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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

CONTENTS

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE  
GENERAL DEBATE, AS NECESSARY (continued)

Statements were made by:

Mr. Friedersdorf (United States of America)  
Mr. Bayart (Mongolia)  
Mr. Inzko (Austria)  
Mr. Nazarkin (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 48 TO 69 (continued)

STATEMENTS ON SPECIFIC DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS AND CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE, AS NECESSARY

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): Knowing of the interest within this Committee regarding the continuing negotiations between my country and the Soviet Union, I wish to inform the members of the Committee that it was announced today, both in Washington and in Moscow, that Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze will travel to Washington tomorrow for another round of talks at the ministerial level with Secretary of State, George Shultz. It is our intention to brief the Committee early next week regarding recent discussions between our two countries, including the talks to be held in our capital this week.

Mr. BAYART (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to express our support and approval of the continuing extremely useful Soviet-United States contacts at a high governmental level, in particular the recently announced visit of Mr. Shevardnadze, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, to Washington tomorrow, and the positive results of the negotiations which took place a few days ago at Moscow between the Soviet leadership and the United States Secretary of State Shultz. We are gratified by the communication to the effect that the major questions in the treaty on the elimination of medium- and short-range missiles have already been agreed upon and that the treaty can now be finalized and signed in the very near future.

Once again we should like to express the hope that following the conclusion of that treaty, the Soviet Union and the United States of America will reach agreement on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive weapons. In that connection, Mongolia welcomes the constructive steps undertaken by the Soviet Union in the area

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

of achieving such an agreement and notes with satisfaction that, as a result of the recent Moscow negotiations, the two sides have been able to establish the basis for a rapprochement in their positions. In our view strict compliance with and strengthening of the Soviet-United States anti-ballistic missile Treaty of 1972 is of key significance in achieving the objectives of a radical reduction in strategic offensive weapons because strategic offensive and defensive weapons are inseparably linked.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

The preamble to the treaty contains the clear provision that effective measures to limit anti-ballistic systems would be a substantive factor for curbing the strategic-offensive-weapons race and would lead to reducing the danger of nuclear war. This is the reason for the universal significance of the Treaty, and, as was noted in a statement on 14 October by V. F. Petrovsky, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, that bilateral document is an important and inseparable part of the system of international law. The security interests not only of the Soviet Union and the United States of America but of the entire international community are linked to it.

Therefore we cannot remain indifferent to the continuing debates on this Treaty and to the extremely important objective of preserving and strengthening it. Scrupulous compliance with all provisions of the Treaty and measures to strengthen it form the basis for halting and reversing the arms race on Earth and for preventing its extension to outer space.

We cannot disguise our concern regarding the statements of the United States Administration that it does not intend to renounce implementation of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) programme. The well-known scenario of the SDI makes it clear that it is incompatible with the anti-ballistic missile Treaty.

However, we hope that the continuing constructive dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States will enable us to find a solution to the problem of preventing an arms race in space. As early as January 1985, the two sides agreed that the objective of their negotiations on nuclear and space weapons would be to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and halting the arms race on Earth, at limiting and reducing nuclear weapons and at strengthening strategic stability.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

The present situation requires strengthening not only the ABM Treaty but also the existing legal basis for keeping outer space weapon-free. Beyond the scope of currently valid international treaties and agreements, it is still possible to deploy in space anti-satellite weapons and other types of weapons which are not classified as weapons of mass destruction, nor is there any provision for the immunity of space objects. These and other gaps must be filled.

The international community has available to it, in the form of the Conference on Disarmament, the mechanism necessary for holding serious and substantive negotiations to prevent the spread of the arms race into outer space. This multifaceted body has received from various States many innovative ideas, concrete initiatives and proposals which could serve as the basis for finding points of departure for holding negotiations and resolving urgent questions.

