

CD/PV.111
3 March 1981
ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 3 March 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. G. Herder (German Democratic Republic)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. M. MATI
Mr. M. DJABALLAH
Mr. A. BENYAMINA

Argentina:

Mr. F. JIMENEZ DAVILA
Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD

Australia:

Mr. R. STEELE
Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium:

Mr. A. ONKELINX
Mr. J-M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil:

Mr. S.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA
Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. I. VOUTOV
Mr. R. DEYANOV

Burma:

U SAW HLAING
U NGWE WIN

Canada:

Mr. G. SKINNER
Mr. G.K. VACHON

China:

Mr. YU Peiven
Mr. LIANG Yufan
Mr. PAN Jusheng
Mr. SA Benwang

Cuba:

Mr. L. SOLA VILA
Mrs. V. BOROVOSKY JACKIEWICH

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. RUZEK
Mr. P. LUKES
Mr. J. JIRUSEK
Mr. L. STAVINOHA

Egypt:

Mr. I.A. HASSAN

Mr. H.N. FAHY

Ethiopia:

Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE

Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE

Mr. GESBERT

Mr. H. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER

Mr. H. THIELICKE

Mr. M. KAULFUSS

Mr. P. BUNTIG

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFEIFFER

Mr. W. KLINGLER

Mr. H. MULLER

Mr. V. ROHR

Hungary:

Mr. I. KOMIVES

Mr. C. GYORFFY

Mr. A. LAKATOS

India:

Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia:

Mr. Ch. ANWAR SANI

Mr. E. SOEPRAPTO

Mr. HARYONATARAM

Mr. F. QASIM

Mr. KARYONO

Iran:

Mr. M. DABIRI

Mr. D. AMERI

Italy:

Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO

Mr. A. CIARRAPICO

Mr. B. CABRAS

Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

<u>Japan:</u>	Mr. Y. OKAWA Mr. M. TAKAHASHI Mr. R. ISHII Mr. K. SHIMADA
<u>Kenya:</u>	Mr. S. SHITEMI Mr. G. MUNIU
<u>Mexico:</u>	Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES Mr. M.A. CACERES
<u>Mongolia:</u>	Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG Mr. L. BAYART Mr. S.O. BOLD
<u>Morocco:</u>	Mr. M. CHRAIBI
<u>Netherlands:</u>	Mr. R.H. FEIN Mr. H. VAGENIAKERS
<u>Nigeria:</u>	Mr. O. ADENIJI Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI
<u>Pakistan:</u>	
<u>Peru:</u>	
<u>Poland:</u>	Mr. B. SUJKA Mr. J. CIALOWICZ Mr. K. TOMASZEWSKI
<u>Romania:</u>	Mr. T. MELESCANU
<u>Sri Lanka:</u>	Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA
<u>Sweden:</u>	Mr. C. LIDGARD Mr. L. NORBERG Mr. S. STROMBACH Mr. G. EKHOLM Mr. J. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. V.A. PERFILIEV
Mr. L.S. MOSIKOV
Mr. V.M. GANJA
Mr. V.V. LOSHCININE
Mr. A.G. DOULYAN
Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO
Mr. S.N. RIUKHINE

United Kingdom: Mr. D.M. SUMTERHAYES
Mr. N.H. MARSHALL
Mr. B. NOBLE
Mrs. J.I. LINK

United States of America: Mr. C.C. FLOVERREE
Mr. L. FLEISCHER
Mr. F. DESIMONE
Ms. K. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. J.A. MISKEL
Mr. H. WILSON

Venezuela: Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT
Mr. O.A. AGUILAR

Yugoslavia: Mr. M. VRHUNEC
Mr. B. BRANKOVIC

Zaire:

Secretary to the Committee
and Personal Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JATPAL

Deputy Secretary of the Committee:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

Distinguished delegates, it is indeed a great honour and privilege for the German Democratic Republic and for me personally to assume the chairmanship of this Committee for the month of March. As a socialist country and member of the socialist community of States my country has -- as it is well-known -- for years undertaken tremendous efforts with a view to contributing to halting the arms race and to bringing about effective disarmament. May I avail myself of this opportunity and assure you that, guided by these same objectives, I will spare no effort to fulfil the heavy responsibilities and duties entrusted to me by the rules of procedure of the Committee.

At the outset of my chairmanship, I would like to express to the distinguished representative of France, Ambassador François de la Gorce, my gratitude and, I am sure, that of our whole Committee for the skilful manner in which he conducted the work of the CD through the first month of this year's session. With patience, courtesy, dynamism and understanding which, as we all know, are so characteristic particularly for French diplomacy, he led us to remarkable progress. In less than a month we agreed on the agenda for our 1981 annual session, the programme of work for the spring session and the re-establishment or resumption of work of the four ad hoc working groups.

Thus, during the chairmanship of my predecessor the Committee has entered the phase of substantive work. At the same time, we have to be fully aware of the complicated situation and the tense international atmosphere. The intensification of the arms race, the absence of ratification of the SALT II Treaty, the discontinuance of almost all important channels of disarmament negotiations, have not made easier the solution of our tasks.

But this situation should not cause us to despair. In a spirit of goodwill and flexibility, so characteristic up to now of our Committee, we should intensify our efforts to accomplish the tasks on our agenda. Only in this way will we be in a position to justify the hope and expectations the world community has placed in us and live up to the special role of the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. It stands to reason that any concrete agreement now in the disarmament field would have a favourable impact on the international situation as a whole.

The most important pre-condition for us to make headway in our work, is, no doubt, the political will on the part of all delegations sitting around this table. This applies especially to the delegations of the nuclear-weapon States. It seems to me that such a political will has again been demonstrated only a few days ago by the highest forum of one of those States -- by the USSR at the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The decision to continue to strive for further progress in the field of arms limitation and disarmament and the new concrete proposals submitted to this end will certainly have a positive impact on the work of the Committee.

(The Chairman)

Very little time is left before the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Not only our people, but all peoples of the world expect this Committee to live up to its responsibilities and to present the session with a balance-sheet reflecting tangible progress at least on some of the items on the Committee's agenda. To achieve this we have to intensify our work and use all the time at our disposal as efficiently as possible.

Thanks to the re-establishment of the ad hoc working groups on negative security assurances and chemical and radiological weapons and the resumption of the ad hoc working group on a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the CD is now in a position to proceed with substantive negotiations. I appeal to all member countries to use the opportunities provided by those ad hoc working groups fully, and to harmonize their positions with a view to achieving tangible progress at this session.

At the same time we should not lose sight of the fact that the CD is entrusted with tasks in other fields as well. Here I have in mind such items on its agenda as "Nuclear test ban", "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" and "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons". It is of deep regret to many delegations, including mine, that the Committee has not been able until now to establish corresponding ad hoc working groups or other subsidiary bodies to initiate substantive negotiations on those items too. Being conscious of this, I appeal to all partners, States members of the Committee and non-member States, to concentrate their efforts on these main items and to refrain from introducing into our debate highly political and controversial problems which have nothing to do with disarmament, thus further complicating our work.

As you all are aware, we face a heavy workload this month. Besides the negotiations in the ad hoc working groups, our programme of work provides for special meetings on nuclear disarmament, a comprehensive programme of disarmament, negative security assurances and chemical weapons. In these meetings, we hope, the delegations of such non-member States as Austria, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Spain and Switzerland will make useful contributions.

