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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 February 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

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

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. M. HATI
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. F. JIMENEZ DAVILA Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. R.A. WALKER Mr. R. STEELE Mr. T. FINDLAY
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. A. ONKELINK
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. P. VOUTOV Mr. I. SOTIROV Mr. R. DEYANOV Mr. K. PRAMOV
<u>Burma:</u>	U NGWE WIN U THAN HTUN
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. G. SKINNER Mr. D. THACKER Mr. C. CACCIA
<u>China:</u>	Mr. LIANG Yufan Mr. PAN Jusheng Mr. SA Benwang
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mrs. V. BOROWDOSKY JACKIEWICH
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. P. LUKES Mr. A. CIMA Mr. L. STAVINOH
<u>Egypt:</u>	Mr. I.A. HASSAN Mr. H.N. FAHMY Miss N. BASSIM

Ethiopia:

Mr. T. TEREFÉ
Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. J. DE BLAUSSE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER
Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. H. KAULFUSS
Mr. P. BUNTIG

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFLEIFFER
Mr. N. KLINGLER
Mr. H. MÜLLER
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary:

Mr. I. KÖNIGES
Mr. C. GYORFFY

India:

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

Indonesia:

Mr. E. SOEPRAPTO
Mr. HARYONATARAH
Mr. F. QASIM
Mr. KARYONO

Iran:

Mr. H. DABIRI
Mr. D. AMERI

Italy:

Mr. A. CIARRAPICO
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan:

Mr. Y. OKAWA
Mr. M. TAKAHASHI
Mr. R. ISHII
Mr. K. SHINADA

<u>Kenya:</u>	Mr. S. SHITEMI Mr. G. MUNIU
<u>Mexico:</u>	Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES Mr. H.A. CACERES
<u>Mongolia:</u>	Mr. S.H. LKHASHID
<u>Morocco:</u>	Mr. H. CHRAIBI
<u>Netherlands:</u>	Mr. R.H. FEIN
<u>Nigeria:</u>	Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI
<u>Pakistan:</u>	Mr. T. ALTAF
<u>Peru:</u>	Mr. F. VALDIVIESO
<u>Poland:</u>	Mr. B. SUJKA
<u>Romania:</u>	Mr. T. MELESCANU
<u>Sri Lanka:</u>	Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA
<u>Sweden:</u>	Mr. C. LIDGARD Mr. S. STROMBACH Mr. J. LUNDIN Mr. J. PRAWITZ
<u>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:</u>	Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV Mr. L.A. NAUMOV Mr. V.A. PERFILIEV Mr. L.S. MOSHKOV Mr. V.M. GANJA Mr. A.G. DOULYAN Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO Mr. S.N. RIUKHINE

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES
Mr. N.H. MARSHALL
Mr. B. NOBLE
Mrs. J.I. LINK
Mr. E. YEO

United States of America:

Mr. C.C. FLOWERREE
Ms. K. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. J.A. MISKEL
Mr. H. WILSON
Mr. S. FITZGERALD
Mr. F. DE SIMONE
Mr. L. FLEISCHER

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT
Mr. O.A. AGUILAR
Miss G. DA SILVA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. H. VRHUNEC
Mr. B. BRANKOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. LONGO B. NDAGA
Mr. O. GNOK

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the Committee:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

Mr. VRHUNEC (Yugoslavia): Mr. Chairman, it is not necessary to enter into a detailed analysis of the general debate conducted in the Committee, in order to arrive at the conclusion that the comprehensive nuclear test ban is one of the key issues of disarmament, nuclear in particular. In their remarks, all the delegations present here have invariably expressed an unequivocal desire and demand for the halting of the nuclear arms race and the cessation of further tests aimed at achieving a greater sophistication of these weapons.

What is it that should be done right away in order to move this problem, which is of primary importance for the halting of the nuclear arms race, from its deadlock and to achieve concrete positive results as soon as possible? The first and most important step is an urgent opening by the Committee on Disarmament of concrete negotiations for the reaching of a corresponding agreement on the ban. This item has been on the Committee's agenda for quite a while now but without any particular results, despite the fact that it is one of the first tasks for all of us present here, and not only for us but the entire international community. United Nations General Assembly resolutions clearly indicate this and there is much reason for discussing this in the Committee where corresponding proposals do exist.