Mongolia is gratified at the re-establishment this year of the Ad Hoc Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Under the skilled leadership of the representative of Italy, Ambassador Aldo Pugliese, the Committee has already, for all practical purposes, carried out its mandate to define and identify existing prohibitions and limitations and has also singled out those problems which require a new agreement or agreements. Therefore it is now necessary to turn the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee to the working out of concrete measures to avert the arms race in outer space, as has been recommended on numerous occasions in General Assembly resolutions. We are confident that this year too, the General Assembly will recommend the holding of negotiations aimed at working out an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The international community is now facing the large-scale problem of keeping weapons away from outer space and ensuring its peaceful use for the benefit of mankind. A solution to these problems will be promoted by the establishment of a

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

world space organization. That question can be discussed and resolved both in the United Nations and in another appropriate international forum.

The major task of such an organization would be to co-ordinate the activities and unify the efforts of States in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. It could, working with national technical bodies wherever possible, verify compliance by States with the provisions of present and future agreements in the area of preventing an arms race in outer space.

A world space organization will have to take into account the interests of all States, in particular the socio-economic development objectives and needs of the developing countries. The same purposes would be served by the establishment, with the assistance of the major space Powers, of an international centre for conducting joint studies and for carrying out space technology projects at the request of developing countries.

Such a centre would include a school to train specialists and cosmonauts from developing countries and a test range for launching space objects. The possibility for the effective functioning of such a centre is attested to inter alia by the INTER COSMOS programme, in which Mongolia is a participant.

The third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will meet next year, precisely 10 years after the holding of the first such session. In preparing for the upcoming session, we must, first and foremost, recognize the fact that thus far very little has been done to achieve the fundamental objective of disarmament and the goals and tasks set forth in the Final Document of the first special session and that today a new and responsible approach to the question of war and peace is required.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

In that view, the major objective of the session will be the preparation of a firm material basis which will enable us to make the 1990's a decade for building a nuclear-free and non-violent world.

The necessary guidelines for the adoption of such a decision already exist. Among the constructive initiatives of many Member States, I should like to mention the Soviet programme for the stage-by-stage total elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000. It deserves particular attention, among other reasons, because it was worked out and put forward by a nuclear State. The programme is realistic because it is based on the fundamental principle of equality and equal security, with constantly decreasing levels of nuclear weapons and with due regard for the qualitative and quantitative aspects of existing nuclear-weapon arsenals.

It should be emphasized that these initiatives have been developed and considerably expanded, taking into account the positions of various States and world public opinion, in the Reykjavik and later proposals made by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

The recently held International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development was an event of enormous international significance. It reaffirmed the close link between disarmament and development, which has been recognized by the international community. Our assessment of the results of the Conference was expressed in the joint statement of the socialist countries made at the end of the Conference (A/CONF.130/27).

Now that the Conference is behind us, what lies ahead is the most important and most difficult of all - the practical implementation of the programme of action it adopted. That work would be greatly promoted by a consideration of the complex links between the problems of disarmament and development by the Security Council. In addition, the establishment of an international "Disarmament for Development" fund would show the determination of States to make their policies reflect the universally recognized linkage between disarmament and development.

Mr. INZKO (Austria): Exactly 33 years have passed since, in 1954, suggestions were first made that an agreement to ban the testing of nuclear weapons should be considered on its own merits. The hazardous radioactive fall-out from tests, particularly atmospheric tests, carried out in the early 1950s caused mounting worry as the world learned of the spread of radioactive nuclides of strontium, caesium and iodine. At the same time, the world learned of the fateful consequences and of the mechanisms transferring these substances to the human body through food - for example, through milk from cows fed on grass contaminated by radioactive grain.

In this connection, in April 1954, in a letter to the Secretary-General, India's Prime Minister Nehru called for a standstill agreement which would seek to end test explosions of nuclear weapons, as a first step towards the discontinuance of the production and stockpiling of such weapons.



(Mr. Inzko, Austria)

A number of other proposals followed, but it was not until 1958 that important developments regarding the positions of the nuclear Powers took place.

In fact, in that year, one after the other, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union suspended nuclear tests. That voluntary ban was maintained by the three Powers for almost three years, until September 1961, when the Soviet Union conducted the first resumed test, followed by the United States two weeks later.