To conduct our common efforts effectively, the Chair will always be available for contacts and consultations with all delegations. On the other hand, I know that I may count fully on your co-operation and assistance. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to Ambassador Jaipal, Mr. Berasategui and their colleagues from the Secretariat for the highly qualified support they have lent to my predecessors. I count on their co-operation as well.

Concluding my opening remarks, I should like to emphasize my hope that during the month of March, too, the Committee will continue working as it has done up to now and that a constructive spirit will prevail thus allowing us to reach concrete results.

Mr. VRHUNEC (Yugoslavia): Mr. Chairman, permit me to extend to you on behalf of my delegation our most cordial congratulations on your taking up of the duties of Chairman of the Committee during the month of March. At the same time, I would also like to offer our congratulations to Ambassador de la Gorce for an exceptionally well-done job last month.

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

It is very difficult to take the floor at a moment when the considerations of our Committee regarding the question of nuclear disarmament indicate that we are not able, at this session either, to make the first, concrete steps directed towards the taking of international measures in this, no doubt, most important issue in the field of disarmament. This is the third year that the Committee on Disarmament is not able to achieve anything with respect to nuclear disarmament while, in the meantime, the accelerated race in this field results in such astronomical expenditures and reaches frightening proportions as to become its own contradiction. There is no justification for this. And, as Mrs. Thorsson, head of the Swedish delegation, has said here: "It must be demonstrated that the nuclear weapons mystique, the notion that a nuclear weapon can in any way increase the national security of any State, is a fraud -- what I have earlier called 'the greatest fallacy of our time', which, far from increasing anybody's security, is certain to reduce it for all."

There are few world issues that have so many times been assessed as most important and most dangerous for the peace and survival of mankind as is the case with the question of nuclear disarmament. Few, also, are the global issues for which such a broad and convincing argumentation was developed as to how to take urgent and drastic measures. It is, therefore, unnecessary to reiterate here the decisions of various political forums and the numerous United Nations General Assembly resolutions adopted at both regular and special sessions. We, the members of the CD, are particularly well acquainted with this. Moreover, we have all solemnly and formally accepted the responsibility of having to initiate the process of nuclear disarmament on innumerable occasions. We all also decided, when the Committee on Disarmament was created, that we would start here concrete negotiations for the solution of these questions. I will also refrain from giving other arguments for our concrete work with regard to this issue. This has been convincingly done by the great majority of speakers that have preceded me, especially the members of the Group of 21 and it is not necessary to cite them.

However, owing to the resistance of some western powers, the settlement of this most important area of disarmament is at a standstill. In fact, it has not even begun, except for these verbal considerations of ours which, of course, are not capable of remedying this situation.

The whole world rightfully asks itself what it is that we are doing. Why is there no concrete beginning of nuclear disarmament? Where does this lead to? The non-aligned countries which, as they have been doing for 20 years already, attach particular importance to this question and consider that it is of the utmost priority, at the Ministerial meeting recently held in New Delhi accorded a particularly important place to disarmament problems, while special emphasis was placed on nuclear disarmament. On that occasion, the Ministers stated: "The greatest peril facing the world today is the threat of destruction as a result of nuclear war. The actions of the nuclear-weapon States, which are engaged in a new and frenzied round of the nuclear arms race, have created a situation in which mankind seems to have been condemned to live in the shadow of nuclear annihilation." To that effect, "the Ministers expressed their belief that the most effective way to eliminate the threat of a nuclear war, pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, was to prohibit the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons. The

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

Ministers recognized the reluctance of nuclear-weapon States to agree to an international convention on banning the use, or threat of use, of nuclear weapons." On the other hand, the Ministers of non-aligned countries attached great importance to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly for development purposes.

The Ministers of non-aligned countries have clearly pointed out the untenable positions and arguments used by those who do not want negotiations on nuclear disarmament. They have most energetically rejected the efforts aimed at justifying such positions based on the emergence of various theories such as the one regarding the deterrent or the possibility of conducting a so-called limited nuclear war which, in essence, only opens wide the door to the continuation of the nuclear arms race. The application of the theory of deterrence among the Superpowers has, indeed, succeeded in preventing their direct involvement in regional conflicts. However, the competition with regard to the deterrent has in no way succeeded in removing the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe. On the contrary, it has even increased the insecurity and uncertainty, since the arms race continues precisely on the basis of the positions of the use of force aimed at maintaining the status quo in international relations. This is because the deterrent theory is a theory of force, a theory of interference in the internal affairs of other countries and of founding security on the untenable bases of the strengthening of military power. These and similar theories are aimed at encouraging the rivalry between nuclear-weapon States and blocs and attempt to justify the further unimpeded development of even more lethal and destructive technology for new weapons and systems as well as installations, instead of having all of man's riches used for the progress and prosperity of all people in the world.

Every thought about the possibility of conducting a limited nuclear war is beyond sane logic and resembles the madness of terrorism. It was sufficient for the danger of possible errors in manipulation to appear, of which we are all witnesses, in order to observe how quickly humanity can be brought to the brink of catastrophe. Apart from the need to take every measure in order to prevent accidents that could be catastrophic and to ensure that the stocks of nuclear weapons are out of reach for possible use for terrorist purposes, the only answer that can be lasting and satisfactory is the most urgent destruction of all the existing stocks of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of their further production.

There are no negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the true sense of the word. All negotiations conducted on this subject today outside the Committee's framework do not essentially encompass disarmament measures but rather the control of armaments, which only allows for an unhindered continuation of the nuclear arms race. This is why our Committee has a particular responsibility, as the only negotiating body, to make concrete as soon as possible the item on its agenda concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. However, this should not be approached with rhetoric but with genuine agreement on the beginning of concrete negotiations without delay. Yugoslavia strives for the urgent initiation of negotiations on the basis of what was said in the statement of the Group of 21 non-aligned and neutral countries dated 9 July 1980 and which is

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

contained in document CD/116. We consider that the basis given in the document with regard to the beginning of negotiations on nuclear disarmament is good and offers a possibility for compromise. The non-aligned and neutral countries members of the Committee think it indispensable to work out the main stages of nuclear disarmament envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament in such a way that the responsibilities of the nuclear-weapon States would be clearly defined, as well as the role of non-nuclear weapon States in the process of achieving nuclear disarmament. Non-aligned and neutral countries also consider it imperative to identify as clearly as possible the questions concerning the prohibition of the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons in the process of nuclear disarmament. It is certain that a particular place is also occupied by the effort to identify the issues whose aim it will be to eliminate the reliance on the doctrine of deterrence for reasons that have already been frequently cited in the remarks by the non-aligned and neutral countries members of the Committee. In order to fulfil the principal task in this area which stands before the Committee, the non-aligned and neutral countries strive for the taking of such measures as will enable the Committee fully to carry out its responsibilities as the only multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament and to make possible the realization of a corresponding relationship of the Committee and the negotiations on nuclear disarmament which are conducted in bilateral, regional or other limited forums.

