

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 12 February 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. F. de la Gorce (France)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. A. SALAH-BEY

Mr. M. MATI

Argentina:

Mr. F. JIMENEZ DAVILA

Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD

Australia:

Mr. R.A. WALKER

Mr. R. STEELE

Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium:

Mr. A. ONKELINX

Mr. J-M. NOIRFALISSE

Miss G. VAN DEN BERG

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA

Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. P. VOUTOV

Mr. I. SOTIROV

Mr. R. DEYANOV

Mr. K. PRAMOV

Burma:

U SAW HLAING

U THAN HTUN

Canada:

Mr. G. SKINNER

Mr. B. THACKER

Mr. C. CACCIA

China:

Mr. YU Peiwen

Mr. LIANG Yufan

Mrs. WANG Zhiyun

Mr. YANG Mingliang

Cuba:

Mr. L. SOLA VILA

Mrs. V. BOROWDOSKY JACKLEWICH

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. RUZEK
Mr. P. LUKES
Mr. A. CIMA
Mr. L. STAVINOH

Egypt:

Mr. I.A. HASSAN
Mr. H.N. FAHMY

Ethiopia:

Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE
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. N. KLINGLER
Mr. H. MULLER
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary:

Mr. I. KOMIVES
Mr. C. GYORFFY

India:

Mr. A.P. VENKATESWARAN
Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia:

Mr. DARUSMAN
Mr. KARYONO
Mr. F. QASIM
Mr. HARYOMATARAM

Iran:

Mr. M. DABIRI
Mr. D. AMERI

Italy: Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO
Mr. A. CIARRAPICO
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan: Mr. Y. OKAWA
Mr. R. ISHII

Kenya: Mr. S. SHITEMI
Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico: Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mr. H.A. CACERES

Mongolia: Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco: Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS

Nigeria: Mr. O. ADENIJI
Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan: Mr. M. AHMAD
Mr. M. AKRAH
Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru: Mr. F. VALDIVIESO
Mr. A. DE SOTO

Poland: Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. S. KONIK
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania: Mr. H. HALITA
Mr. T. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA

Sweden:

Mr. C. LIDGARD

Mr. L. NORBERG

Mr. S. STROMBACK

Mr. J. LUNDIN

Mr. J. PRAWITZ

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. B.P. PROKOPIEV

Mr. L.A. NAUMOV

Mr. V.A. SEMIONOV

Mr. V.A. PERFILIEV

Mr. L.S. MOSHKOV

Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO

Mr. S.N. RIUKHINE

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMTERHAYES

Mr. N.H. MARSHALL

Mrs. J.I. LINK

United States of America:

Mr. C.C. FLOWERREE

Ms. K. CRITTEMBERGER

Mr. J.A. MISKEL

Mr. H. WILSON

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT

Mr. O.A. AGUILAR

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. VRHUNEC

Mr. B. BRANKOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. O. GNOK

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the Committee:

Mr. V. BERRASATEGUI

Mr. VOUTOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, may I first of all express the satisfaction of the Bulgarian delegation at your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament at an important juncture, when we are laying the foundations of our activities for the current session. Please accept my most sincere wishes for a successful and fruitful performance in this demanding post, and permit me to note the efficiency and the purposefulness you have displayed in setting in motion the 1981 session of the Committee. May I also pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Tadesse Terrefe, as well as to the new heads of the delegations of Romania, Pakistan, Egypt and Zaire.

This session of the Committee is important in several respects. The international situation, which is an essential background and factor for success in our field, remains complex and contradictory. Certain well-known circles in the West, driven by the illusive dream of military supremacy, are pushing humanity into a new and even more frightful spiral of the arms race and thus, nearer to the danger of a nuclear holocaust. We have to note with regret that all possible means to block the entry into force of the SALT II agreements have been employed, and a decision to deploy in Europe a new generation of medium-range nuclear missiles has been taken, while a number of other military programmes, both in conventional and in nuclear fields, are being unfolded.

In the campaign accompanying the current boom in the policy of the position of strength there are some signs of reviving the plans for the production and deployment in Europe of neutron nuclear weapons, that ominous symbol of the arms race, which has been stigmatized with such force by the world community.

We fully share the view expressed by Mrs. Thorsson, the distinguished leader of the Swedish delegation, contained in her statement of 5 February this year, that Governments and people should take note of these reports and ponder over the eventual effects on the future of nations in the densely populated European continent.

As a European country, the People's Republic of Bulgaria could not watch undisturbed the attempts to question the achievement of détente, to present it as a unilateral advantage to one of the sides. Hundreds of millions of Europeans living on the continent, where the concentration of military forces and armaments is 20 times larger than the average for the world, could not agree with the efforts to pronounce as non-existent the 70s of the twentieth century. As has been stated recently in this regard by Todor Zhivkov, the First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party and President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria: "However short this period may have seemed, it demonstrated to the peoples, to the business circles, to the politicians and statesmen its incomparable advantages to the 'cold war' era; it bore fruits, and opened up even greater perspectives for mutually advantageous co-operation between the European States". In this respect I should like to express our hope that the Madrid meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe will follow a constructive path and concentrate on the major issues on which peace and security in Europe depend, including the question of a European conference on disarmament.

At the present stage the role and the responsibility of our Committee increases even more and we should exert ever greater efforts to secure progress in our endeavours to help in curbing the arms race and to agree on concrete measures of

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disarmament. Our delegation backs the appeals in this regard made in the statements of all previous speakers, and particularly in those of the representatives of the Soviet Union, Mexico, Sweden, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Romania, India and others.

May I now briefly outline the approach of the Bulgarian delegation to the main issues the Committee faces during the current session.

Firstly, a few words on the problems of organization and procedure. Our delegation is gratified to note that these matters are being solved in a constructive manner with a view to not losing precious time that must be allotted to the main items on our agenda. As to the concrete points, the position of our delegation is fully reflected in the joint document of a group of socialist countries, CD/141.

Undoubtedly, the problems related to nuclear weapons occupy the central place in our work and constitute the corner-stone of the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament.

The well-known proposal of the socialist countries on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until their complete destruction represents a solid foundation for a radical approach to the multilateral negotiations. We are glad to note that the majority of the States members of this Committee share our view on the creation of an ad hoc working group on nuclear disarmament and the holding of consultations without delay to prepare the ground for the future negotiations, which is in compliance with General Assembly resolutions 35/152 B and C. We are deeply convinced that the Committee on Disarmament is the most appropriate forum for such consultations and eventually for the nuclear disarmament negotiations, taking into account the provisions of paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

A number of facts in recent months have strengthened our conviction that neither the perfection of nuclear weapons nor the creation of new nuclear strategies but rather the clear realization of the growing danger of a thermonuclear war is the major concern of human civilization at this stage, and from this premise we must proceed to profound and purposeful negotiations demonstrating political will. Today, the cause of peace becomes a vivid embodiment of humanism in our times, of a striving for a new and just world. Permit me to quote once again the Bulgarian party and State leader who stated from the high rostrum of the World Parliament of Peoples for Peace, held at Sofia in September 1980, the following:

"We know that the main differences between capitalism and socialism cannot vanish by themselves, that each system will try to prove its right to existence, its advantages. But in our view, all this does not necessarily mean that we should reach for the nuclear bombs and missiles. In our view, the dispute between the two world systems can and should be conducted in conditions of world peace, of peaceful coexistence and competition between States with different social systems."

The socialist States parties to the Warsaw Treaty stated unequivocally and categorically in their Declaration of 15 May 1980: "the States represented at the meeting affirm that there are no types of weapons which they would not be willing to limit or reduce on a basis of reciprocity" (CD/98, p. 10). We believe that this Declaration has not been lost on world public opinion.

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One of the items that will attract the Committee's attention during this session is the question of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. I would like to point out that in spite of the constructive steps of the Soviet Union, steps that have had quite a positive impulse, the trilateral negotiations have not for the time being brought the expected results. Without underestimating in the least the importance of the trilateral talks, we support the idea of the non-aligned and neutral countries for the creation of an ad hoc working group with the active participation of all five nuclear-weapon States. The Committee should proceed to the elaboration of a mandate for such a group without delay.

Another important aspect of the efforts for reducing the danger of nuclear weapons will be our discussion on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons in countries where there are no such weapons at present. This will be fully in line with General Assembly resolution 35/156 C, bearing in mind that the Committee is to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session on the results of its proceedings on this important question.

My country attaches particular importance to the subject of negative security assurances. Our views on some of its aspects were stated last year in the Ad Hoc Working Group on this item as well as at the second Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT and in the First Committee of the General Assembly, where we presented working papers and a draft resolution. We have already had opportunities to positively assess the work done so far by the Ad Hoc Working Group in the search for a common approach acceptable to all, which could lead us to a legally binding international instrument. At this session, the re-established Working Group will have another chance to complete the examination undertaken last year of the substantive aspects of the negative security assurances. With this perspective in mind, the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/155, appealed "to all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to demonstrate the political will necessary to reach agreement on a common approach which could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character".