In the view of the Austrian delegation, that voluntary nuclear-test ban was of particular significance, as it was not only the earliest voluntary action of that kind but also one which demonstrated that test bans are possible and can work if good will exists on the part of the parties involved.

However, owing to the fact that nuclear testing resumed in 1961, further proposals had to be made, new efforts undertaken and new solutions sought to find a mutually acceptable agreement. No one will deny that such efforts concern one of the most vital subjects and that the obstacles arising from that fact can be overcome only by the strong political will of the States concerned.

Aware of this, we are gratified to learn that the Foreign Ministers of the United States of America and the Soviet Union will soon meet once again, and we look forward to that meeting in the expectation that the momentum towards international co-operation and towards strengthening international security and promoting the conditions of peace and stability will be further stimulated. In a spirit of greater trust, the finalization of negotiated commitments, not only as far as intermediate-range nuclear forces are concerned but, one may hope, in the broader field of disarmament as well, should become possible, and negotiations on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and to nuclear disarmament will have another chance to be successful.

(Mr. Inzko, Austria)

With this in mind, it should also be possible to overcome the obstacles preventing the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Negotiations on such a treaty should start at an early date in accordance with the preamble of the non-proliferation Treaty. To seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time seems to us to be a logical consequence following from a concept of international security that includes the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery.

It is widely recognized that there are no insurmountable technical obstacles to the conclusion of a treaty banning nuclear tests in all environments. Specialists in many countries have developed a considerable amount of expertise available to the international community, so that the technical question of verification could be solved in a politically acceptable way. We expect that the Conference on Disarmament will give its early and urgent attention to the detailed consideration of the issues involved in the elaboration of a comprehensive test-ban agreement. Such a draft agreement would form the basis of a necessary universal appeal to the members of the international community to subscribe to this essential disarmament concept.

It is true that the end of testing does not automatically lead to a reduction of nuclear weapons and that the prospects of negotiations on such reductions have an impact on the negotiations regarding a test ban. But if each advance in one area of disarmament had to wait for progress in other areas, all negotiations would be deadlocked.

Austria is deeply concerned at the fact that in more than 30 years it has not been possible to reach agreement on a comprehensive treaty banning all nuclear tests. The need for such a treaty has become more and more evident. Since the Second World War, we have witnessed more than 1,500 nuclear-test explosions.

(Mr. Inzko, Austria)

Therefore, on several occasions, Austria has stressed that any reduction or ban on nuclear tests should be supported by the community of nations. Accordingly, my delegation welcomed the test moratorium announced by the Soviet Union in August 1985, including its several extensions. That moratorium expired last February, and it is to be regretted that during the time it was in force, the opportunity was not used to make substantial progress leading to a world-wide test ban.

Comparing the first seven months of this year with the same time-frame of 1986, we learn that nuclear-test explosions have risen from 12 to 27. This substantial increase should serve as a powerful reminder that a comprehensive test-ban treaty is one of the highest priorities on the disarmament agenda.

In this connection, let me once again refer to the Austrian Government's public appeal of 3 February 1987 to the Governments of the Soviet Union and the United States of America. In its appeal, my Government expressed its confidence that an immediate start of negotiations and the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty without delay would constitute a significant step in reducing the nuclear-arms race. The Austrian Government called on the Governments of the two super-Powers to renounce further nuclear testing pending the conclusion of such a Treaty.

On the other, positive side, however, a historical account shows that during the past 30 years an evolution has taken place, both within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament and outside of it.

This evolution, together with the present favourable political climate, makes it possible for the United States and the Soviet Union to recommence negotiations starting in early November 1987.

(Mr. Inzko, Austria)

This exchange of views between experts of the two Governments will, we hope, lead to the ratification of the two partial test-ban agreements of 1974 and 1976. Although Austria welcomes the entry into force of those agreements, they should not distract us from our efforts to reach a comprehensive test-ban treaty at the earliest possible moment.