There is no doubt that this basic approach of the non-aligned and neutral countries does not neglect or render more difficult the conducting of negotiations at any level (bilateral, regional or multilateral) if those negotiations give their corresponding contribution to nuclear disarmament. We think that the SALT negotiations should continue and that the idea of holding a European disarmament conference, which is a subject at present being considered at the conference on European security and co-operation being held in Madrid, should be carried out.

The first thing which is clear, if this Committee is to assume its responsibilities with regard to nuclear disarmament, is the fact that some western powers should change their attitude and agree to the initiation of multilateral negotiations. To this end, my delegation strives for the creation of a corresponding working group which should begin work immediately. We take the refusal to create the working group as a violation of the basic right of the members of the Committee to participate, in an equitable and democratic manner, in this difficult and responsible task which we all took upon ourselves to perform, and not the nuclear-weapon States alone. Is the initiation of multilateral negotiations on this question not to the advantage of bilateral negotiations which will, of course, be conducted in parallel? Does not the failure of bilateral negotiations so far clearly call for the need to make use of multilateral possibilities as well, where the creativity and political will of a large number of countries will have a positive influence on the solution of such an important issue?

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

It is clear that the working group should have a well-defined mandate, an elaborated programme of action and clearly established stages of negotiation. This is because the process of nuclear disarmament is a lasting one and requires time but at the same time also there should be a clearly expressed willingness resolutely to go forward on the basis of the agreed programme. As a basis for discussion, the working group could take documents CD/116 and CD/4 as well as all other relevant documents. In the initial phase of work the group would concentrate on the identification of the various aspects of this issue and would gradually go on to the solution of the main problems. Without such a concrete approach to the question of nuclear disarmament, this Committee will not fulfil its main task and all eventual progress that we make with regard to other issues would not be of corresponding consequence.

According to the programme of work of the Committee, today is the last day of debate on this item of the agenda. This does not mean that the further consideration of the problems of nuclear disarmament ceases. We consider that the Committee should continue with the consideration of this issue, and very intensively. There is a sufficient basis for this, while the forms can vary -- from informal meetings of the Committee through informal groups and meetings to informal consultations.

Yugoslavia, in pursuance of its policy of peaceful and active co-existence and the decisions of the non-aligned movement, will spare no effort in order that we achieve success in nuclear disarmament. We cannot and will never reconcile ourselves to the existing deadlock in the consideration of nuclear disarmament in the Committee and will constantly strive to achieve an understanding and acceptance by all that we are here in order to solve all disarmament questions in a concrete manner. We do not wish to assume the responsibility for any possible failure. This responsibility must be fully borne by those who, despite the demands of all mankind, prevent nuclear technology being used for the prosperity instead of for the destruction of the world.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank Ambassador Vrhunec for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair.

Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, our Committee has devoted three plenary meetings, starting last Tuesday, to item 2 of our agenda, namely, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. The week before we discussed item 1, nuclear test ban. I propose to deal today with both subjects, for reasons of principle as well as for practical considerations. In my statement in the plenary on 12 February I had the occasion to state the position of Brazil with regard to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Since we conceive the nuclear test ban as a step towards nuclear disarmament, I would also like to elaborate today on the Brazilian stand regarding a treaty banning the further testing of nuclear weapons. At the same time, I have in mind the interesting debate we had yesterday on the establishment of working groups to deal with items 1 and 2 of our agenda. As my delegation made specific suggestions on the matter, which were supported and commented on by other delegations, I believe that some clarification, for the record, of the issues discussed yesterday would be in order.

Let me start by repeating what seems to be the view of the almost unanimity of the members of this Committee, concerning the urgent need for our Committee to engage in substantive negotiations on those two items. The continuation of the nuclear arms race is a major concern for all nations in the world, and not just for those Powers that still engage in the unabated proliferation of their nuclear arsenals, in numbers and in quality. We have been confronted with the argument that nuclear disarmament is of "vital importance" to the security of the Superpowers, or that the subject is "too sensitive" or "too complex" to be dealt with multilaterally. We contend, however, that this question is also vitally important to our own security, and that its very complexity and sensitivity warrant the early start of negotiations. A nuclear war would wipe out not only those who believe they can wage it, but the rest of the world as well. It is thus clearly within the purview and the duty of this Committee to negotiate urgently on the substance of the matter.

At our informal meeting of yesterday, my delegation suggested that the Secretariat provide us with a listing of all concrete proposals made to date, since the inception of the Committee on Disarmament, on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. The delegation of India had previously made a proposal that we start from the discussion, in informal meetings, of chapter 5 of the Secretary-General's report on nuclear weapons. Many delegations argued for the continuation of informal meetings to deal with nuclear disarmament, and yesterday Ambassador Taylhardat of Venezuela made complementary suggestions to my proposal. Other delegations, including those of Nigeria, Kenya, Argentina, Peru, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sweden and Yugoslavia, from the Group of 21, had constructive comments to make on the question at hand. All those suggestions made yesterday are complementary to each other. My own delegation is entirely flexible on the details of the format which we hopefully may decide upon, to focus the negotiations envisaged. We still think that a listing of all proposals made in the United Nations dealing with nuclear disarmament might prove too long and too cumbersome; maybe we should start with a less encyclopaedic catalogue, to which delegations could propose the addition of other official documents presented before 1979 and which are still relevant today. The important point, however, and it is one on which I feel there was a convergence of views, is that this exercise must have two main purposes: first, to create the conditions for a meaningful, substantive dialogue within the Committee, and secondly to aim at pin-pointing issues on which concrete multilateral negotiations may be started. With this understanding, my

(Mr. De Souza E Silva, Brazil)

delegation is ready to continue exploring, in informal meetings, the organization of our work on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. In this connection, I still believe that the proposal of the Group of 21 provides us with the best option for success. If, however, the suggestions made by my delegation and by several others continue to be met with dismissal, silence or a refusal even to start a dialogue, then we, and all members of the United Nations, can do little else than draw the appropriate conclusions.

Much the same reasoning applies to the proposals dealing with the establishment of a working group to negotiate a treaty on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon testing, for all time, in all environments. We heard no objection, during yesterday's meeting, to the continuation of an informal discussion on the substance of the matter; not more than two delegations are on the record as having opposed the establishment of the working group on item 1 proposed by the Group of 21. One of those delegations explained that its Government was engaged in an over-all review of its defence policies, and that only after this process had been completed could it sit in the Committee with the benefit of clear instructions. The other, however, had unconvincing objections of principle, which are still unclear to my delegation. Be that as it may, the consequences are, to say the least, disappointing. At any rate, this situation should not prevent the trilateral negotiators from responding to questions that have been addressed to them in this Committee, in the search for clarification of issues raised by their report to the Committee last year. The fact that the tripartite talks have been suspended, and for reasons unrelated to the tasks assigned to this Committee, should not prevent the three negotiators from providing the Committee with substantive responses. In this connection, the delegation of the Soviet Union has devoted one statement in the plenary to substantive aspects of the CTB, and has also expressed its support for the Group of 21. Would it be too much to ask the other two Powers to state the reasons why they believe that success would be impaired if consensus were attained in the Committee?

It might be pertinent to recall the recent example of the establishment, last year, of a working group on chemical weapons. The experience of the Committee in this connection has shown that the work of the CD in no way brought prejudice to the bilateral negotiations, which, incidentally, have also been suspended for reasons pertaining to the bilateral relations between the Superpowers. May I add here, as an afterthought, that since the inception of the nuclear age, 35 years of restricted negotiations on disarmament have now elapsed; but no single measure of disarmament has ever been produced by those select forums; on the contrary, for 35 years, at a most wicked speed, a massive arms build-up has taken place.