We are witnessing the negotiations under way between the United States of America, the USSR and the United Kingdom and from time to time also have the possibility of obtaining reports on the development of their negotiations. What we have heard so far may sound encouraging but does not mean too much in practical terms. No progress has been made and the reconciliation of the positions of the three nuclear-weapon Powers is extremely slow. In our opinion the tripartite negotiations should not be an obstacle for parallel work both here and there with regard to an international convention on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. These are two complementary actions which must take place simultaneously and for which the only important thing is that they are both conducted towards a successful solution. It is our assessment that the standstill in the negotiations and the unresolved problems between the nuclear-weapon Powers primarily rest with the problem of verification. However, in several reports of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Seismic Events it is clearly indicated that verification problems can be overcome successfully if there is a desire to do so. That is why we think that we should embark upon the road of a more comprehensive consideration of the nuclear test ban, for which the Committee, apart from the trilateral negotiations, is both competent and responsible. Full use should be made of the fact that we are prepared, as members of the Committee, to give our full contribution to the settlement of this issue. According to our statements, we all aim to achieve the same goal and this is the halting of the nuclear arms race. We should, therefore, all give an adequate contribution to this end.

The Yugoslav delegation considers as fundamental the question of a corresponding political will to arrive as soon as possible and comprehensively at a consensus regarding the adoption of an international agreement on a nuclear test ban. If such political will is not shown immediately, in both options of the negotiations, one can rightfully cast doubt upon statements to that effect or remarks of the nuclear-weapon Powers in which these countries expressed the will to endeavour for the cessation of the nuclear arms race. The expressed desire does not mean much by itself if it is not really implemented and if it is not accompanied by adequate behaviour that will assure all of us that there is readiness for the undertaking of corresponding action.

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

On the basis of what I have already said, my delegation most resolutely strives for an urgent initiation of negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear test ban within the framework of the Committee now, at this spring session. We propose that the Committee consider the possibility of introducing, in the meantime, while negotiations are under way, a moratorium on all nuclear-weapon tests. In view of this, we consider that there is a most urgent need for the creation of a working group within the Committee aimed at opening negotiations on the international instrument that would prohibit all nuclear-weapon tests, in all environments and unconditionally, which, in fact, was a proposal tabled by the Group of 21 non-aligned and neutral countries both last year as well as this year.

Mr. SUMMERHAYES (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, it is a very sincere pleasure for me to add my voice to those which have greeted your assumption of the Chair of the Committee. Your chairmanship sets the seal on the most welcome participation of France in the work of this Committee following the decision taken at the time of the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament. Your country's contribution to our work has indeed been of growing significance and importance. May I assure you personally of the continued support of myself and my delegation in fulfilling your present role.

I should also like to express to Ambassador Terrefe of Ethiopia my delegation's appreciation for his stalwart work last summer, when he chaired the Committee through the difficult task of drawing up its annual report. And I join most warmly in the welcome already given by many colleagues to the distinguished Ambassadors of Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire. As a depositary of the treaty we were particularly glad to hear that our new Egyptian colleague has taken his place among us at a time when his country is completing the process of ratification of the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty.

Turning to the work of the Committee in our new session of 1981, it is very satisfactory to note that within two weeks of reassembling we have approved our agenda and our programme of work and have also reached agreement on the tasks for the Committee's immediate attention which will be taken up in our four existing working groups. I give due credit to you, Mr. Chairman, for this result and I would like to comment generally on some of the items of the business now before us.

In a statement which I made at the beginning of our 1980 session, I affirmed my Government's commitment to the search for balanced and verifiable measures of arms control. I will start today by reaffirming that commitment. As the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, said in a speech on United Nations Day, arms control is an integral part of Britain's national security policy. We pursue negotiations because we believe they can enhance our security. However, we do not favour high-sounding declarations which add little, if anything, to the commitments already included in the Charter of the United Nations. Nor do we favour the negotiation of agreements which would leave one side with an advantage over the other or which, through the absence of appropriate methods of verification, would lead to suspicion and uncertainty. In the coming year, therefore, my delegation will play a full and constructive part in the search for realistic and verifiable agreements which will enhance the security of all members of this Committee, and of the wider world community.