While remaining a firm proponent of the idea of an international convention as the most effective way to strengthen the security guarantees of the non-nuclear-weapon States, the Bulgarian delegation believes that the possibility of some interim agreements could also be explored at this stage. To prepare for such a course of action the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/154, called upon "all nuclear-weapon States to make solemn declarations, identical in substance, concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States having no such weapons on their territories, as a first step towards the conclusion of such an international convention". It also recommended "that the Security Council should examine declarations which may be made by nuclear States ... and, if all these declarations are found consistent with the above-mentioned objective, should adopt an appropriate resolution approving them".

The Bulgarian delegation holds that the Ad Hoc Working Group should continue to examine the proposed non-use formulations with a view to finding out possible common points between them. Proceeding from these premises, an effort could be made to evolve the basic elements of a common formula to be included in a legally binding international instrument, or of a general basis for individual declarations, identical in substance, which the nuclear-weapon States might wish solemnly to make

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on their own initiative, taking into due account the results achieved in the negotiations. In this regard, the period prior to and in the course of the General Assembly's second special session devoted to disarmament could become, as in 1978, another turning point in the efforts effectively to strengthen the security guarantees of the non-nuclear-weapon States. Opinions could also be exchanged in the Ad Hoc Working Group as to the most appropriate parameters for a Security Council approval, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council practice, of individual non-use declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States.

The Bulgarian delegation will shortly present a working paper concerning the questions that should be addressed, along these lines, by the Ad Hoc Working Group on negative security assurances. We believe that substantial progress on this item could be achieved if all States members of the CD, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, were to pursue a constructive approach and display maximum flexibility with a view to arriving at a solution acceptable to all. We welcome in this regard the readiness expressed in the statement of the Soviet delegation at the 103rd meeting of the Committee, to engage in active co-operation with other States in the search for a mutually acceptable formula of guarantees.

During this session we look forward to intensive work in the field of chemical weapons. We share the opinion that the Ad Hoc Working Group achieved certain progress although, as was stated in its report, not all questions were thoroughly discussed owing to the limited time. Now, we are to finish the work commenced, concentrating on points of convergence of views.

We attribute due importance to the bilateral USSR-United States talks on chemical weapons and we expect their early resumption.

As to the problem of banning the development and production of new types of weapons and systems of mass destruction, it has been occupying an important place in the recent sessions of the Committee on Disarmament. The advantages of a comprehensive prohibition of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction are quite obvious. What is necessary at this stage is a display of political will on the part of all States which are in a position to develop such weapons. There are some trends in this field raising justified concerns and confirming the need for further intensive efforts to forestall them by agreeing on concrete disarmament measures.

With regard to the question of radiological weapons, we hold the view that favourable prerequisites exist for the early elaboration of a draft convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons, on the basis of the joint USSR-United States proposal. The work done during the last session in the Ad Hoc Working Group led to further clarification. We share the view that the differences on certain points could perhaps be narrowed, thus bringing about the conditions for the successful accomplishment of this task by the end of this session of the Committee.

At the end of the Committee's 1980 session, a group of socialist countries, including Bulgaria, introduced document CD/128 presenting our views on the main elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. The Committee should spare no effort to secure the timely elaboration of the programme, while striving to achieve a fair balance of the positions of different countries and groups.

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In conclusion, I should like to assure you that the Bulgarian delegation will do its utmost to render its modest contribution to business-like and purposeful negotiations in the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Bulgaria for his statement and I should also like to thank him warmly for his kind words with respect to myself.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): Mr. Chairman, taking the floor for the first time at a plenary meeting, I would like to extend to you the congratulations of the Hungarian delegation on your assumption of the responsible office of Chairman of our Committee for this month and to express my appreciation of the dynamic way you conduct the business of the Committee. I do hope that the Committee, under your experienced guidance, will soon tackle the rest of the outstanding problems of procedure and set itself to the tasks of substance.

My words of appreciation go also to Ambassador Terreffe of Ethiopia who chaired the Committee last August, at a decisive stage of our last year's work.

May I also extend a hearty welcome to our new colleagues, the distinguished representatives of Romania, Egypt, Pakistan and Zaire, wishing them successful work. My delegation stands ready to continue friendly co-operation with them, as we did with their predecessors.

My delegation has observed with satisfaction that the Committee was able quickly to reach a consensus on its agenda and programme of work for the first part of its present session, and a similar fast result has been reached in re-establishing the four working groups set up at our last year's session, and in addition provision has been made for setting up new ones as proposed by several groups or delegations. Experience of our last year's session has proved beyond doubt that negotiations conducted in the framework of working groups constitute the most efficient method for achieving advance towards our goals. What we consider the most important is that the working groups start functioning and make progress in the negotiations themselves.

Some speakers taking the floor before me referred to the present international situation as grave and deteriorating. While agreeing with that view one can not but consider it as a direct consequence of a policy neglecting the realities prevailing in the international relations, renouncing the principle of parity and equal security, openly declaring plans for gaining military superiority. New nuclear doctrines are being worked out to reduce or to abolish the political, technical and psychological barriers before the use of nuclear weapons. To meet this end a new wave in the nuclear arms race is being initiated by NATO in its decision to deploy in western Europe huge arsenals of new generations of medium-range nuclear missiles. Ratification of SALT II has been deferred and its future is becoming more and more bleak.

The position of the Hungarian Government concerning the present state of the international situation has been clearly expressed in the Declaration of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty adopted at the meeting of its Political Consultative Committee last May. In that Declaration the States parties clearly declared that they do not aspire to military superiority but stand for parity and equal security at progressively lower military levels. The Declaration gave a practicable programme to meet this end, which was reiterated by the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty last December.

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Parallel with our proceedings, important negotiations are being conducted at the Madrid meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, among other things on the military aspects of détente. Hungary, together with the other members of the socialist community, is doing its best to achieve agreement on the earliest possible convening of a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe. In our view those meeting in Madrid can and should reach a decision on the convening of such a conference, as well as on the main lines of its work and agenda. Holding such a conference would become an important landmark in strengthening the foundations of European peace and putting into practice the obligation of all States participating in the conference to take effective steps and to reach tangible results in reducing military confrontation and in promoting disarmament in Europe.

Although Hungary is not a full member of the Vienna talks, it attaches great importance to this process and hopes that the negotiations will lead to positive results, and the earlier the better.

The Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum has a vital role to play in curbing the arms race and achieving genuine disarmament. The General Assembly of the United Nations also demonstrated, at its thirty-fifth session, that there is an increased urgency to put into practice the provisions adopted at its first special session devoted to disarmament. My delegation considers it very important that the Committee on Disarmament should achieve substantial advances in its work before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The Committee on Disarmament has on its agenda all the major subjects of disarmament to be solved. The programme of work and the working groups, once established, constitute the necessary and suitable framework for our successful activity. The working paper submitted by a group of socialist States, of which my delegation is a co-sponsor, contains all the major considerations for the work of this Committee.

In the work of the Committee my delegation, like many others, gives the highest priority to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. During its last two sessions the Committee had extensive exchanges of views on this issue, including consideration of the proposal submitted by the socialist delegations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until their complete destruction. My delegation strongly urges the setting up of an ad hoc working group without any delay, with the active participation of all nuclear-weapon States.

In connection with nuclear disarmament, the Hungarian delegation attaches special significance to the continuation of the SALT process between the USSR and the United States of America. It is a matter of deep regret that the continued postponement of the ratification of SALT II holds up this vitally important process. It is our hope that following the ratification of that Treaty the negotiations will continue to achieve a more substantial reduction of strategic nuclear armaments.

In the field of nuclear disarmament my delegation gives special attention to the conclusion of an international convention on the strengthening of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

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In continuation of the substantive work done last year in the Working Group on this subject, my delegation is of the opinion that the Committee should consider formulas for solemn declarations by the nuclear-weapon States, identical in substance, concerning the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, to be confirmed by the Security Council in an appropriate resolution. This could be a first step towards an international convention, against which there was no objection in principle in our last year's deliberations.

The Hungarian delegation notes with satisfaction that the Committee decided to include in its agenda the question of the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present, in the context of nuclear disarmament. The best way to consider this issue also would be to set up a working group as proposed in the recent working paper of the socialist delegations.

Questions related to nuclear disarmament in every aspect were widely and deeply discussed during the second Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held last year. Experiences at the Conference have shown beyond doubt the basic interest of States in retaining and strengthening the non-proliferation régime. However, it was also obvious that this cannot be done without achieving real advance in other fields of nuclear disarmament.