(Mr. Inzko, Austria)

We should view in the same positive light the agreement reached between the Soviet Academy of Sciences and a group of United States scientists on scientific co-operation with a view to making possible the verification of nuclear tests. That can be considered as a first step in gaining the necessary expertise to monitor nuclear tests reliably. In this context, I should also like to recall the offer of the six Heads of State or Government to establish temporary monitoring stations in the United States of America and the Soviet Union and on their own respective territories, as expressed in the Mexico Declaration adopted at Ixtapa on 7 August 1986.

Austria welcomes those initiatives, since it considers that agreement on the comprehensive test-ban treaty is an essential element in reducing nuclear danger. Austria has therefore always endorsed or co-sponsored the relevant resolutions within the framework of the United Nations. It furthermore fully supports the concept outlined in the five-continent initiative and actively participated in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of seismic experts of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conclusion, allow me to express the hope of the Austrian delegation that the forthcoming talks between the super-Powers will lead to concrete results and to durable arrangements. However, any agreement reached should not result only in a moratorium, in improved monitoring of tests, or in a better advance-information system or tests at lower levels: those may be considered to be intermediate goals and useful steps. The ultimate goal, in the view of the Austrian delegation, must be a comprehensive ban on all nuclear tests by all States, in all environments, for all time.

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): The Soviet delegation has already had an opportunity to congratulate you and the Vice-Chairmen, as well as the Rapporteur, on your election to your posts. I should like personally to wish you and the other officers of the Committee

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

continued success at this responsible stage of the Committee's work, when we are approaching the adoption of draft resolutions.

Today, the Soviet delegation intends to address the question of banning chemical and bacteriological weapons, agenda item 61.

My colleagues and I have repeatedly been approached by representatives of other delegations with this question: How do you explain the fact that the Soviet Union has been working with such determination for the speedy conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons? I should like to begin by responding to that question.

The prohibition of chemical weapons is not the only goal of our efforts. We are pursuing a systematic and consistent policy aimed at solving other arms-limitation and disarmament problems as well. As to the question "Why?", the answer is that disarmament, in our view, is at the very core of a comprehensive system of international security and it can become a reality only if all means of mass destruction, which includes chemical weapons, are destroyed. The Soviet Union has consistently worked towards realization of the goal stated by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on 16 January 1986, namely, the freeing of mankind from all forms of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, by the end of this century. The conclusion of a convention banning such weapons, together with the Soviet-American negotiations on nuclear and space weapons, would signify progress towards disarmament and détente.

For us, the early conclusion of the relevant international convention on chemical weapons is one of the top priority objectives in disarmament efforts. At the multilateral talks, the achievement of agreement on a global ban on chemical weapons is rightly recognized as a most promising area, one in which the international community is now within reach of its desired goal.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

In our bilateral contacts with the United States we are also guided by an interest in the early conclusion of such a convention. As the Soviet delegation has already reported, we have put forward a number of new proposals at the bilateral level, in particular with regard to the bilateral exchange of data, subject to appropriate verification, between the Soviet Union and the United States on military-chemical arsenals before the convention is signed. The discussion continued in Moscow during the talks held there on 22 and 23 October. On the whole, those discussions were useful. As a result of the discussions there has emerged an identity or closeness of the positions of the Soviet Union and the United States on such problems as the bilateral exchange of data on chemical weapons and the facilities that manufacture them, on mandatory challenge inspections, on openness with respect to chemical weapons and on the non-proliferation of chemical weapons. An understanding was reached with respect to those problems on which both sides should focus attention in the future. At the same time we disagreed with the arguments of the American side in favour of initiating the production of binary weapons under the pretext of adequately assuring its national security interests. I shall return later to our assessment of those plans.

The conclusion of the convention, which would crown the hard work of nearly 20 years, would become an important landmark in history. It will have positive implications not only in the sphere of military activities but also in all areas of international comprehensive security.

First, the very fact of the conclusion of the convention will demonstrate the high responsibility of States and their desire to solve the problems involved in ensuring security not through military means and the accumulation of weapons of mass and total destruction but through political means, through disarmament agreements. It would also reaffirm the capability of States to assume concrete

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

obligations in the military sphere and to make a deliberate choice in favour of restraint and self-restriction.