In making the proposal for the continuation of informal discussions on how to organize meaningful negotiations on the nuclear test ban, my delegation keeps an open mind with regard to details. But we do believe that the suggested exercise must also take the form of a dialogue, so that out of it there could emerge the substantive material to form a basis for a mandate of the working group proposed by the Group of 21.

My delegation is firmly convinced that a CTBT cannot be pursued as an end in itself; further, we think that its urgency does not derive merely from the fact that many Parties to the non-proliferation Treaty are now voicing doubts as to the effectiveness of, or the compliance with, that instrument. On the contrary, as Brazil has consistently stated, the CTBT must be conceived as a step towards nuclear disarmament. To be truly effective and lasting, a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests must be acceptable to as wide a number of parties as possible,

(Mr. De Souza E Silva, Brazil)

particularly to the five nuclear-weapon Powers, which continue to conduct tests to increase the destructive power of their arsenals. But the condition of universality will not be fulfilled if the legitimate concerns and interests of other nations are not taken into account. Agreements resulting from closed negotiations cannot be expected automatically to suit the interests of those who were not allowed an opportunity to state their concerns and to see that they were adequately reflected.

As for Brazil, we do have basic views in connection with a treaty to prohibit nuclear-weapon testing. We would like to see a treaty which would contain a clear commitment to the goal of nuclear disarmament, and which would serve as an effective tool for the promotion of international co-operation in the field of the full use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, a treaty which would not contain imbalances and discrimination, and one which would not bestow on a few parties a privileged status, even if such parties consider themselves to be more concerned than the others. I have in mind both the substantive articles of the treaty and the clauses relating to the complaints procedure, to the verification mechanism, to ratification and entry into force and the provisions for its periodical review. We would further like to see a treaty which would effectively result in the ceasing of all nuclear-weapon testing for all time in all environments, and which does not become a tool for political pressure or, even worse, an instrument of legitimization for the resumption of testing after a limited number of years.

May I close my remarks by making one point absolutely clear. We recognize the right of every nation to conduct, with whatever partners it chooses, whatever talks it considers necessary to safeguard its legitimate interests. But we cannot accept the argument that substantive talks in this Committee, on questions which all of us agreed to inscribe on its agenda, could prejudice or in any way preclude restricted talks on the same subjects. In our opinion, by simply performing the negotiating task for which it was created, this Committee would be carrying out the invaluable work of clarifying issues of vital importance, both for the nuclear-weapon States and for the non-nuclear-weapon States, in order to ensure the effectiveness and universality of the instruments to be multilaterally agreed upon.

Let us not be misled into believing that it is wise to act internationally as if the world were composed of two categories of nations, one of which would accept no responsibility towards the other. All members of this Committee have agreed to negotiate urgent measures of nuclear disarmament. Talks may be conducted separately, in small groups, within alliances, between alliances, without alliances; but we must also negotiate within the framework that we ourselves have established for that purpose. To preclude multilateral negotiations in this Committee might have serious consequences, for it is only within its framework that we will be able to negotiate disarmament agreements which will prove equitable, universal and lasting.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): Comrade Chairman, at the outset let me congratulate you on your succession to the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of March and wish you the utmost success in discharging your responsibilities. The Hungarian delegation is especially pleased to welcome in the Chair the representative of the German Democratic Republic, with which the Hungarian People's Republic has strong ties of friendship, deep-rooted co-operation in all the fields of life and a profound common interest in strengthening world peace and security. Your personal capabilities and experience in multilateral diplomacy represent a reliable guarantee that the Committee will continue its work in a business-like,

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

constructive atmosphere generated during the chairmanship of your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador François de la Gorce, to whom I would like to express my deep appreciation for his constructive contribution to our work.

It is evident that the main task of the Committee during this year, particularly during this month, is to achieve advance in the broad and vital field of nuclear disarmament, especially in creating the necessary organizational framework for such negotiations. Your role as Chairman is instrumental in it and my delegation will do its utmost to assist you to achieve that end.

Exchanges of views in connection with various aspects of nuclear disarmament held in the Committee as a whole gives me some encouragement. The majority of the delegations represented here expressed their readiness and strong desire to start concrete negotiations on vital aspects of nuclear disarmament which have been so far considered only at the level of deliberations; I have in mind the questions of the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. However, my delegation cannot hide its profound disappointment that in view of the refusal of a few delegations the Committee is unable to settle the procedural phase and set itself to substantive negotiations. The agreement in principle on setting up working groups on the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament has been long overdue. Even late last year the rigid resistance by one delegation on these issues led to the deplorable consequence that the second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons could not achieve consensus on a substantive final document.

My delegation continues to be convinced that substantive negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament within the framework of ad hoc working groups on concrete aspects of nuclear disarmament are not only feasible and desirable, but an unavoidable task if the Committee on Disarmament really adheres to the consensus reached during the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as contained in the key paragraph 50 of its Final Document.

In my previous statement, of 12 February, I made preliminary comments in connection with the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Although the discussion of the item was to have ended last week, I would like to make further observations in view of the discussion which took place in the Committee. My delegation highly appreciates the comprehensive statement made by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan, last Friday on the position of the Soviet Union concerning the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests in relation to the tripartite negotiations as well as the negotiations to be conducted in the Committee. I consider that the flexible position of the USSR could contribute to a substantial advance in both forums. My delegation fully shares the position of the Soviet delegation concerning a moratorium and an international global network to detect and identify seismic events. I would like to reiterate the hope of my delegation that the other two interested parties in the tripartite negotiations will soon find it possible to resume the talks and will reach positive results.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

My delegation remains convinced that, parallel with the trilateral talks, the Committee on Disarmament has also a role to play in achieving a genuinely universal CTBT. The majority of the delegations represented here agree that an ad hoc working group should be created with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. As far as the concrete task of such a group is concerned, I think that more than enough proposals have been put forward even during our debates held since the beginning of the session, apart from the proposals which had been made earlier. What is to be done at this stage is to formulate these proposals into a realistic mandate acceptable to all, and to start the substantive negotiations in the ad hoc working group.

The Committee is to complete in this meeting the consideration of item 2 of its agenda: the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. The urgency of the need to find a way to stop the nuclear arms race has been explained in dramatic terms by many delegations who took the floor on this item. It is evident from the present state of the international situation that the continuing nuclear arms race is becoming a more and more dangerous destabilizing factor in international relations. The prevention of the outbreak of a nuclear war and making a substantive headway towards nuclear disarmament is the highest priority task facing the peoples of the world and to an increased extent the Committee on Disarmament. The socialist countries have always been advocating and promoting wide-ranging proposals and concrete negotiations to put an end to the nuclear arms race, the latest of them being those made by L.I. Brezhnev in his statement to the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The Hungarian Government fully supports these proposals and is convinced that the implementation of these proposals is in the best interests of the peoples of the world, particularly those in Europe. We do hope these proposals will be given due and responsible consideration by those to whom they are addressed.