The general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is another item of the highest urgency. The early conclusion of a treaty prohibiting all nuclear-weapon tests would be a major contribution towards ending the qualitative improvement, development and proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as towards the improvement of the international climate. Resolution 35/145 B of the General Assembly requests the Committee to set up a working group to initiate negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. My delegation hopes that the Committee will meet this request and start substantive work soon, with the active participation of all nuclear-weapon States, now all represented in the Committee. It is our conviction that a moratorium on nuclear-weapon tests by all nuclear-weapon States would greatly increase the chances of success. One more word on this question: in the opinion of the Hungarian delegation, the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on this issue should in no way hinder the trilateral talks, which my delegation hopes will soon be resumed.

The Committee has urgent and very important tasks also outside the field of nuclear disarmament. The prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction is one of them. The early achievement of an agreement assumes special urgency also in the light of the alarming reports and official statements concerning the planned production and deployment of the new generation of chemical warfare agents, the binary weapons. It is the hope of my delegation that the Working Group on Chemical Weapons will soon resume its work and further advance towards the elaboration of an agreement on the effective prohibition of all chemical weapons on the basis of the useful work done last year in the Working Group.

My delegation is of the view that this year the Committee on Disarmament should pay more attention than previously to the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction. The drive by certain circles for technological superiority in the military field inevitably means that the latest achievements of science and technology will be used for military purposes, which may lead to a qualitatively new phase in the arms race even more difficult to control. The socialist delegations of the Committee have long been proposing that the most radical solution to prevent the emergence of new types

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of weapons of mass destruction would be to work out a comprehensive agreement banning the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, supplemented by specific agreements or protocols banning particular types of such weapons. Resolution 35/149 of the General Assembly adopted on this issue practically reiterates this request to the Committee.

While dealing with this question I think it necessary to remind the Committee of a proposal made last year and supported by several delegations. During the discussions of this issue which had taken place in the course of the last few years it became more and more evident that new ways need to be found to handle this complicated and wide-ranging issue in a more efficient way. The setting up of a working group of qualified governmental experts would provide an appropriate forum to survey this question more deeply and with more expertise, and the Committee too could profit from it in its proceedings. This is why the socialist delegations reiterated in working paper CD/141 their proposal for the setting up of such a group.

It is a matter of concern that according to official statements the new United States administration is considering again the production and deployment of neutron weapons. I profoundly agree with the statement of Mrs. Inga Thorsson made before the Committee on 5 January to this effect. Renewing this plan, which had been dropped earlier in face of the protest of European public opinion makes timely and topical again the proposal by the socialist delegations to start negotiations on an agreement banning the production and deployment of neutron weapons which was submitted to the CCD in 1978.

A specific area pertaining to this field is the prohibition of the development, stockpiling and the use of radiological weapons. Last year the Committee was considering it in one of the working groups. Although my delegation considers that work as a positive development, I think the Committee this year should try to tackle that task in a more ambitious way and do its best to be able to present to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session a complete draft convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons. On the basis of the existing proposals and last year's work this seems quite possible to us if the necessary political will is manifested on all sides.

The Hungarian delegation attaches considerable importance to the question of the elaboration of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. We support the continuation of the work of the relevant Working Group and are ready actively to participate in it. We hope that the activity of the Working Group and of the Committee on this important question will lead to realistic and useful results embodied in a sufficiently broad programme acceptable to all countries. My delegation considers it very important that the programme should reflect the principle of equality and equal security.

This is what I wanted to say at this stage of the work of the Committee. In the course of our work my delegation will return to specific subjects in a more detailed manner according to the schedule contained in our programme of work.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Hungary for his statement and for the kind words he was good enough to address to the Chair.

Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, it is a source of lively satisfaction to the delegation of Brazil to see you guiding our deliberations. A bare two weeks ago the President of Brazil paid a visit to France, giving a new impetus to the age-old and untroubled relations between our two countries. At a more personal level, we enjoy seeing you almost daily display your skills as a professional diplomat. Your patient encouragement, your competence, persuasive rather than importunate, your gentle firmness, have earned you the friendly and affectionate respect of your colleagues around this table. Allow me to take this opportunity also to offer a warm welcome to our colleagues from Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire, with whom I look forward to working in the closest co-operation.

It has become customary at the start of each year of our deliberations to attempt a general overview of the world situation and of its implications for the subject matter which concerns us most directly in this Committee, that is, disarmament. It has also become customary for that overview to reach the conclusion that in the period of twelve months since the start of the previous session of the CD, the pace of the armaments race and the destructive power of arsenals have far outrun the efforts of the world community to halt and reverse these trends. The year 1980 has been no exception; once again we have witnessed the continuation, and even the acceleration, of the trend toward the development and deployment of new weapons and weapons systems designed to spread death and destruction with greater speed, accuracy and power than ever before. This ominous tendency has been coupled with the emergence of the notion that a nuclear war can actually be fought and won, a notion which is in turn backed by the reasoning that the doctrines of nuclear deterrence deserve the credit for the avoidance of the outbreak of nuclear war.

Surely, since the appearance of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the Superpowers and in those of the three other nuclear-weapon Powers, no conflict has escalated far enough to cause one, or both, or all of them to wield their full-scale military might in the fallacious search for victory; and fortunately so, for otherwise certainly none of us would still be sitting in this chamber trying to formulate permanent solutions to the problems posed before us.

We must collectively recognize that the security needs of one nation, or block of nations, cannot be served by keeping in constant jeopardy the security of the whole world, including, of course, the security of the very Powers which seem to expect more security in an increasingly insecure environment. In the United Nations disarmament forums, and particularly during the last session of the General Assembly, the overwhelming majority of the world community has repeatedly stressed this single point: it is imperative that current attitudes be fundamentally changed if we are to achieve genuine progress in disarmament negotiations. Yet, the argument has been advanced from some quarters that the notion of "undiminished security" during the process of disarmament would provide justification for what is euphemistically referred to as the "modernization" of arsenals and strategic doctrines, even in the absence of a disarmament process. The Brazilian delegation cannot condone such ideas, which tend to seek not only the legitimization of the possession of nuclear weapons, but also to justify the efforts for their increased sophistication and destructive power. Recent developments in the strategic and tactical thinking of the two main military alliances seem only to confirm the conclusion that, for the Superpowers, the concept embodied in the phrase "arms control" means simply the adjustment of the arms race to mutually tolerable levels, in terms of the resources

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devoted to the ceaseless improvement of the weapons at their disposal. The vast majority of mankind, on the contrary, has repeatedly and unmistakably expressed its desire for genuine disarmament, meaning of course the immediate cessation of the nuclear arms race and the start of tangible measures of nuclear disarmament.

Brazil has always attached the utmost priority to these goals, and we will continue to seek practical ways to bring about progress on such measures. At the last session of the General Assembly, Brazil co-sponsored resolution 35/152 C, which calls for the commencement of such negotiations on this item and provides the framework for their conduct in this Committee. We likewise supported the call of the Group of 21 for the early establishment of a working group, within the Committee on Disarmament, to deal with specific aspects of this all-important question. My delegation fully endorsed the proposal that six working groups on the six substantive items on our agenda should be enabled to start their work without any further delay.

With that preoccupation in mind, may I be allowed to turn now to some brief comments on the substantive items on the agenda that the Committee has approved for this year's session. My delegation will, of course, make more detailed statements on each of the items at the appropriate time, hopefully in the context of the negotiations to be undertaken by the six working groups.

I have already underlined above the urgency and priority that not only my delegation, but the whole community of nations, attach to the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament which, for reasons known to all of us, appears as item two on our agenda. We believe that there is more than enough material, also in the form of concrete proposals, to warrant the commencement of serious substantive negotiations on this subject. I would only repeat at this point our earnest hope that the Committee be enabled to deal substantively with this question.

The next important and urgent item on our agenda is the negotiation of a treaty to ban all tests of nuclear weapons in all environments. We see no reason why the establishment of a working group on the CTB should be viewed as a hindrance to talks that have been going on for quite some time, with little apparent progress, among three of the five nuclear-weapon Powers. On the contrary, it would appear that a condition of success for a measure of this kind would be precisely its universal character, that is, the achievement of a treaty which would contain provisions designed to attract the widest possible adherence. The recent history of agreements in the general field of disarmament provides eloquent proof that it is not prudent, nor indeed realistic, to expect the international community to lend full support and credence to arrangements which do not take into account their legitimate concerns or which aim at perpetuating imbalance and discrimination. Brazil conceives a treaty prohibiting the further testing of nuclear weapons not as an end in itself, nor only as a protective step to ensure that the nuclear weapon club is not enlarged, but as a meaningful step on the path towards nuclear disarmament. Such a treaty would, in fact, institute a freeze on the improvement of nuclear weapons, thus providing an effective tool to check vertical proliferation. The next step, to be explicitly linked to the test ban, must be directed toward the start of concrete measures of nuclear disarmament itself. Furthermore, the treaty should not hinder the full development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and indeed should be seen as a positive instrument for the promotion of the peaceful utilization of nuclear power and of international co-operation in this field.

