in this conference room. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 16 July, at 10 a.m. After that plenary meeting and in accordance with the timetable for meetings to be held this week, the Conference will hold an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 2, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at noon.