Secondly, the convention would be a major step towards the democratization of international relations and the affirmation of genuine equality among States, because the division of the world into countries that possess chemical weapons and those that do not could be overcome. It would strengthen the sense of universal responsibility, the integrity of the world and the indivisibility of international security.

Thirdly, the elaboration of a convention would bear out the effectiveness of a multilateral approach to disarmament and the prospects for internationalized efforts to move to a world free from weapons of mass destruction, a non-violent world. It would enhance the prestige of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating body. The convention would become a prototype for subsequent agreements on those other problems that are on the agenda of the Conference.



(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

Many participants in the debate in the First Committee have noted the recent progress in the negotiations on the banning of chemical weapons, conducted within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. I refer in particular to the assessment made yesterday by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on chemical weapons, who said:

"We can state that at the end of this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament the convention is no longer a distant goal but a real possibility." (A/C.1/42/PV.21, p. 18)

We also believe that these negotiations have now entered their final stage. The basic questions concerning a future convention have been resolved in principle, first and foremost the problem of verification. That is the result of intensified talks over the past one and a half to two years.

Further to the 15 January 1986 statement by Mikhail S. Gorbachev, in which a great deal of attention is devoted to chemical disarmament, the USSR has proposed a series of major initiatives on the key issues before the negotiations at Geneva. Last year the Soviet delegation presented detailed proposals for the elimination of chemical-weapon production facilities and for ensuring, through strict international control, that chemical weapons would not be produced in commercial industry. This year, we have placed on the negotiating table proposals to the effect that chemical-weapon storage facilities should be declared, and that there should be verifiable complete destruction of their stockpiles and, ultimately, challenge inspections.

In putting forward these proposals we based ourselves on a realistic view of what is happening at the negotiations, as well as on an unbiased and respectful attitude towards the positions of the other negotiators. To sum up, that is what new political thinking is about in negotiating practice: it is based on unity of word and deed, of political statements and negotiating positions.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which reflects both agreed provisions - which constitute the majority - and issues that remain to be resolved, was created through collective efforts. During the 1987 session of the Conference on Disarmament, the draft text was enriched with provisions on the declaration of chemical-weapon storage facilities and control over them up to and including the complete destruction of all stockpiles, on verification of the elimination of chemical-weapon production facilities, on guarantees that chemical weapons would not be reconstituted, and on the planned system of bodies to be set up within the framework of the convention.

For the first time, it was possible to proceed with formulating provisions of the convention with respect to challenge inspections. That is perhaps the most important result of this year's session of the Conference, and one that opens up prospects for speeding up the negotiations on the entire range of problems, above all those having to do with international control. The Soviet Union will continue to press for legal formalization of the principle of mandatory challenge inspections according to which States would not have the right to refuse to have them conducted. That should be ensured on the basis of equal rights and obligations on the part of all parties to the convention, and on the basis of prompt, effective and flexible procedures for conducting such inspections.

In working on other elements of control machinery for the convention, the Soviet Union firmly believes also that it is necessary to establish a reliable and stringent system of international control. Even now an understanding is emerging among the negotiators that, in terms of the scope and depth of mutual inspection and verification of compliance with obligations, the future convention will be a phenomenon unprecedented in the history of disarmament. That understanding meets the requirements for the effective elimination of chemical weapons from military arsenals.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

Bodies should be established, within the framework of the convention, to ensure its effectiveness. Those bodies would in their totality actually constitute international machinery. We support the idea that from the very beginning of the functioning of the convention, parties to it should have at their disposal an effective and authoritative agency, a reliable regulator of the process of chemical disarmament. To prepare for the effective entry into force of the convention, a preparatory commission should be set up, composed of representatives of States that have signed the convention.

Of course, a whole range of issues still remain unresolved at the negotiations. Work has to be intensified to finalize the provisions that have been agreed upon in principle. However, we are not inclined to dramatize the remaining obstacles to an agreement. We are confident that these can be overcome if the desire for the early conclusion of a convention prevails in the positions of the negotiators. The time factor is becoming increasingly important, especially since the negotiations are proceeding against the background of rapid developments in chemistry and chemical technology. The emerging chance to save mankind from the chemical threat should not and cannot be missed.