My Government also attaches great importance to the relationship between arms control and international security. Arms control cannot be isolated from its wider international context. Those who wish us to proceed as if our work here was in some sense autonomous are being disingenuous. For the fact is, and here I quote the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly's first special session devoted to disarmament, that:

(Mr. Summerhayes, United Kingdom)

"Disarmament, relaxation of international tension, respect for the right to self-determination and national independence, the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the strengthening of international peace and security are directly related to each other. Progress in any one of these spheres has a beneficial effect on all of them..."

We therefore firmly believe that prospects for arms control in the coming year will be closely related to progress towards restoring international confidence. We cannot escape this. We have seen the relationship demonstrated directly in the events of the past year. None of us can ignore the effects on international confidence of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the implications for the arms control process. Its shadow continues to fall on the work of this Committee. It is, alas, not the only such shadow. For us in Europe, ability to make progress in arms control will inevitably tend to reflect the state of East/West relations. We hope that all States will refrain from any action that could further damage those relations and inevitably undermine the prospects for arms control.

For many people the turn of world affairs in the last year has reawakened fears of war. There has been anxiety that the deterioration in East/West relations to which I have referred may have dragged us all a little closer to the nuclear abyss. Some of my distinguished colleagues have already at this session commented on the possibility of nuclear war breaking out by accident; others have expressed fears about a doctrine of limited nuclear war.

My Government shares the deep sense of horror at the devastating potential of nuclear weapons. But we are also all too conscious of the appalling loss of life that a conventional war can cause. It is precisely to prevent the outbreak in Europe of any war -- conventional or nuclear -- that the United Kingdom belongs to the NATO alliance and adheres to the alliance strategy of deterrence. My Government have considered all the issues very fully in the light of the particular threat -- both conventional and nuclear -- to our security and that of our allies. Our aim is to convince any adversary who might hope to advance a political objective by launching a conventional or nuclear attack against us that the risks would far outweigh any potential benefits. It is in order that we may be able to fulfil that broad aim that we maintain nuclear and conventional forces. I would stress that our aim is to prevent war by being seen to be able to defend ourselves. No one need fear that we would seek to impose our political objectives on another country through the use of these weapons. My country is a member of a purely defensive alliance. We fully realize that if nuclear exchanges began there would be an appalling risk of escalation into all-out nuclear war -- in which there would be no winners. It is, of course, inconceivable that anyone could win even a limited nuclear war. We need no convincing of this. It is the logic on which nuclear deterrence has always been based. The policy of deterrence has kept the peace in Europe for 35 years and it remains valid today.

Several of my distinguished colleagues have drawn attention in vivid terms to the dangers of accidental nuclear war. By way of comment on this I want to point out that any decision to use nuclear weapons would only be taken at the highest political level. Nuclear weapons would never be used automatically in response to an alarm from an early warning system on its own. Furthermore, there are agreements, including the use of "hot lines", between France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other specifically to prevent the outbreak of accidental nuclear war. We believe these agreements are an important factor in preventing possible misunderstandings and maintaining confidence.

(Mr. Summerhayes, United Kingdom)

I shall be returning again to these points in a later intervention and I shall then also comment in more detail on some of the issues raised by the statement of the distinguished representative of India on 3 February. I have mentioned them now because they form an important part of the background against which our discussions in this Committee are held. Nuclear weapons, whether we like it or not, are inextricably bound up with the security relationship between East and West. Those who advocate the alternative, a Europe free of nuclear weapons, must make an absolutely convincing case that their alternative would bring less uncertainty and greater stability and would enhance security in Europe. That has not been done; and when proposals for negotiations on sweeping measures of nuclear disarmament are advanced by a country which enjoys, with its allies, superiority in central Europe over the NATO alliance of 3:1 in tanks and artillery and some 150,000 in ground-force manpower it is right that we should be deeply sceptical. It should be no surprise that we in the western alliance should argue that nuclear arms control cannot be pursued without regard to the conventional imbalance in central Europe.