The Committee on Disarmament has before it also concrete tasks in the field of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Ever since the submission by the socialist delegations of the proposals in document CD/4 on negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until their complete destruction, the Committee on Disarmament has had wide-ranging discussions on this issue. As a consequence of these debates the majority of the delegations came to the conclusion and explicitly expressed their opinion that the Committee on Disarmament is the most suitable forum for the preparation and conducting of such negotiations.

A number of concrete proposals have been made for the translation into practice of this right conclusion. Working paper CD/109 submitted by the delegation of the German Democratic Republic last June proposed, among other things, the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and the working out of an appropriate mandate for it. A similar initiative was made by the Group of 21 in working paper CD/116 which proposed the setting up of a working group and also gave an indicative description of the concrete tasks such a group could deal with. In the final analysis both proposals can be conceived as practical efforts to translate into practice paragraph 50 and other relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

In the discussion on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament some delegations have shown special interest in the question of ending the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. The Hungarian delegation is of the opinion that this question should be considered together with other issues relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament within the framework of an ad hoc working group to be established.

It is a matter of regret that, despite the insistence of the majority of delegations, the Committee has not made even one small step towards discharging its extraordinary responsibilities in this crucial field. My delegation is determined that the Committee should at the latest during this part of its session take a decision to set up an appropriate subsidiary body and start on a priority basis preparatory work for substantive negotiations on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and on nuclear disarmament.

Before concluding, I would like to deal with the question of the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present. As you may recall this question, in conformity with the decision taken by our Committee, belongs to item 2 of our agenda.

My delegation, like many others, attaches great importance to strengthening the system of political and international legal guarantees for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. The idea of concluding an international agreement on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present is, in the opinion of many delegations, one of the possible actions to serve this goal.

The conclusion of an agreement on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present would considerably strengthen the non-proliferation régime, and could contribute to reducing the danger of nuclear war and the nuclear arms race, and could enhance the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such an undertaking would make a significant contribution to increasing confidence and to strengthening international peace and security. For these reasons my delegation considers that the conclusion of such an agreement is both possible and necessary, not to mention the timeliness of the question.

In paragraph 1 of resolution 35/156 C adopted at its last session the General Assembly "Requests the Committee on Disarmament to proceed without delay to talks with a view to elaborating an international agreement on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present". In paragraph 3 of this resolution our Committee is requested to submit a report on the question to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session.

Taking into account the importance and timeliness of the question, the establishment of a working group would be the best way to carry out this task as proposed in document CD/141 submitted by the socialist countries on 5 February. The Hungarian delegation is ready to co-operate with every delegation in the elaboration of a mandate for such a working group.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to thank Ambassador Komives for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Comrade Chairman, it gives my delegation great satisfaction to see you presiding over the Committee on Disarmament during the month of March. You are a worthy representative of a country that is united with my own by strong ties of brotherhood, fraternity and solidarity. The German Democratic Republic is a country which has played and continues to play an active and militant part in the effort to achieve general and complete disarmament as a way of strengthening international peace and security.

We are aware of your great ability and we are confident that, under your able and skilful guidance, we shall end this month -- the longest in our spring session -- successfully and with positive results. You may be assured of the utmost support and co-operation from our delegation.

I should like, through you, to offer our congratulations to the Ambassador of France on the results achieved in the month of February when our Committee worked under his chairmanship.

It may seem unnecessary to repeat that working groups provide the best framework for dealing with the various items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament, but when a fact is really incontrovertible and objective, it has to be repeated, and reality has convincingly demonstrated that this is so. Consideration of the items before us in the context of working groups is the best way of clarifying their many and complex facets; this is what makes some of the arguments adduced here regarding this question unacceptable.

With regard to the forestalling of attacks, considerations of security, defence, protection and so on, the example was given here of a person who equips his house with alarms, warning signs, fences and dogs for his protection. But what about those who cannot afford to install alarms or buy dogs, or those who do not even own houses? Are they then to be left open to attack, without protection of any kind?

No one can deny that it would be useful to set up two working groups on such pressing and urgent items on our agenda as (1) a comprehensive nuclear test-ban; and (2) the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

All members of the Committee, including those delegations which are opposed to the establishment of such groups, know that the discussion of these items in working groups would not mean the immediate conclusion of treaties. We all know that these items require thorough, meticulous and detailed consideration, but if we continue to do nothing in this matter, time will pass and the task will become all the more difficult. Even more important, what explanation will this single multilateral disarmament negotiating body give to the international community? What shall we tell the General Assembly at its second special session on disarmament?

The Final Document adopted at the first special session on disarmament, which is talked about so much, was adopted by consensus. We shall be taking stock of its results at the second special session on disarmament; we shall note what has been done and what has not been done. What will happen when paragraphs 47 onwards are considered? These are the paragraphs referring to questions about nuclear weapons -- unavoidable issues which we are duty bound to take up.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

My delegation is deeply concerned lest we conclude our work this year without setting up these working groups. This will be the Committee's last full session before the second special session on disarmament, and we must not come to it "empty-handed". Both the Group of 21, to which my country belongs and the socialist group, together with many delegations in the so-called western group are in agreement that these working groups should be set up. This has been reflected in statements, documents submitted, and so on.

For instance, I should like to draw attention to:

Document CD/4, submitted as early as in 1979 by the socialist countries, concerning negotiations on nuclear weapons;

Document CD/36/Rev.1 of the Group of 21, also concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament;

Document CD/72 of the Group of 21, containing an appeal for the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and urging the establishment of a working group without delay;

Document CD/116 of the Group of 21, on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament;

Document CD/134, the Statement of the Group of 21 on the conclusion of the annual session of the Committee on Disarmament in 1980, which contains the following passage:

"... it is a matter of regret that despite the greater responsibility thus placed on the Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament, it has been prevented during its 1980 session from adequately discharging its mandate, particularly with regard to that part of its responsibilities which has been assigned the highest priority by the General Assembly, namely, the Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament including the initial step of a Nuclear Test Ban.";

Document CD/135, submitted by the group of socialist States, which states, in one of its paragraphs:

"The delegations of the socialist countries have attached and continue to attach primary importance to the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. They submitted specific proposals to the session of the Committee concerning negotiations on the cessation of the production of nuclear weapons of all kinds and the gradual reduction of stockpiles of such weapons culminating in their complete elimination. In addition, it was proposed that an ad hoc working group on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament should be set up within the Committee, and that the group's terms of reference should be determined during the current session of the Committee on Disarmament." That meant, in 1980.

As regards statements, there have been many, including more than one by the Group of 21 reiterating this urgency, that of the socialist countries and, more particularly, the statement by Comrade Issraelyan of the USSR on 27 February, as well as statements by the Netherlands, Japan, Belgium, Australia, Canada and Italy: all objectively reflect the importance of setting up these working groups.

In addition, at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, various resolutions to this effect were adopted.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

In conclusion, I should like to refer to document A/35/392 entitled "Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons". The delegation of India proposed that we should discuss, at informal meetings, chapter V of this report, entitled "The doctrines of deterrence and other theories concerning nuclear weapons". My delegation supports this proposal. The entire report is extremely useful and important and we ought in particular to take note of chapter VIII, "The perpetual menace to human society", and especially paragraph 494, which I should like to quote:

"If this report has proved nothing else, it should at least have served to demonstrate the catastrophic consequences which would result if the nuclear arsenals of today or tomorrow were ever unleashed in war. There are perhaps some who wish to draw comfort from calculations that it may be difficult to kill outright every man, woman and child on earth even in a nuclear war. But such calculations are empty exercises. The danger of the annihilation of human civilization should not be made the subject of theoretical arguments, but be used as a basis for creating a common awareness of the alarming situation the world is facing today and of the need for exercising the political will to search for acceptable solutions".