My delegation is firmly convinced that negotiations within the CD would greatly contribute to the clarification of important issues and would result in the formulation of an equitable and lasting treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests for military purposes.

(Mr. De Souza E Silva, Brazil)

The question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has been in the forefront of the disarmament debate for quite some time now. Brazil has consistently stated its conviction that the only meaningful and lasting assurance is nuclear disarmament itself. Pending nuclear disarmament, some proposals have been advanced, including the negotiation of a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons. In lending its support to that proposal, Brazil has observed that a ban on the use must not be interpreted as in any way legitimizing the possession of nuclear weapons, and must therefore contain an explicit, binding commitment to nuclear disarmament. In the absence of even a convention on the non-use, alternative suggestions have been formulated, such as some form of arrangements by which nuclear-weapon Powers would provide assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. It is appropriate to establish and stress here that the inherent nature of the nuclear weapon is expressed in its unique and hitherto unsurpassed capacity to destroy the very foundation of human life upon this planet. The recent report of the Secretary-General on the harmful consequences of nuclear war provides a vivid, yet realistic, illustration of this point. By its very nature, the lethal effects of the nuclear weapon are not confined to the belligerents, and its use has already been decried by the United Nations as "a crime against humanity". For those reasons, it is obviously not enough that the nuclear-weapon Powers formally forswear the use of nuclear weapons against the countries which decided not to exercise their sovereign right to the nuclear military option. Accordingly, any interim arrangement should be conceived as a twofold obligation on the part of the nuclear-weapon Powers: first, a clear, binding commitment to nuclear disarmament, and secondly, an equally clear commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons during the period between the acceptance of the first obligation and the actual achievement of nuclear disarmament. Only the acceptance of that twofold commitment would adequately balance the decision by non-nuclear-weapon countries to forego the military option.

The Brazilian delegation followed with keen interest the discussions which took place last year in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, and which were very useful to clarify some of the issues involved in this complex matter. We fully support the efforts to arrive at a comprehensive prohibition of the production, development and stockpiling of chemical weapons. We believe, further, that the future convention must provide for the destruction of the existing stocks of such weapons through an explicit commitment on the part of the few States which do possess them, including a detailed and comprehensive declaration of such stocks and of the facilities for their production. The destruction of existing stockpiles and the dismantling and conversion of facilities are certainly the most significant features of the proposed convention, since they would give the new instrument the character of a true disarmament measure. Accordingly, it would perhaps be more adequate to conceive the instrument under negotiation as a "convention on the destruction of stocks of chemical weapons and on the prohibition of their development, production and stockpiling", rather than the other way around. Another priority aspect of the future convention is the promotion of scientific and technological co-operation in the international field for peaceful activities and research involving the use of chemicals.

As regards radiological weapons, the Brazilian delegation continues to believe that the Committee on Disarmament should concentrate its efforts on the negotiation of items to which higher priority has been assigned. The overwhelming majority of the international community has recognized the urgency of other aspects of the disarmament spectrum, and in particular nuclear disarmament.

Finally, we believe that the Committee should not miss the opportunity to contribute substantively to the success of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We are glad that this fact has been duly recognized by all delegations and is reflected in our agenda for the 1981 session. The negotiation of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, to be submitted to

(Mr. De Souza E Silva, Brazil)

the second special session on disarmament in 1982, is but one aspect of this contribution, albeit a very important one. In our opinion, the main task of the second special session will be the examination of the implementation of the Programme of Action embodied in the Final Document of the first special session; and that document entrusted this Committee with the very substantive task of negotiating disarmament measures. In this, the third year of the work of the Committee on Disarmament, it is imperative that concrete progress be made. The machinery set up in 1978 must live up to the expectations of the world community and become a truly effective instrument of advancement of the cause of disarmament. As the arms race attains intolerable levels, and as even those levels are now being deemed insufficient by those who have the power decisively to influence the course and pace of the arms race, the prospect of our failure seems ominous indeed.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil for his statement and I should also like to assure him of my warm gratitude for his very cordial remarks about myself.

Mr. YU Peiwen (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, first of all, allow me to congratulate you warmly, Ambassador François de la Gorce, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, upon your assumption of the Chairmanship for the first month of the 1981 session of the Committee on Disarmament. I am convinced that your brilliant Chairmanship will ensure a good beginning for the present session, and you can count on the full co-operation of the Chinese delegation. I also wish to take this opportunity to extend a welcome to the ambassadors from Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire who are participating in our work for the first time this year.

As the Chinese saying goes, "A year's work depends on a good start in spring". Spring invariably brings hope for the new year. During this second spring of the 1980s, we are once again gathered here to discuss a question of universal concern, the question of disarmament. It is our sincere hope that as a result of the joint effort of all present here the Committee will, at the present session, make further progress on the basis of last year's achievements.

However, no one can escape a feeling of serious concern and disquiet at the world situation which has a direct bearing on the disarmament negotiations. The international situation continues to be turbulent, and in certain conflict areas it is becoming worse. In particular, one Superpower has directly dispatched its armed forces to occupy the sovereign State of Afghanistan where the flames of war are still raging. At the same time, this Superpower is supporting its agent in the latter's continued aggression and occupation of Cambodia. They have refused so far to implement the resolutions adopted last year by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, calling once again for the unconditional withdrawal of all aggressor troops from Afghanistan and Cambodia. Recently, the situation in Europe has been fraught with new dangers as a result of the massing of armed forces and the frequent military manoeuvres on the part of the same Superpower in some strategic areas in Europe. All this will certainly affect and create obstacles for the present disarmament negotiations.

In the past year, the rivalry between the two Superpowers has continued to intensify. On the one hand, these Powers have heightened tension and the danger of war in various regions of the world, particularly the Middle East, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, by the continuous reinforcement of their military forces and deployment. On the other hand, they are intensifying their competition for military superiority. One Superpower is clamouring for "maintaining a balance", but it is in fact going all out to improve the quality of its conventional armaments now that it has gained quantitative superiority. After it has achieved a rough

(Mr. Yu Peiwen, China)

parity with the other Superpower in nuclear arms, it is now concentrating on the development and improvement of its MIRVs. Its nuclear offensive power is now much greater with the addition of new types of nuclear missiles and strategic bombers. The other Superpower, not to be outdone, is also raising its military budget and engaging in the research and manufacture of new types of weapons. They have already begun a new round in the arms race centred on qualitative improvement.

In the face of the worsening international situation and the intensifying arms race, the people of the world are calling ever more vigorously for an end to aggression and expansion and a halt to the arms race. During the past year, the representatives of many countries have emphatically pointed out in the various disarmament forums that the Afghan incident has seriously heightened international tension, poisoned the atmosphere of confidence necessary for the international disarmament talks and blocked progress in those negotiations. What the people now demand from the Superpowers is action rather than empty words for "the maintenance of peace" and "the promotion of disarmament", a just demand which emanates from the existing international situation.

It was in the midst of the turbulent international situation at the beginning of the 1980s that the Chinese delegation first joined the Committee on Disarmament. We have come with a sincere desire to discuss and study seriously the various disarmament questions with the other members and we hope that the work of the Committee will contribute to the realization of disarmament and the maintenance of world peace. Judging from the experience of the previous session, we believe it is necessary for this Committee to follow sound principles and proper procedures in order to achieve progress.

The most salient feature of the present world situation in terms of the level of armaments is that the two Superpowers possess enormous arsenals which are both quantitatively and qualitatively far superior to those of other countries. Only the two Superpowers are capable of waging a world war, and it is the hegemonist policy they pursue that is seriously threatening world peace and the security of nations. Therefore, a fundamental principle applicable to all areas of the disarmament effort at present is that the Superpowers should be the first to act and drastically reduce their super-arsenals. It is regrettable that the Superpowers have so far refused to take any measure that would entail a real reduction of their armaments. This is the key to the lack of substantive progress in disarmament negotiations.

Since the question of disarmament has a direct bearing on international peace and security, countries participating in the discussions and negotiations on the various disarmament items should enjoy full equality. At present, in terms of institutional arrangements and working procedures, the Committee on Disarmament represents an improvement upon its predecessors. The monopoly over disarmament negotiations by a few big Powers has begun to disintegrate. Small and medium-sized countries have more say now in these matters, and this is commendable. However, the views and demands of these countries are yet to command the respect that they deserve. In our view, the small and medium-sized countries are fully entitled to voice their views and urge the Superpowers to take effective disarmament measures.

I now wish to state our views on some of the questions inscribed on the agenda of the present session of the Committee.