On the basis of our assessment of the time factor, the Soviet Union has made a number of important decisions, and is now putting them into effect. We have stopped production of chemical weapons and are now accelerating the rate of construction on the basis of unique internal technological solutions of a special facility for the destruction of the stockpiles, in the city of Chapaevsk. These actions are tangible testimony to our readiness to go along with eliminating these weapons from military arsenals.

The Soviet delegation believes that from the standpoint of success at the talks it would be extremely useful if the General Assembly at its current session

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

came out in favour of the early completion of a convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons.

Confidence-building measures have now become part and parcel of efforts towards real disarmament. In the standards of openness and glasnost that are now being established, we see also the sprouts of a reasonable, responsible and rational ordering of international affairs. That applies also to chemical disarmament. Here too the Soviet Union adheres to this principle: the more disarmament, the more trust. The very fact that the negotiations have now entered their final stage opens up favourable opportunities for taking measures to strengthen trust and reaffirm openness. We hope that the arms race will be replaced by competition in the area of confidence-building measures. We believe such measures are an important way of stepping up negotiations on a convention banning chemical weapons.

As is well known, we in the Soviet Union recently organized, at the military facility at Shikhany, an exhibit of chemical weapons we possess and of the technology for destroying chemical weapons with the use of a mobile facility. Forty-five foreign delegations witnessed the demonstration, along with representatives of the United Nations Secretariat and of the mass media. In total, 136 foreign guests visited Shikhany.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

We exhibited at the test range 19 specimens of chemical munitions of the Soviet Union, including 10 specimens of munitions for guns and rocket artillery, two warheads for tactical missiles, six aerial bombs and spraying devices, and one chemical grenade. Relevant information for each specimen was provided with respect to its combat purpose and basic characteristics. Information was provided with regard to all existing types of toxic agents in the Soviet Army, namely, a mixture of mustard gas and lewisite, viscous lewisite, sarin, viscous soman, VX, viscous VX and CS.

It was also explained that the specimens of munitions shown gave an exhaustive picture of the Soviet chemical-warfare arsenal. In view of the fact that one of the most complex questions is that of working out and agreeing on methods for determining the toxicity of new chemical compounds in order to place them under one or another verification régime provided for in the convention, the officials of the Shikhany military facility gave a report on the methodology used in our country.

There was a demonstration of a mobile complex for destroying chemical weapons and of the actual technology of destruction for one type of chemical munitions, a 250-kg aerial bomb with a charge of sarin. The participants in the demonstration had an opportunity to view the control and protection equipment area, the laboratory and technical area and the residential area and spend time at the test range of the Shikhany facility. During the demonstration, no limitations were placed on the use of photographic, video or sound-recording devices. The demonstration at Shikhany illustrates the Soviet Union's new approach to questions relating to openness. Our action was guided by the interests of a speedy, full, effective and verifiable ban on chemical weapons and of promoting an increased atmosphere of trust.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The Soviet side was the first to embark on such a multilateral demonstration of its actual inventory of typical chemical munitions. Thus the participants in this demonstration at Shikhany were provided with essential information, including information on our chemical weapons. Supplementary information was given at a press conference held at Moscow on 5 October by the commander of the chemical forces of the USSR Ministry of Defence, Colonel-General V. K. Pikalov, and his deputy, Lieutenant-General A. L. Kuntsevich. They explained, among other things, that at the Shikhany facility all chemical-warfare agents and all types of munitions in the Soviet inventory were demonstrated except for modified forms of munitions carrying the demonstrated toxic agents. For instance, 122-millimetre artillery shells with sarin were on display, while similar shells with mustard gas were not, although other munitions with that toxic agent were shown. Naturally this was done not to hide anything but to avoid repetition in describing each type of munitions and each toxic agent.

Many representatives who visited Shikhany have sent us letters noting the great value of that visit for building confidence and for further progress at the talks. I should like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all those representatives for their favourable assessment of our action.