At their six Summit Conferences, the non-aligned countries have reiterated the need for nuclear disarmament. Thus, at the recent Ministerial Conference held in New Delhi, the Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries stated that "the greatest danger confronting the world today is the threat of destruction resulting from a nuclear war. The actions of the nuclear-weapon countries, which have embarked on a new and frenzied phase in the arms race, have created a situation in which mankind appears to be condemned to live in the shadow of nuclear annihilation. Some of the nuclear-weapon countries have been trying to promote the highly dangerous theory of a limited nuclear war and to minimize the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons. At the same time, the so-called 'balance of deterrence' between the great Powers has not prevented them from taking part in regional conflicts. The competition in deterrence has in no way created a sure means of averting the imminent catastrophe. Only the nightmare of uncertainty and fear that today characterize international relations have increased, for the arms race is due primarily to the persistent recourse to the use of force to maintain the status quo in international relations. There is only one real deterrent: mankind's desire to survive. As unswerving advocates of world peace, the non-aligned countries should, therefore, co-ordinate their actions so as to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race with a view to eventually achieving the complete elimination of such weapons from the arsenals of States".

Let us co-ordinate our actions to achieve concrete negotiations on the cessation of nuclear tests and nuclear disarmament.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics): Distinguished Comrade Chairman, first of all, I should like on behalf of the Soviet delegation and on my own behalf cordially to congratulate you on your assumption of the functions of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for the current month. We are particularly pleased to do this since you represent here a country which is linked with the Soviet Union by the indissoluble ties of friendship and fraternity. May I wish you, distinguished Comrade Herder, success in discharging your responsible task as Chairman of this Committee.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We should also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador de la Gorce of France, who was the Chairman of the Committee during the month of February.

Today, the Soviet delegation would like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee on Disarmament to an event of major international import -- the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which is now in process of concluding its work. The Report to the Congress, delivered by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, L.I. Brezhnev, contains a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the present international situation, confirms the invariability of the foreign policy course of the Soviet Union towards safeguarding peace and strengthening international security, and puts forward new and important proposals aimed at curbing the arms race and improving the international climate.

Reflecting the most vivid response produced in the world by the work of the Congress, many delegations in the Committee -- and they have told us about this quite frankly -- have displayed a keen interest in the materials emerging from it. The Soviet delegation has submitted as an official document of the Committee the section of the report by L.I. Brezhnev which focuses on the tasks of the consolidation of peace, the settlement of urgent international issues and, in the first place, the problem of disarmament.

Many of the provisions of the report, new constructive proposals put forward at the Congress, bear the most direct relation to the work of our Committee, to those issues which have been raised in the statements of a number of delegations in the course of the general debate.

In this connection, the Soviet delegation would like to draw the attention of the Committee to certain questions touched upon in the report of L.I. Brezhnev.

"The pivotal line of the foreign policy of our Party and Government," -- stated L.I. Brezhnev in his report to the Congress -- "has been and continues to be the struggle to reduce the danger of war and to curb the arms race." The Soviet State, like many other countries -- as has, in particular, been clear from the work of the current session of the Committee -- singles out within the entire sphere of disarmament the issue of the limitation and elimination of nuclear weapons, which are the most dangerous to humanity.

As is well known, the Soviet Union stands for the radical solution of this issue, that is, for ending the production of nuclear weapons and reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed. The relevant concrete proposal was submitted to the Committee by the Soviet delegation together with the delegations of other socialist countries over two years ago. The Congress noted the efforts made by our country to try to secure the adoption of individual measures in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and in particular the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests, the strengthening of security guarantees for non-nuclear weapon States, the prevention of the further spread of nuclear weapons across our planet, and a number of other measures.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Numerous statements in the Committee reflected serious anxiety over the fact that the process of strategic arms limitation by the USSR and the United States of America has been artificially held back and, as you know, through no fault of ours. But there is something more behind this, namely, concern over how Soviet-American relations are going to develop in future. This concern is understandable. During the general debate in the Committee many delegations have rightly emphasized the fact that the entire international situation as well as the solution of a good many problems, including, naturally, disarmament issues depend to a large extent on the policies of the USSR and the United States. The report made by L.I. Brezhnev to the Congress says, clearly and explicitly, that the state of Soviet-American relations at present and the acuteness of problems requiring a solution necessitates a dialogue, and an active dialogue, at all levels. This is also true of the state of affairs here, in the Committee on Disarmament.

Attaching extremely important significance to the limitation of strategic armaments, L.I. Brezhnev urged the continuation, without delay, of the relevant negotiations with the United States, preserving all the positive elements that have so far been achieved in this area. He underlined anew that the only sensible and acceptable basis for such negotiations, in which -- and we would draw attention to this -- all the other nuclear-weapon Powers should participate, at an appropriate time, is observation of the principle of equality and equal security.

L.I. Brezhnev declared that the USSR is prepared to come to terms on limiting the deployment of the new submarines -- the Ohio type by the United States and similar ones by the USSR, and to agree to the banning of the modernization of existing and the development of new ballistic missiles for these submarines.

The proposal contained in the report by L.I. Brezhnev to set up a competent international committee which could be composed of the most eminent scientists from various countries is aimed at intensifying the struggle against the nuclear peril and at increasing opportunities for the dissemination of truthful information about the disastrous consequences for mankind of a nuclear war.

One of the important items on the agenda of our Committee is that of the prohibition of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. The report to the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stressed once again that the Soviet Union has actively sought the prohibition of all other types of such weapons also, and that certain results have been achieved in this field. In particular, the Convention on the Prohibition of Military Use of Environmental Modification Techniques has entered into force. Considerable useful work has been done towards the drawing up of a treaty for the banning of radiological weapons. We hope that this work will be successfully completed in the near future. Negotiations are continuing in the Committee, for the second year already, with a view to the exclusion of chemical weapons from the arsenals of States, but in truth they are proceeding too slowly, and we sincerely regret it.

The report to the Congress stressed that thanks to the actions of the peace-loving forces it was possible to check the implementation of plans for the deployment of neutron weapons in western Europe. For our part we reaffirm, said L.I. Brezhnev, that

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

we will not begin production of this weapon unless it appears in other States, and that we are prepared to conclude an agreement banning this weapon once and for all. I would recall that a draft treaty on the prohibition of neutron weapons tabled by the group of socialist countries in March 1973 is lying on the negotiating table in the Committee. The Committee should tackle this issue also.

The Soviet delegation feels that it is its duty to draw attention also to new proposals put forward at the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and aimed at a radical improvement of the international situation. Let me say at once that these proposals are not meant to form the subject of negotiations in the Committee, and we shall not introduce them for that purpose, but there is no doubt that their adoption and implementation would improve the situation in the world and would create a more propitious climate for disarmament negotiations also, including here, in this Committee.