First, I will speak on the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament which is of concern to everyone. It is quite clear that the

(Mr. Yu Peiwen, China)

people of the world are being subjected to the ever-menacing danger of a nuclear war as a result of the accelerating nuclear arms race between the Superpowers and their intense preparations and deployment for a nuclear war. All effective measures should be taken to prevent such a war, which would spell unprecedented disaster for the people of the world. It has been the consistent view of my delegation that the fundamental way to remove the danger of a nuclear war is the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons. The worth of any nuclear disarmament measure should be judged by whether it would serve to reduce and remove the danger of a nuclear war. At the present stage, the reduction of such a danger requires the two countries which possess the largest nuclear arsenals to put an end to their ever-intensifying nuclear arms race, take the lead in drastically reducing their nuclear arsenals, halt their production of all types of nuclear weapons and close the enormous gap between themselves and the other nuclear-weapon countries, thereby creating the necessary conditions for the joint reduction and final destruction of nuclear weapons by all the nuclear countries.

On the question of a nuclear-test ban, our view is that the halting of tests alone will in no way stop the nuclear arms expansion of the Superpowers. To call on all nuclear countries without distinction to end nuclear testing before the Superpowers have drastically reduced their nuclear arsenals would only serve to maintain and consolidate the nuclear superiority of the Superpowers without reducing the danger of a nuclear war. Only the drastic reduction by the Superpowers of their nuclear arsenals can provide the necessary prerequisite for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban and help to reduce and remove the danger of a nuclear war.

On the question of security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States, the consistent position of the Chinese delegation is that, pending the achievement of the over-all objective in nuclear disarmament of complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons, all nuclear-weapon countries should undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and to proceed on that basis to negotiate and conclude as soon as possible an international convention to that effect. As non-nuclear countries pose no nuclear threat to the nuclear countries, there can be no justification for any nuclear-weapon country to shirk its responsibility to extend such security guarantees.

I now turn to the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons. The CCD was seized of this question for more than 10 years. It is disappointing that the objective of a complete prohibition of chemical weapons has remained as remote as ever. On the contrary, more and newer chemical weapons have appeared in the arsenals of the Superpowers. During the last year, numerous reports have revealed that people subjected to oppression and aggression are being cruelly injured and massacred by the use of chemical weapons. This very real threat of the use of chemical weapons has given more urgency to the question of the complete prohibition of such weapons. In our view the Committee should proceed at its present session

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on the basis of last year's achievement and enter into substantive negotiations for the drafting of an international convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons.

The reported use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Laos is of serious concern to people everywhere. A resolution was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session calling for an international investigation into the use of chemical weapons. This reflects the strong indignation of the countries of the world at the use of such weapons. The Chinese delegation will support all proposals and measures that would strengthen the 1925 Geneva Protocol and effectively prevent crimes in violation of the said Protocol.

With respect to the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the Chinese delegation has always attached importance to the formulation of the programme because it involves the objectives and principles of disarmament as well as specific disarmament measures, and therefore has a great significance for, and impact on, the future course of disarmament. In order to help promote progress in the field of disarmament, the programme should lay down the basic principles and establish the priorities of disarmament measures on the basis of the actual situation in the world at present.

In our opinion, the programme should incorporate the reasonable proposals that countries in possession of the largest arsenals should bear special responsibilities for disarmament, that disarmament should help to safeguard the sovereignty, independence and security of countries, and that conventional disarmament should also be given importance together with nuclear disarmament. All of these are in line with the urgent requirements of the small and medium-sized countries and would help to reduce the threat against world peace and the security of countries posed by the enormous arsenals of the Superpowers. These important proposals are also reflected in the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament and in the proposals on the main elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Our Committee should take this into full account in the course of formulating the programme.

The Chinese delegation shares the hope of many others for real progress in the negotiations on the various agenda items during the present session. People have high hopes for the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament to be held in 1982, and our Committee should contribute to the preparations for that session through our efforts here. The task facing us is therefore both important and urgent. The Chinese delegation is prepared to co-operate with other members and join in the common effort to overcome the difficulties and obstacles and contribute effectively to the promotion of disarmament and the safeguarding of world peace.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. SUJKA (Poland): Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to join all the distinguished speakers who took the floor before me in welcoming you most warmly on behalf of the Polish delegation as the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of February, at the beginning of its 1981 session. Let my sincere congratulations be accompanied with words of high appreciation that the members of my delegation and I share for your diplomatic skill so well reflected in your excellent performance during the first two weeks of our debate.

Together with our best wishes to you for the remaining part of this month, I cannot fail to say how pleased I am to welcome to this Chair a distinguished representative of France, the country with which Poland maintains age-old relations of mutual respect and co-operation.

I also wish to express warm thanks to His Excellency Ambassador Terrefe of Ethiopia for his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee in its concluding session last year, and particularly for performing the difficult task of presiding when the Committee's report to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly was being prepared.

My best wishes go to the distinguished representatives of Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire who have recently joined us as heads of their respective delegations at this conference table. I also cordially wish all the best to the Secretary of the Committee, H.E. Ambassador Jaipal, and to all members of his staff who do not spare their efforts in discharging their responsible task of ensuring that the work of our Committee runs smoothly.

We are entering the third consecutive year of activity of the enlarged Committee on Disarmament and the second year of its work with its full membership. This work has enriched us with additional experience and we have now got to know each other much better than we did three years ago, although there have been, as usual, routine transfers of heads of delegations. On the other hand, the monthly rotation of the chairmanship brings variety to our work through consecutive chairmen's individual features shaped by the historical background and the specific characteristics of their nations.

My delegation fully shares the remarks, already expressed, on the importance of this year's session of the Committee on Disarmament. I shall probably not be giving away a secret if I say that my delegation has arrived at the 1981 session of the Committee with a clear instruction from its Government: to contribute to the strengthening of this Committee which constitutes the only forum of a world scope for multilateral disarmament negotiations, endowed with the confidence of Governments and the whole international community. In order not to fail this confidence, my delegation has been instructed to make every possible effort to ensure the constructive nature of the work of the Committee and of its subsidiary bodies, to seek persistently a compromise which would secure a balanced character in the formulas worked out and would not infringe upon the interests of mutual security. This approach is based on the conviction that the balance of security must be sought along a declining line of the armaments spiral, since, in the past 35 years, the movement upwards has brought a five-fold increase in armaments spendings. However, no one would venture to give an affirmative answer to this simple question: is the world today five times more secure?

The Government of the Polish People's Republic, mindful of the historical experiences of its own nation and faithful to its alliances, invariably spares no effort in order that the process of détente, begun in the late 1960s and early 1970s, should be developed and strengthened by accompanying indispensable disarmament efforts.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

Such a position has been held by my country not only in those times when dangerous clouds were gathering over the world but also and, perhaps, particularly in the times when we were witnessing equally dangerous local storms. Just such particular times make it imperative to intensify the search for a lowering of the levels of military means of confrontation. In this context, the signals of a new phase in the arms race must cause concern in Poland. The well-known decision of the Council of NATO on the deployment of medium-range rockets in western Europe, as well as the recent news on the neutron bomb and binary weapons constitute such signals. And again, as in the past, it is being argued that a resumption of the issue of the deployment of the neutron bomb and proceeding to the production of binary weapons would restore the shaken strategic balance. Of course, one feels inclined to ask: what are the new elements or facts which have arisen since mid-1979 when, with the signing of the SALT II agreement, the existence of a strategic balance of forces was explicitly confirmed. After all, it cannot be assumed that the endorsement of such a balance was based at that time on miscalculation or with a view to deceive one's own nation as well as its partners.

My country is vitally interested in putting an end to the search for any excuses which could serve to justify the speeding up of the arms race. We are interested in abandoning the philosophy of seeking a balance of forces and in favour of the philosophy of the balance of reason. Guided by such a sense of reason, Poland has put forward at the Madrid follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, on behalf of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty, a proposal to convene in Warsaw a conference on military détente and disarmament in Europe of all States participating in the Madrid meeting. Realizing the fact that there are different approaches towards such a conference, we earnestly hope, however, that the idea of convening it will be accepted by all participants in the Madrid meeting. We see this conference as, first of all, a decisive step towards strengthening confidence-building measures in Europe, the continent which has the greatest accumulation of all possible dangerous weapons. To host such a conference would be an honour to my country, whose peaceful initiatives have been markedly reflected in the post-war political realities of Europe. In line with the aforementioned conference goes the invariable interest of Poland in a prompt and meaningful breakthrough in the talks on the mutual reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe which are taking place in Vienna.

As a representative of a State Party to the Warsaw Treaty, I should also like to mention the initiatives of this defensive organization, recapitulated during its jubilee session in Warsaw in May 1980. The decisions taken at this session, contained in the document of the Committee CD/98, clearly call for the acceleration of progress in disarmament negotiations. This appeal was repeated at the meeting of leaders of States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty last December.

I wish to express the firm conviction of my delegation that we shall, this year, find enough will, determination and perseverance to make, in this Committee, more significant progress than we have done in past years. This conviction is based on the following premises:

1. We have accumulated enough experience in the conditions of the enlarged Committee's membership;
2. We have achieved concrete results in its work, such as:
 - (a) An outline of negotiating positions, i.e. an awareness of convergent and divergent positions;

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

(b) A selection of issues and their outlines from their starting points to their solutions;

(c) Agreed organizational platforms, methods and forms of negotiations;

3. Within the Committee there is a prevailing tendency towards maintaining and strengthening its function as a negotiating body, endowed with a business-like atmosphere and a will to avoid any superfluous formalism and unnecessary political controversies.