The Soviet Union favours expanding the practice of strengthening confidence-building measures in the process of drafting a convention banning chemical weapons. We accepted the United States invitation to visit a facility for the destruction of chemical weapons at Tooele, Utah. Other arrangements are also being planned, in particular a visit by Soviet experts to Munster in the Federal Republic of Germany and possibly to Porton Down in the United Kingdom. Later we shall invite experts to come to the USSR and visit a special facility for destroying chemical weapons that is now under construction near the city of Chapaevsk.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

We believe that it would be useful if the General Assembly called upon States to take further steps to build confidence and enhance openness in respect of chemical weapons. It is important that this process should grow in scope and become multilateral. In particular, States must declare whether or not there are stockpiles of chemical weapons in their territories or under their jurisdiction or control.

Measures to consolidate the régime of the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in war are in the interest of all. To build on our declared readiness to use the good offices of the Secretary-General in investigating cases of the use of bacteriological weapons, the Soviet delegation has already stated its agreement to have such good offices extend to the investigation of cases in which chemical weapons are used.

The Soviet Union is in favour of consolidating the rules outlawing bacteriological weapons, in particular by strengthening the Convention's machinery for verification. The results of the 1986 Second Conference to review the status of the Convention and the 1987 meeting of scientific and technological experts - at which important agreements were reached on specific confidence-building measures to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention and to step up international co-operation in the peaceful uses of the biological sciences - merit a positive assessment. The USSR Council of Ministers, which discussed the results achieved by those international bodies, instructed the competent Soviet ministries and agencies to take all necessary measures for unconditional and scrupulous compliance with the agreements arrived at. In accordance with the established timetable, the Soviet Union communicated relevant information to the Disarmament Department of the United Nations Secretariat. The Soviet Union will strictly honour the recommendations agreed to by the signatories to the Convention on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The proclamation of various regions of the world as zones in which the deployment, testing, manufacture, acquisition and storage of chemical weapons would be prohibited could constitute major intermediate steps towards the global elimination of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union reaffirms its support for the initiatives of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia, as well as of Bulgaria and Romania, for establishing such zones in Central Europe and in the Balkans, respectively.

While expanding trust, we should at the same time refrain from what one might call "measures of mistrust". Such "measures" include, first of all, programmes for developing a new generation of chemical weapons, namely, binary weapons. What prompts two States which participate in the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons to prepare for manufacturing this newest type of chemical weapons? They allege that they have to guarantee their security for the period of drafting the convention - and those States are rather pessimistic as to the prospects for concluding that convention - and subsequently for the period needed to destroy existing stockpiles.



(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

In our view, such arguments are totally unconvincing. We firmly believe that security must be strengthened by lowering the levels of armaments. In fact, only this logic makes it possible to conclude agreements on real disarmament measures, including those in the sphere of chemical weapons. Accordingly, we cannot agree to the continuation of the production, modernization and proliferation of chemical weapons after the convention banning chemical weapons has been concluded. That would distort the very essence of the convention.

It stands to reason that to begin producing a new generation of chemical weapons now, when the negotiations on the complete prohibition of such weapons, including both old and new forms, are in the home stretch, is a major "measure of mistrust". It calls into question the sincerity of the intentions of those who, while negotiating a ban on chemical weapons, are concurrently resuming their production, and an improved version at that.

The allegations that the Soviet Union possesses a larger arsenal of chemical weapons have no basis in fact. Here I should like to refer to the statement made by General Pikalov at the Moscow press conference on 5 October of this year, when he cited figures which attest to parity with the United States in chemical weapons.

I have already expressed our view of the state of affairs at the talks. I should like to add that the major obstacle which could delay the success of the talks seems to be the desire of some States to gain time for producing binary weapons.