My Government believes that the only secure route to nuclear arms control lies through negotiations between the nuclear-weapon Powers, and in particular between the United States and the Soviet Union. This is why we attach great importance to a continuation of the SALT process. We welcome the recent statements of President Reagan in this respect. The relationship between the United States and Soviet Union is clearly central to our endeavours in the field of nuclear arms control. We recognize that there is bound to be a pause while the new United States Administration reviews its vital security interests. We must be realistic about this. This is nowhere more true than for the question of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban. My country has played a full and active part in these negotiations in the past. We continue to believe that a comprehensive test-ban is a worthwhile objective. We have maintained that the confidential tripartite negotiations are the best way forward on an issue which is vital to the security of the negotiating parties. It follows that we do not support the setting up of a working group in the CD at the present time.

I have spoken at some length on nuclear questions partly in response to other comments by distinguished colleagues. But we should not give undue prominence to nuclear weapons. After all, four-fifths of world military expenditure is on conventional arms and armed forces. I therefore want to conclude with some comment on the non-nuclear items on our agenda. Since these are to be the subject of our work in the ad hoc groups, I shall not go into details now and we shall make our main contribution in the groups themselves. Foremost among these items is that of chemical weapons. The United Kingdom neither possesses the means to conduct offensive chemical warfare at any level nor does it have plans to acquire such a capability. I wish to make this absolutely clear. Furthermore, my Government remains firmly committed to seeking a verifiable arms control agreement banning chemical weapons. We welcomed the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons during the last session of the Committee under the very able chairmanship of Ambassador Okawa of Japan, and we played an active part in its discussions. We are pleased that this Group has been re-established and held its first meeting of the new session yesterday.

My delegation will also play an active role in other areas of this Committee's work. We do not wish to overstate the importance of an agreement banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. But such an agreement would be a useful achievement. We intend to offer detailed comments on language in the texts which have been submitted. Likewise, we attach importance to the negotiations on a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Agreement on this subject in the Committee would be a valuable step in preparing for the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament. We intend to play a full part in the discussions on this question.

All in all, it seems to me that the agenda we have adopted provides us with plenty of useful work to undertake. We may find that the time available will be barely enough to complete all that we have to do.

Mr. VENKATESWARAN (India): Mr. Chairman, today we are considering the very first substantive item on our agenda, entitled, "Nuclear test ban". The views of my delegation on this subject are well known and accordingly I shall be brief in setting forth what we see as the role of the Committee in the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, during the current session.

We recognize that the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests would not in itself result in a reduction of the existing nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States. However, such a prohibition applicable to all States on a non-discriminatory basis would firstly result in some restraint on the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, and secondly, create a more conducive climate for the determined pursuit of the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We fully agree with the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil who, in his statement on 12 February 1981 stressed that a treaty prohibiting the further testing of nuclear weapons would be a meaningful step on the path of nuclear disarmament. We also agree with him that multilateral negotiations in this Committee on a comprehensive test ban treaty cannot be viewed as a hindrance to the ongoing negotiations among three nuclear-weapon Powers. As he rightly pointed out, and I quote, "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".

During our last plenary meeting held on Tuesday, 17 February, the distinguished Ambassador of Nigeria made some pertinent observations. Several delegations, including my own, welcomed the submission by the United States of America, the USSR and the United Kingdom of a joint report on the progress of their negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, submitted towards the end of the summer session of the Committee on Disarmament last year. During the preliminary discussion that was held, several important questions were put to the trilateral negotiators concerning certain aspects of their report. We fully agree with the Ambassador of Nigeria that these questions must find an adequate response from the delegations concerned. We would therefore join him in requesting the parties engaged in the trilateral negotiations to make available to this Committee, as soon as possible, a well-considered response, either jointly or separately, to the questions raised by several delegations including mine. Of particular relevance to my delegation would be a clear and forthright presentation and elaboration of the "important areas where substantial work is still to be done", referred to in the report of the trilateral negotiators.