The working paper CD/141 introduced by Ambassador Herder, the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic, on behalf of a group of socialist States reflects also the views of my delegation on the organizational aspects of the work of our Committee. There is no need to repeat them now. I would like to confine myself to expressing my delegation's deep satisfaction and, at the same time, congratulations to you as our Chairman on the consensus achieved on the re-establishment of four working groups. There should be no difficulties, I think, for these groups to start their substantive work without further delay.

It would respond adequately to the appeal of the United Nations General Assembly, contained in resolution 35/152 E addressed to States members of the Committee on Disarmament "to intensify their efforts to bring to a successful end the negotiations which are currently taking place in the Committee on Disarmament". Another element of optimism would be a decision that, for the time being, the ad hoc working groups could continue their work on the basis of last year's mandates which might later be amended or changed if the Committee so decides.

The general goal and point of departure in the work of the ad hoc groups should be: to continue and advance and perhaps even finalize what is ready for solution on the basis of what has already been done.

With your permission I should now like to say a few words about the tasks of the specific working groups as we see them.

First, the Working Group on the prohibition of chemical weapons. My delegation looks forward to participating and to contributing actively and constructively to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons. The group should-- without undue delay-- continue and advance the work undertaken in 1980. In our view, it could in particular take up the issues which were not discussed last year owing to lack of time, or it could elaborate in a more detailed manner the questions on which a general convergence of views has already appeared.

Let us not forget that parallel to our work in the Committee on the prohibition of chemical weapons there are also the bilateral talks on that subject. We consider them very important for the process of multilateral negotiations, especially as their results have been very hopeful. I can only wish and hope that they be resumed very soon and that their results will enhance our work.

It is my strong personal conviction that there are already sufficient premises for a tangible progress in the process of working out the draft of an agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons. What we really need is a political will and the political decisions of Governments to have such an agreement.

(Mr. Sujka (Poland))

I now come to the question of the prohibition of radiological weapons. The Polish delegation believes that the Ad Hoc Working Group on this subject should immediately proceed with the negotiations. This group has at its disposal the jointly agreed proposal which is a good basis for the drafting of a convention. We see no major difficulties in reconciling different approaches which appeared in the process of negotiations. Allow me to express my hope that this will be feasible in 1981 as the Group will have more time for negotiations than it had last year.

Another Ad Hoc Working Group which should, in our view, finalize its work this year is the Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. My delegation shares the opinion that there is no doubt as to the validity of the Group's mandate. It has been set up with the specific and concrete task of elaborating a comprehensive programme of disarmament which will be presented, in due course, to the General Assembly at its second special session on disarmament, to be held in 1982. This adds an element of importance and urgency to its work, since such a programme will have to be fully drafted well in advance of the special session. My delegation is convinced that the Group will make an effective and constructive contribution to the success of the second special session. The comprehensive programme of disarmament which we are striving for will not be really comprehensive if it does not include a certain psychological infrastructure of disarmament. It should, in the view of my Government, provide for such measures as would arm public opinion with the conviction that to live in peace one has first to start to disarm.

As far as effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons are concerned, the Polish delegation, while repeating that the Working Group's aim is the elaboration of an international convention, believes that in order to bring the issue closer to its solution, the Working Group could consider some kind of interim arrangement. In such an arrangement we would like to see an agreed common formula of assurances instead of five unilateral statements.

I should now like to turn to the items of our agenda on which no subsidiary bodies were established but which have always been accorded a very high priority in our considerations.

One such item is a comprehensive nuclear-weapon test-ban. In the view of the Polish delegation we can no longer delay the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this subject. In fact, we are of the opinion that such a working group should be established immediately. The ad hoc working group on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon test-ban, with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States, should take into account the results of the trilateral negotiations on the subject and all other proposals and future initiatives. It could define the issues to be dealt with in the negotiations on an agreement on this subject and start negotiations on the shape of this agreement.

Another high-priority item on our agenda is the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. The high priority my country attaches to early progress in this area was shown by the proposals Poland and other socialist countries put forward in 1979 (contained in document CD/4) for the start of negotiations on ending the production of all types of nuclear weapons and gradually reducing their stockpiles until they have been completely destroyed. We firmly believe that this issue and other issues relevant to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament deserve to be negotiated within an ad hoc working group which should be established. This working group could begin its proceedings with the examination of the question of the elaboration and clarification of the stages of nuclear disarmament as envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, including the role and responsibilities of both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in the process of nuclear disarmament.

(Mr. Sujka (Poland))

While I am on the subject of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, I would like to mention another topic which has found its place on our agenda this year and which deserves a closer scrutiny. I have in mind the question of elaborating an international agreement on the non-stationing of nuclear weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present. The Polish delegation is convinced that such an agreement could contribute to the limitation of the nuclear arms race and to the progress of détente, and thus would constitute an important step towards the limitation of armaments. In our opinion such an agreement could best be elaborated by the ad hoc working group, which could start its work in the near future.

Last but not least is the question of banning new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons. The Polish delegation lends its support to the proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc working group of experts on this subject. The main task of such a group, which would be working under the auspices of the Committee on Disarmament, would be the elaboration of an expert report on all the consequences of developments in the field of potentially dangerous research work which might in effect bring about new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. This group could also give us indications as to the particular types of weapons of mass destruction that should be subject to a ban.

It is worth remembering that the 1981 session of the Committee on Disarmament is the last full session we have before the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. It is also worth remembering that we have certain obligations which we are required to meet before that session. If we want seriously to meet them and to achieve tangible results in at least one or two particular areas of disarmament before the special session, we will have to achieve them within the next few months.

The good and constructive atmosphere in which we started our work this year as well as the concrete decisions already taken by the Committee under your Chairmanship fill us with optimism, and augur well for the results of this session. On behalf of the Polish delegation I would like to declare our full co-operation with you, Mr. Chairman, and with your successors in the Chair in the effort to attain our common goal.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Poland for his statement and I should also like to thank him warmly for his kind words both about myself and about my country.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, last Tuesday in this Committee, venturing upon a comparison with Monsieur de Callières, I said what I felt on the subject of your chairmanship. I think it might be somewhat unsuitable if, as the representative of Belgium, a neighbour country whose relations with France are so profound, so sustained and so friendly, I were to expatiate upon the satisfaction I feel at seeing you preside over our work. I would rather note the satisfaction expressed by everyone in the Committee at the way in which you are directing our discussions; I believe first, that, this illustrates your country's policy and the excellent relations that France maintains with all States and, secondly, that it also represents a recognition of your eminent qualities. In this connection, I should like to echo the words used by the Ambassador of Brazil in the speech he has just made. He spoke of your "gentle firmness", and I find that this is a most obvious description of the representative of a country once celebrated in song as "gentle France".

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

You will remain in our minds as the man who, within the space of a fortnight, succeeded in solving the bulk of the difficult organizational problems with which our Committee was faced. Thanks to your diplomacy and skill, you have done it while preserving an exceptionally friendly atmosphere within our Committee.

In welcoming that friendly atmosphere, I should also like to say how glad we are to see Ambassador Jaipal, Mr. Berasategui and their whole team with us again. They are, I feel, trusty counsellors and enlightened guides both for the Chair and for each delegation. It is very often thanks to them that we can make our way through procedural tangles and solve problems in the organization of our work.

Lastly, I should like to welcome among us our new colleagues from Argentina, Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire. I believe that, through the contacts they have already established with us in the past few days, they have shown that they were adapting themselves perfectly to the atmosphere of our Committee, and I feel that this bodes well for our continued co-operation with them.

At the outset of this third year of activities of the Committee on Disarmament with its present structure and membership, I should like to draw attention to the risks that are increasingly confronting the effort to secure arms control and disarmament -- an effort in which an essential responsibility has been laid upon our Committee.

These risks arise, first, from the alarming state of international security. For a year now, the vast majority of the members of the international community have repeatedly voiced their concern over the deterioration of the conditions of security in the world. The continuation of actions involving force in various part of the world hardly encourages us to amend that view. A year ago, I told the Committee that "it would ... be a grave error of political judgement to speak today in ... the Committee on Disarmament without expressing the deep concern felt by our peoples and leaders over what has been taking place in Afghanistan since late December 1979". The situation has remained unchanged since then, and today we feel more than ever that only moderation in the behaviour of States could restore a better political climate, which alone would be conducive to further progress in disarmament negotiations.