It is hardly necessary to explain that it is far easier to prevent this or that conflict threatening to transcend local limits than to put a stop to a conflagration that has already broken out. As far as Europe is concerned, the purpose of preventive action of this kind is served by the confidence-building measures provided for in the decision of the All-European Conference, such as notification of military exercises of ground troops and the invitation to them of observers from other countries. As you know, these measures apply to the territory of the European States, including the western regions of the USSR. In the past the Soviet side has already proposed that the system of notification should cover naval and air force exercises as well as large-scale troop movements.

At the 26th Congress it was proposed that the zone of application of such measures should be substantially extended, and it was emphasized that our country is prepared to apply them to the entire European part of the USSR, provided the western States, too, extend the confidence zone correspondingly. Furthermore, a proposal was put forward to check the build-up of nuclear-missile weapons in Europe.

The Far East is another region where the elaboration and application of confidence-building measures, with due consideration for its specific features, could not only defuse the situation locally but also contribute to the strengthening of the foundations of universal peace. There, such Powers as the USSR, China and Japan border on each other and there are also United States military bases in this region. As far as this region is concerned, our country has also taken a new initiative. In his report L.I. Brezhnev expressed the readiness of the Soviet Union to hold concrete negotiations on confidence-building measures in the Far East with all interested countries. We stand for stability in this region, just as in all other regions of the globe.

The implementation of all these far-reaching proposals on confidence-building measures will facilitate progress in the field of disarmament as well. We wish to emphasize the realistic and meaningful nature of these proposals from the point of view of the strengthening of peace and the settlement of urgent disarmament issues.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Considerable attention was given in the report by L.I. Brezhnev to what are usually called "flash-points", that is, the hotbeds of military conflicts and tensions, and in the first instance to the Persian Gulf area. At the end of last year the Soviet Union proposed to the United States of America, other western Powers, China, Japan and all other States which might be interested, the reaching of an agreement on a wide range of mutual obligations providing, first of all, that in the Persian Gulf area and on the adjacent islands no foreign military bases should be established and no nuclear or any other type of weapons of mass destruction should be stationed. Another step would be an obligation not to use or threaten to use force against the countries of the Persian Gulf area and not to interfere in their domestic affairs. The Soviet Union also proposed that agreement should be reached to respect the non-aligned status chosen by the Persian Gulf States and not to draw those States into military groupings in which nuclear-weapon Powers participate. We also urged respect for the sovereign right of the States of this region to their natural resources. And finally, the Soviet side proposed that it should be agreed not to create any obstacles or threats whatsoever to normal commerce and the use of maritime communications connecting the States in this region with the rest of the world.

It has sometimes been said about these proposals, which have met with a strong response in the world, that they cannot be divorced from the question of the Soviet military contingent in Afghanistan. In this connection, it was made clear at the Congress that the Soviet Union is prepared to negotiate with respect to the Persian Gulf as an independent problem, and also to participate in a separate settlement of the situation around Afghanistan. At the same time our country, as L.I. Brezhnev stated, does not object to the questions connected with Afghanistan being discussed in conjunction with questions of Persian Gulf security. It goes without saying that in that connection only the international aspects of the Afghanistan problem could be discussed, and not internal Afghan affairs.

It is common knowledge that there are quite a few other urgent problems in the world. They are also awaiting a sensible solution, which requires, as L.I. Brezhnev put it, a far-sighted approach, political will and courage, authority and influence. In this connection, L.I. Brezhnev put forward a proposal for the convening of a special meeting of the Security Council with the participation of the top leaders of its member States in order to look for ways of improving the international situation and preventing war. Leaders of other States could obviously also take part in the meeting, which would, of course, require thorough preparation.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Thus, the new measures and proposals put forward at the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union cover a wide range of both political and military issues. All these proposals pursue a single aim, our one over-all aspiration -- to do everything possible to relieve the peoples of the threat of a nuclear war and to preserve world peace.

"Not war preparations that doom the peoples to a senseless squandering of their material and spiritual wealth, but the consolidation of peace -- that is the clue to the future", L.I. Brezhnev emphasized.

In conclusion, I should like to stress once again that all the main directions of the activities of our State in the field of foreign policy as outlined at the Congress, convincingly demonstrate that the course of the Soviet Union towards the preservation and consolidation of peace, and towards détente, the curbing of the arms race and disarmament is consistent and steadfast. This is a long-term policy not subject to momentary trends. The conclusions and proposals of the Congress, whether relating to the problem of disarmament or to any other international issue, constitute guidelines for Soviet foreign policy and diplomacy, and we shall follow them strictly and unswervingly. The objectives proclaimed by the Congress fill us with a feeling of optimism, and we hope that the new Soviet proposals will have a favourable impact on our common work and will facilitate the solution of the practical tasks facing our responsible negotiating forum.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from Russian): I should like to thank Ambassador Issraelyan, the representative of the Soviet Union, for his detailed explanation of his country's latest proposals in the sphere of the cessation of the arms race and disarmament, which were adopted at the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Bearing in mind the part that the Soviet Union as one of the foremost nuclear-weapon Powers is called upon to play in the implementation of measures of disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament, I am convinced that these proposals will be given due attention also by the members of this Committee. I should like to inform the members of the Committee that at the request of the delegation of the Soviet Union appropriate extracts from the report to the 26th Congress will be distributed to the Committee as a working document. I should like also to thank Ambassador Issraelyan for the kind words he addressed to myself.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): My delegation is happy to see you in the office of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament. Your clear perception of the problems with which this multilateral negotiating body deals -- or with which it will inevitably have to deal, sooner or later -- and your skill in finding compromise solutions are features of inestimable value for the successful guidance of our work during the month that lies ahead.

I should also like to take this opportunity to reiterate to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador de la Gorce, our gratitude and great appreciation for the outstanding role that he played during the month of February.

Turning to the item we agreed to continue considering at this meeting -- the item on the Committee's agenda entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" -- I shall begin by reminding you that my delegation has already had the opportunity to state in this forum the basic points of its position on this matter at the meetings -- the verbatim records of which can easily be consulted -- that I shall now list together with the dates on which they were held:

1979

1. 28th meeting, held on 19 April;

1980

2. 80th meeting, held on 22 April;
3. 87th meeting, held on 26 June;

1981

4. 101st meeting, held on 3 February;
5. 107th meeting, held on 17 February.

To supplement this list, I should like in the first place to emphasize that not only do we still consider it "inconceivable", as we have been saying here for almost two years, that any attempt should be made to prevent the Committee on Disarmament from discharging its duty with respect to nuclear disarmament, which, as has been said and repeated endlessly, should have the highest priority in our work; we find the persistence of such an attitude wholly unacceptable.

Since this Committee is the "single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum", it is obvious that it has not only the right, but also the inescapable duty to tackle an issue which, as the United Nations has so rightly said, is of "vital" interest to all peoples because what is at stake is nothing less than the very survival of mankind. The fact of the Committee's doing so will not, of course, create any obstacle to the continuation of the bilateral negotiations between the two Superpowers but will rather, on the contrary, be a useful complement to those talks.