As for the other argument, that of ensuring security during the period required to destroy existing stockpiles, I should point out that according to the provisions already tentatively agreed on, all existing stocks of chemical weapons must be placed under international control not later than 30 days after the convention enters into force. In other words, they will actually be removed from

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

the arsenals of States and placed under a sort of "international seizure". And if we really wish to create conditions in which the security of States will not be jeopardized, we should think not about how the convention may allow the manufacture of chemical weapons after its entry into force but rather about ensuring the convention's maximum efficiency immediately upon its entry into force.

We believe that the current session of the United Nations General Assembly has the right to call upon States not to take any steps that could make it more difficult to reach agreement at the talks.

Doubtless there are still questions at the talks that remain to be explored further and resolved; they include the procedure for the destruction of chemical weapons, conditions to ensure that they will not be manufactured in commercial production, questions regarding the composition and structure of the convention bodies and, last, the drafting of the provisions relating to challenge inspections. We are convinced that multilateral efforts by the participants in the talks will produce positive results in those areas also.

Work on the convention will be resumed at Geneva in less than a month. From 23 to 27 November the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee will hold consultations with the delegations present. I wish to state that our delegation will certainly be among them. Open-ended consultations will be held from 30 November to 16 December and the Ad Hoc Committee's session will take place from 12 to 29 January 1988. Thus, a great deal of work is scheduled for the time remaining before the 1988 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

It is our view that the question of the Chairman and the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee for 1988 should be agreed upon in advance, so that no time is lost later in resolving it. We believe that the Ad Hoc Committee's mandate should provide for putting the finishing touches on the draft convention, including its final wording.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

There is something else that I wish to add with regard to work on the convention in 1988. We must start even at this early date to think about making the schedule of the negotiations as full as possible. Any loss of time must be avoided. In the light of the other important disarmament measures slated for next year, intensification of the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons will require the negotiators to make additional efforts. We call upon them to do so. The pace of work must not be slackened.

The Soviet Union is convinced that there are reasonable peaceful alternatives to war preparations. Chemistry is no exception in this respect. The current level of chemistry and chemical technology makes it possible to deal successfully with many urgent problems of providing decent conditions of life on earth. The convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons must open up broad opportunities for promoting interaction among States and using the achievements of chemistry for the benefit of progress. Interesting proposals in this area have already been put forward at the Geneva talks. The Soviet Union advocates the development of broad international co-operation in the peaceful use of the achievements of the chemical and biological sciences and the elaboration of appropriate programmes.

Since the talks on the prohibition of chemical weapons are now at their final stage, it would be desirable, in our view, for the General Assembly at its current session to adopt a consensus resolution on the question of banning chemical weapons, and the central feature of that resolution would be an appeal to States to contribute in every way to the early finalization of the convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons and of the industrial base for their production. The adoption of a single consensus resolution by the General Assembly would reflect an awareness that the talks are now at their most crucial stage and would provide a useful impetus for their successful conclusion.

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The efforts of many years to draft a convention outlawing chemical weapons are finally drawing to a successful conclusion and have now become an essential component of the world community's endeavours to ensure mankind's survival through a comprehensive system of international peace and security. In pursuing a broad dialogue on a new organization of relations among States, the General Assembly must speak out forcefully in favour of a secure world, and a very important factor for that will be the early completion of the convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): Despite the efforts to reduce the number of draft resolutions, the Committee will again have to consider a great number of them. Some 76 draft resolutions and two draft decisions have been proposed on various agenda items pertaining to disarmament. Thirty-eight draft resolutions have been distributed as documents this morning, and 12 more will be distributed today. The Secretariat will do everything within its power to distribute the other draft resolutions tomorrow, 29 October.

On behalf of the Committee, I should like to express appreciation to the Secretariat, including the staff of the Documents Control Section, for the great diligence and dedication displayed in the compilation, processing and distribution of all these documents.

As I have already said, it is my intention to follow the practice that has evolved over the past few years of grouping draft resolutions so as to facilitate the Committee's work when it is considering and taking action on drafts. In the course of the week the Bureau will group them appropriately.

I should therefore be able to provide members with suggestions concerning the organization of our work in the first few days of the next phase of the Committee's work. Perhaps between now and the beginning of next week we shall be able to make specific proposals in this regard.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.