But the stagnation which marked, in particular, the second half of the last decade may perhaps also be explained by factors more intrinsic than the political climate to which I have just referred. The approaches we have envisaged, our working methods and the ways and means we have devised also deserve close scrutiny. It would no doubt be mistaken to place the responsibility for the meagreness of the results achieved in the last few years exclusively upon political factors extrinsic to arms control. It is up to us, as well as to other competent bodies, to identify with the greatest possible rigour all the reasons for the situation.

Three years after the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament we are forced to admit that although the Final Document which resulted from the session has lost none of its validity, the hopes it raised have not been fulfilled. The second special session planned for next year should give fresh impetus to the efforts of all States, and especially those represented on this Committee.

Possibilities do exist, even under present political circumstances. Thus, my country welcomed the opening last year of preparatory talks between the United States and the USSR, as part of the SALT process -- to whose continuation Belgium attaches the greatest importance -- concerning the limitation of certain specific systems of theatre nuclear weapons. My country's authorities look forward to the most rapid possible development of these talks.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

Similarly, the conclusion of a Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons also demonstrated the possibility of achieving concrete results notwithstanding the present disappointing international climate.

Some results were also achieved at the last session of the General Assembly, such as the adoption by consensus of resolution 35/156 D concerning the Study on all the aspects of regional disarmament. Belgium will do its best to ensure the follow-up of this Study so that it may, in the words of the resolution, "encourage Governments to take initiatives and to consult within the different regions with a view to agreeing upon appropriate measures of regional disarmament". Belgium hopes that other States will inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations of their views regarding the study and its conclusions. In this connection I should add that Belgium is happy to note the importance attached in Europe to the regional approach and is taking an active part in the Vienna talks for mutual balanced forces reductions, where the western countries have, in particular, proposed the conclusion of an interim first-stage agreement on reductions in Soviet and United States forces and, at the same time, have submitted a set of associated measures aimed at strengthening confidence among the participating States. Belgium is also represented in Madrid, at the second conference for the review of the Final Act of Helsinki, to which it would like to impart renewed momentum, especially as regards the military aspects of security, by supporting the French proposal for a conference on disarmament in Europe.

In these areas relating to the regional approach, as in other, Belgium greatly looks forward to the contribution to disarmament work that will be made by the activities of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, whose recent establishment we warmly welcome.

So far as the Committee on Disarmament itself is concerned, it should endeavour, within the framework of its programme of work, to function effectively wherever it is able to make a useful contribution. To be able to do this, it is essential that it should avoid paralysing procedural disputes and get on as quickly as possible to the substance of the items on its agenda. We welcome the fact that under your wide, skilful and adroit chairmanship the Committee should have made such a good start as regards organizational matters.

The working instruments the Committee on Disarmament fashioned at its last session offer considerable advantages which should not be wasted in 1981. No time should be lost in putting these instruments into use once more. For this reason, Belgium suggests that the four working groups set up with regard to certain important items on the agenda -- chemical weapons, the comprehensive programme of disarmament, radiological weapons and security assurances -- should rapidly resume their activities in accordance with the negotiating role of our Committee. This role should be preserved at all costs, for there are, we believe, enough other forums within the United Nations framework where more theoretical problems connected with disarmament can be debated.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

My country has on a number of occasions made the point that the working groups method has proved perfectly compatible with efforts being pursued in separate negotiations. It should be possible to reconcile the desire to see those negotiations succeed -- both in the field of chemical weapons and in the immensely important one of the complete prohibition of nuclear tests -- with the legitimate concern of the Committee on Disarmament to deal in substance with the well-defined items on its agenda.

I should like to speak here of those which seem to me to be the most important among them, bearing in mind the limited time set aside for our work.

The question of a nuclear test ban will undoubtedly arouse special interest during this session of the Committee. First, the three States engaged in negotiations on this question presented at the end of the 1980 session of the Committee a report which was more substantial than that for 1979 and which will not fail to provide material for discussion. Secondly, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons demonstrated that this key instrument of arms control should be seen merely as the point of departure of a policy and that it ought to be followed by other, more ambitious, precise and specific decisions on security and disarmament. The conclusion of a nuclear test ban treaty should be one of those decisions.

In this context, and without prejudging the manner in which we shall decide to tackle this question as a whole, Belgium would like, for its part, to dwell on the problem of the detection and identification of seismic events, to which the tripartite report itself attaches great importance.

Two topics could be submitted for our attention:

First, that of the means of ensuring a judicious geographical distribution of stations participating in the network for the detection and identification of seismic events, more particularly in the light of considerations expressed at the informal meeting of the Committee on Disarmament on 13 July 1980 with the participation of experts from the Ad Hoc Group concerned with the detection and identification of seismic events;

Secondly, that of the consideration of the new mandate which could be given to the Group of Experts after 1981. That mandate might be more directly connected with the various problems of seismic data exchange which our Committee may discuss, particularly in relation to consideration set forth in the tripartite report and more specifically in connection with the setting up of a committee of experts to examine questions relating to international seismic data exchange.

Belgium has never ceased to show interest in the negotiations aimed at the prohibition of chemical weapons. Whereas, during its work in 1980, the Committee on Disarmament focused its attention principally on problems relating to the drafting of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

stockpiling of chemical weapons and their destruction, it would seem logical and timely if it were now to endeavour to supplement and, above all, to harmonize the various viewpoints expressed. My country will spare no effort to try to contribute to this process the aim of which is to reinforce the work begun by the Geneva Protocol more than a quarter of a century ago.

In the matter of radiological weapons, the path mapped out for us by the Committee's work in 1980 is clearer. Rapid agreement should be possible on the conclusion of a treaty, for the prohibition of such weapons, provided that, bearing in mind the security constraints to which our States are subject, we agree on a realistic definition of the weapon we want to prohibit. Such a definition, however limited it might be in its implications for the strategic relationships of the moment, should in no way prejudice the efforts yet to be made. It would in any case constitute the first prohibition in a field in which all States could undertake to pursue negotiations with a view to achieving further significant results.

The elaboration of a comprehensive disarmament programme should be continued without delay in such a way that it will be possible to submit it to the General Assembly at its second special session on disarmament. The value of this programme will not be derived from the constraints, whether chronological or legal. We have never thought that conditions of a coercive nature or strict negotiating deadlines could be imposed on negotiators from the outside. The programme's value will lie in the consensus achieved with regard to the elaboration of a series of measures the implementation of which should be stimulated by the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Lastly, the question of the security assurances to be given by the nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear States has already been discussed so much that an imaginative effort would now seem to be called for. Belgium has already suggested the following two possible ways in which progress in this direction might be achieved, bearing in mind the difficulty of finding a universal common denominator in the unilateral declarations which have been made to date by the nuclear-weapon Powers:

The first suggestion, one of form, was that these assurances should be approved by the Security Council -- an idea recently echoed, with various qualifications, by certain delegations in the Committee;

The second suggestion, one relating to substance, was that an effort should be made to find a safeguard formula which would provide the maximum assurance for those States which have chosen the path of non-alignment.

The Committee on Disarmament will be best able to do its job successfully if it discusses proposals that are credible and well-defined. It is essentially in this pragmatic and, we hope, constructive spirit that Belgium proposes to work in the Committee in 1981.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Onkelinx for his statement and I should like to convey to him my warm gratitude for his very kind remarks about myself and my country -- I was very touched by them.

Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Allow me first to repeat in the name of my delegation our congratulations to you on your assumption of the Chair of the Committee on Disarmament at the beginning of our work this year. We are convinced that under your skilled guidance, this body will begin to focus its attention on its principal task, that of achieving effective measures of disarmament.

I wish to assure you that in this aim you can count on the full co-operation of my delegation.

We wish also to extend our congratulations to the representative of our sister nation Ethiopia, the outgoing Chairman. At the same time, we should like to welcome to the Committee the new representatives of Pakistan, Romania, Zaire and Egypt and we look forward to co-operating with them in carrying out the tasks laid upon our Committee.

The year which has just ended was characterized by a marked tendency towards an increase in international tensions and an aggravation of the arms race. There is proof of this in the decision of some countries permanently to increase their military budgets up to the end of the present century and embark on the manufacture of sophisticated weapons of mass extermination.

These steps still further increase the gravity of the present international atmosphere already rendered precarious by the decision to deploy 572 medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe and by the escalation of armaments in the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East.

In addition to these facts, moreover, there are the new ideas that now exist about the possibility of a limited nuclear war, increasing further the risk of a nuclear catastrophe, and the indefinite postponement of the ratification of the SALT II agreement, with the evident intent of making this important treaty a dead letter.

This gives the measure of the importance of the work of the Committee on Disarmament in 1981. As you are aware, the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament is to be held next year, and we consider it incumbent upon the Committee, therefore, to achieve concrete results to justify its work, in accordance with the mandate given it by the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament.

A review of our work shows that the establishment of working groups for the tasks assigned to the Committee is the appropriate way of negotiating in this body, in an atmosphere of understanding which can contribute to the achievement of our objectives. Let me therefore express our congratulations and pleasure to the chairmen of the four groups that have been meeting up to the present, with the hope that the groups will be re-established without delay and will immediately embark on their substantive work.