It is no doubt for this reason that, at its last session, the General Assembly gave its full support in not one but two resolutions, resolutions 35/152 C and 35/152 D, both adopted on 12 December 1980, to the proposal made last year by the Group of 21 that there should be set up, during this first part of the Committee's 1981 session, an ad hoc working group that would begin its work by considering the

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

question of the "elaboration and clarification of the stages of nuclear disarmament envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, including identification of the responsibilities of the nuclear-weapon States and the role of the non-nuclear-weapon States in the process of achieving nuclear disarmament".

My delegation could not accept as a valid argument against the establishment of a working group on nuclear disarmament the alleged need of some regions to possess nuclear weapons in order "to deter potential aggressors". It is already 12 years since we had an opportunity to state our carefully considered conclusion on this matter, an honour that fell to me, at the 395th meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, held on 18 March 1969, when I said, inter alia:

"We refuse to believe that the so-called deterrent power -- a formula that has regrettably been much abused -- of such weapons can be regarded as a positive factor justifying their existence. The fact that in the past 20 years we have had a precarious peace based on a frightening balance of terror is for us far from being a convincing argument.

"In the millions of years of pre-history which are usually divided into the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age it was enough for man to have the deterrent power of primitive weapons made from such materials; and during thousands of years of recorded history in which, we must not forget, for many periods over half a century long peace prevailed and the deterrent power never until quite recently went any further than the instruments of destruction, quite terrifying enough, that were based on TNT and dynamite. We cannot understand why today international peace and security should have to depend on weapons such as the nuclear weapons, the very existence of which entails the danger of universal suicide. Against the presumed need for the deterrent power of nuclear weapons we must set the very real need to evaluate the moral dissuasive power of all peoples of the world, who demand every day with greater urgency and less patience that an end be put to a situation which endangers nothing less than the very survival of the human species."

Ambassador Venkateswaran, the distinguished representative of India, in the excellent statement he made last week, on 26 February, highlighted the numerous reasons why recourse to nuclear weapons to avoid or remedy imbalances, either real or imaginary, in conventional weapons is unjustifiable.

I have nothing to add on that point. I would, however, like to express my surprise at something that was said by another distinguished representative, the representative of the United Kingdom, who told us, in his statement on 19 February, that the Warsaw Pact countries have a "superiority in Central Europe over the NATO alliance of 3:1 in tanks and artillery and some 150,000 in ground-force manpower".

It is understandable and, I would say, even natural, that, when a Government is trying to persuade its own Parliament to be generous with regard to the military budget, it should not be too demanding with respect to the accuracy of the estimates it submits. On the other hand, it seems to us indispensable that, in as august an international body as the Committee on Disarmament, the starting point should be the fact that the members of the Committee do not have a vote in their respective Parliaments and, furthermore, that they should be fully cognizant at

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least of what might be termed the basic information regarding the status of armaments and armed forces in the world. For example, I do not think that I shall be teaching any of the representatives in this room anything new with a few quotations, all taken from public statements by officials of the most important member of NATO, who, in view of the functions they held when they spoke, may unquestionably be considered as among the most knowledgeable persons in the world on matters of this kind. These statements, as will be seen, give a very different picture from that painted for us by Ambassador Summerhayes.

In January 1930, Mr. Harold Brown, then United States Defense Secretary, declared:

"What are called static measures of assessment, in which, for example, Soviet and American missile or tank inventories are compared in isolation, are rarely illuminating about the expected outcome of a battle or instructive as to the defence posture we should adopt....

"In the central region of Europe, a rough numerical balance exists between the immediately available non-nuclear forces of NATO (including France) and those of the Warsaw Pact."

Last year again none other than the then United States Under-Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, Dr. William Perry, stated that NATO led in the "lethality" of tanks, artillery and rocket-launchers, as well as in the quantity and quality of anti-tank missiles and combat aircraft. With regard to precision-guided weapons, which he described as the "most significant application of technology to modern warfare since the development of radar", Dr. Perry believed that the United States had a "substantial lead".

Dr. Perry also believed that the improvement of NATO's anti-tank capability had so accelerated in recent years that "the technology balance is shifting in favour of the anti-tank systems". He added that NATO had over 193,000 very effective anti-tank missiles and an enormous variety of methods of firing them from the ground or from aircraft. As regards the military budgets of the two main alliances, a careful comparative study led Mr. Arthur M. Cox, a former official of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, to the following conclusion, which was published on 21 August 1980 in the International Herald Tribune:

"The combined NATO defence budgets are greater than the combined Soviet-Warsaw Pact defence budgets and, if the China factor is included, the Soviet proportion of defence facing the United States and its allies is less than 75 per cent of that of the NATO powers".

In view of these statements, which could easily be supplemented by others of a similar nature, we believe that exaggerating the size and the dangers of arsenals of conventional weapons is certainly not the best way of achieving the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Perhaps the best course would be to reflect seriously on the words of a man as familiar with strategic questions and as free from suspicion of bias as General Douglas MacArthur, who, speaking before the Philippines Congress on 5 July 1961, declared:

"Global war has become a Frankenstein to destroy both sides. No longer does it possess even the chance of the winner of a duel. It contains now only the germs of double suicide.

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"The present tensions with their threat of national annihilation are fostered by two great illusions. The one, a complete belief on the part of the Soviet world that the capitalistic countries are preparing to attack them; that sooner or later we intend to strike. And the other, a complete belief on the part of the capitalistic countries that the Soviets are preparing to attack us; that sooner or later they intend to strike.

"Both are wrong. Each side, so far as the masses are concerned, is desirous of peace. Both dread war. But the constant acceleration of preparation may, without specific intent, ultimately precipitate a kind of spontaneous combustion."

To supplement this statement made nearly 20 years ago, and since it seems to be fashionable to speak of the balance of nuclear deterrence, I will now go on to quote two of the main conclusions of the recent comprehensive study on nuclear weapons prepared by the United Nations, to the great merits of which I have repeatedly drawn attention since I first became familiar with its contents in October last year:

"In order to claim that it is possible to continue, forever, to live with nuclear weapons, the balance must be maintained at all times irrespective of any technological challenges that may present themselves as a result of the arms race. In addition, there must be no accidents of a human or technical nature, which is an impossible requirement as shown by the various incidents of false alarms and computer malfunctioning that are reported from time to time. Sooner or later one of these incidents may give rise to a real accident with untold consequences. For these and other reasons it is not possible to offer a blanket guarantee of eternal stability of the deterrence balance and no one should be permitted to issue calming declarations to this effect ...

"Even if the balance of deterrence was an entirely stable phenomenon, there are strong moral and political arguments against a continued reliance on this balance. It is inadmissible that the prospect of the annihilation of human civilization is used by some States to promote their security. The future of mankind is then made hostage to the perceived security of a few nuclear-weapon States and most notably that of the two Superpowers. It is furthermore not acceptable to establish, for the indefinite future, a world system of nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. This very system carries within it the seed of nuclear-weapon proliferation. In the long run, therefore, it is a system that contains the origins of its own destruction."

I am convinced that an objective analysis of the opinions which I have read out will inevitably lead to the conclusion that the Committee on Disarmament must lose no more time in beginning multilateral negotiations between its members on nuclear disarmament -- negotiations the conduct of which is endorsed in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of 1978 and for the initiation of which we continue to believe, with the Group of 21, that the best available machinery would be the immediate establishment of an ad hoc working group.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.