It is the intention of my delegation to bend its efforts to ensuring that the Committee on Disarmament is not held back this year by sterile debates over procedural questions or matters that have nothing to do with our work, on which we have in the past spent too much time. We must establish the practice of embarking promptly on concrete work and fruitful negotiations which will bring tangible results.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

The Cuban delegation feels obliged to endeavour to persuade the Committee on Disarmament to focus its work on the priorities established by the United Nations General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament, those same priorities which this negotiating body has set itself.

Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to establish working groups on such important subjects as a comprehensive nuclear test ban, nuclear disarmament and new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. We cherish the hope that for these items also, which are so vital to the cause of disarmament, the Committee will quickly decide to establish the appropriate working groups.

As the arms race intensifies, as the threat to human survival increases, so the demand of peoples for peace increases and with it the need for the Committee on Disarmament to achieve concrete results in its negotiations. My country observes with concern the spiralling of military expenditures the world over making it ever more difficult for the underdeveloped countries to escape from the situation of poverty and disaster which has been their lot for centuries.

In this connection, Fidel Castro, the President of Cuba, recently said:

'The underdeveloped world would go on as before, only still more underdeveloped; imperialism would go on as before, only even more wealthy; and mankind would go on as before, only with a thousand million people more than now living in the most absolute poverty'.

To the present world situation, so precarious in itself with all its centres of crisis and tension, with the increase of armaments in the most diverse regions, is added the appearance of governments announcing ultra-reactionary programmes which, far from promoting ways to secure a relaxation of tension or seeking acceptable solutions, encourage warlike, interventionist and hard-line policies.

My country is an integral part of the group of States threatened by aggression and injustice; consequently, while we are resolved to play our part in the defence of peace and international détente, at the same time we are strengthening our defences with a view to protecting our independence and sovereignty and the legitimate interests of our people.

The foreign policy of Cuba which has just been ratified is based on the principles of preserving peace and international security and striving for disarmament and the halting of the arms race.

Cuba will continue to pursue this policy in all the international forums and in particular in this multilateral negotiating body. The Committee on Disarmament offers the opportunity to demonstrate fully the true intentions of every country as regards the struggle for disarmament and peace.

As early as during the first year of work of this body, as restructured, the Group of 21 gave ample proof of their readiness to collaborate actively in the achievement of concrete results. Similarly, the socialist countries submitted various working papers reflecting their desire to achieve disarmament measures without delay.

(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

It is precisely those groups of States which have most urgently requested the establishment of various working groups in order to enter fully into negotiations, in accordance with the desire of peace-loving countries and peoples, which are struggling tenaciously for the cessation of the arms race, for the removal of the threat of war, for the strengthening of international détente and for the economic and social well-being of the peoples.

These are the general comments that my country wishes to make, while reserving the right to express our views and opinions on particular items in greater detail in the working groups and at future meetings.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Cuba for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. PROKOPIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, the Soviet delegation came to this session of the Committee with the firm intention of making a constructive contribution to its work and of helping to create a business-like atmosphere in it. However, the fact that the Committee on Disarmament has begun its work this year in a constructive manner, on a business-like note, has apparently not been to everybody's taste. The Soviet delegation notes with regret that at today's meeting there has been an attempt on the part of the Chinese delegation once again to divert the Committee's attention from the important tasks before it and to poison the atmosphere in the Committee on Disarmament. There has been a repetition of hackneyed, slanderous and groundless assertions which have nothing whatever to do with the work of the Committee. The Soviet delegation reserves its right to revert to this question when it considers that necessary.

Mr. DABIRI (Iran) (translated from French): In the statement made a few minutes ago, the distinguished and honourable Ambassador of Cuba used an erroneous terminology in referring to the stretch of water which separates the Iranian plateau from the Arabian peninsula. As you all know, that stretch of water has been known under the name of the Persian Gulf since time immemorial. The expression Persian Gulf has always been used in all encyclopaedias and all atlases, as well as by all societies and men of culture. That term has also always been used by United Nations bodies and by all other agencies within the United Nations system. I feel sure that the honourable Ambassador of Cuba used the term he did in speaking of the Persian Gulf by oversight; all the same, my delegation wishes to make this declaration so that it may be included in the record.

Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, if in my statement I made an error of geographical terminology, I wish to apologize to the representative of Iran. It is not our intention to embark upon any contentious subject this year in the Committee on Disarmament but to work fundamentally towards the development of the task entrusted to us by the General Assembly at its first special session devoted to disarmament. If I made a mistake, therefore, I would ask the representative of Iran to accept my formal apology.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement. If no one else wishes to speak, I would suggest that we take up Working Paper No. 28, which we discussed at yesterday's informal meeting, and I should like to know if I may take it that there is a consensus in the Committee regarding the content of this document with respect to the Committee's ad hoc working groups for 1981.

Mr. GARCÍA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): With reference to the third paragraph, I should like to ask a question which is on a point of English. According to what you told us yesterday, it would be for Ambassador Summerhayes, the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, to answer it. I will indicate in advance that my delegation will accept the reply, whatever it is.

The question is the following: the first three lines of this third paragraph read: "It is understood that the Committee will, as soon as possible, review the mandates of the three ad hoc working groups with a view to adapting, as appropriate, their mandates to advance ..." and so on and so forth. My question is whether we could not delete the second 'their mandates' and replace it by the pronoun 'them', which would follow 'adapting'. The text would then read as follows: 'It is understood that the Committee will, as soon as possible, review the mandates of the three ad hoc working groups with a view to adapting them, as appropriate, to advance ...', etc. etc.

I repeat that whatever the answer may be I will accept it as valid and of course I am merely asking a question.

With regard to the Spanish text, I have a few very modest suggestions for the fourth paragraph which are intended solely to bring it exactly into line with the English text, which is the original. Thus the Spanish text, in our view, should read: 'Queda entendido también que la decisión adoptada por el Comité no excluye de ningún modo la consideración con carácter urgente ...,' etc. etc. The words, 'la posibilidad de proceder a' should be deleted because they do not appear in the English text.

Then, in the fourth line, the Spanish text at present reads, '... de la agenda del Comité, y a la consideración ...,' etc. etc. In view of the change that needs to be made in the second line, I would suggest that this should be amended to read '... la agenda del Comité, ni tampoco la consideración ...,' etc.

Mr. SUMMERHAYES (United Kingdom): I will do my very best to answer the question, although I do not feel myself to be the only master of the English language in this gathering.

My comment would be that although the amendments suggested by Ambassador García Robles might perhaps be slightly more elegant grammatically, the existing wording is probably more explicit and makes itself quite clear.

Therefore, I think that the only gain to be made would be in a slight improvement in the elegance of the sentence; as I see it, the existing sentence is very clear in its meaning.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): My feeling would be that we could perhaps leave the text as it is, because this in no way affects the substance. I see that the French text does not repeat the reference to the mandates of the working groups, and speaks of adapting them according to need. It can be deduced from the context that this means adapting the mandates and not the working groups. I realize, in fact, that the English text, as Ambassador Summerhayes said, is more explicit. I wonder if it is really necessary to amend the text since its meaning is perfectly clear, although I appreciate that Ambassador García Robles's concern for elegance is entirely justified.

Could we, then, accept the text as it stands with the small variations in the different languages which do not, I think, affect the basic identity of meaning?

It was so decided.

Mr. FLOWERREE (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I apologize for taking the floor at this late hour. Had we had more time, I would have added my voice more fully to those who have congratulated you on the manner in which you have conducted this session and to welcome our new members. My purpose in intervening at this point is simply to put on record a statement which I made at the informal meeting at the beginning of this week.

As is well known, the new administration which was installed in Washington just three weeks ago is engaged in a detailed review of important policy questions, including those that relate to the work of this Committee.

My Government is conscious, however, of the desire of the Committee to begin its substantive work as soon as possible, and therefore my delegation has been authorized to join in a consensus on the re-establishment, under their former mandates, of those working groups on which there was agreement last year.

In this connection, I wish to note that, since the subject-matter to be treated by these working groups is under review by the new United States Administration, the nature of the participation of the United States delegation will be guided by the pace and outcome of that review.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank Ambassador Flowerree for his statement. Before adjourning the meeting I should like to suggest to the Committee that we hold a plenary meeting tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. so that the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events can present the Group's report to the Committee. We can also, if necessary, take up other subjects. I am thinking in particular that we could perhaps take a decision on the appointment of the Chairmen of the working groups we have just set up, and it goes without saying that if we are in a position to take such a decision, it might perhaps be a good idea to interrupt the plenary meeting for a few minutes to make sure among ourselves that we really are in agreement on the persons to be appointed, and we can then resume our plenary meeting in order formally to record the agreement we have reached on that subject. If there are no other observations, I shall adjourn this meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.