It is our view that the negotiation of a treaty prohibiting nuclear-weapon testing is today essentially a political problem. Adequate technical means of verification already exist to ensure compliance with the provisions of the treaty. This has been stressed once again in the report on the subject by the United Nations Secretary-General which stated, inter alia: "Verification of compliance no longer seems to be an obstacle to reaching agreement". The risks involved in the possibility of surreptitious testing of nuclear warheads of less than 2 to 3 kilotonnes would be far outweighed by the increased security that would result for all States due to a qualitative restraint on the nuclear arms race and the increased sense of confidence and mutual trust that such a prohibition would bring about in relations among States. We must not forget that any further delay in the conclusion of such a treaty may well make our efforts in that direction irrelevant. As in other areas of weapons technology,

(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

the regrettably slow pace of disarmament negotiations is always in danger of being outstripped by the speed of technological change. One must reflect over the very real possibility that the verification system available to us today to enforce compliance with a prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing at the present level of technology may be the best we may ever get. Further advance in such technology may soon make satisfactory verification technically impossible, if we continue to drag our feet. We therefore appeal to the countries which continue to insist on a foolproof verification system, to display a sense of pragmatism and political wisdom in dealing with this issue of concern to all of us. If, however, the parties engaged in trilateral negotiations feel that there is inadequate appreciation of the problems involved in this respect, surely the blame must lie with them for not providing this Committee with adequate information in order to enable it to form a proper judgement.

During the 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament, the Group of 21 strongly urged the setting up without delay of an ad hoc working group to undertake multilateral negotiations on the complete cessation of nuclear weapons testing in all environments. We regret that it was not possible to achieve a consensus on this proposal last year. It is our earnest hope that those delegations which earlier expressed reservations about this proposal will heed the call of the international community and join the mainstream of opinion in this Committee in agreeing to the immediate setting up of such a working group during this present phase of the Committee's deliberations.

A suggestion has been made that such an ad hoc working group should begin its work with a limited mandate which would focus on the institutional and administrative steps necessary for establishing, testing and operating an international seismic monitoring network and effective verification system. My delegation cannot agree to such a limited and narrow approach, for the following reasons. Firstly, the verification system that would be adopted in relation to a comprehensive test-ban treaty cannot be predetermined. The nature of the verification system would depend upon the kind of treaty which we are able to negotiate in a multilateral context within this Committee. Secondly, the details of an international seismic monitoring network which would form part of the verification system of a future comprehensive test-ban treaty is already the subject of intensive discussion within the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts on Seismic Events set up under the aegis of this Committee. The Committee on Disarmament, on the other hand, is a political body, and must function and be seen to function as such, although it may be assisted in its work by technical experts. As in the case of our negotiations on chemical weapons or radiological weapons, we should get down to concrete work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, bringing in experts whenever we feel it necessary to advise us on various aspects or elements of the treaty, including those relating to verification.

In conclusion, I would once again reiterate a suggestion that has been made by my delegation several times in the past. We have recommended that pending the conclusion of a truly universal and comprehensive treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons testing, nuclear-weapon States should immediately agree to an indefinite moratorium on their nuclear weapons tests. Such a moratorium would help to convince the international community that nuclear-weapon States are indeed serious in their commitment to the eventual goal of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. DABIRI (Iran) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, allow me first of all to join my voice to the voices of all those speakers who have already congratulated you on your accession to the Chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament at the opening of the present session. Your competence and the exemplary way in which you are conducting our deliberations offer the best guarantees for the success of the work of the Committee.

I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Terrefe of Ethiopia who presided over the work of the Committee during a particularly difficult period and whose sense of responsibility enabled us to complete our work.

I should also like to welcome the presence at our meetings of the new heads of delegations whose participation will, we are sure, enrich our debates and facilitate our task.

Lastly, I cannot end this part of my statement without expressing our gratitude to Mr. Jaipal, Secretary of the Committee, and Mr. Berasategui, Deputy Secretary, and all the members of their team, for helping us to work in the best possible conditions.

(continuing in English)

At the very moment when the negotiations on disarmament are taking place in the Committee on Disarmament my country, as a victim of a blatant aggression, is engaged in a war which was initiated by the cruel and despotic regime of Iraq.

The Iraqi regime, using ridiculous pretexts, has abrogated unilaterally a valid treaty and committed an act of aggression against my country, violating the fundamental principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the spirit of non-alignment.

This devastating war imposed on us has destroyed parts of cities and many centres of economy as well as hospitals and schools. A great number of our compatriots have been victims of the savagery and the violation of basic principles of international humanitarian law practised daily by the Iraqi regime. The launching of a series of ground-to-ground missiles against the residential areas of cities is only one example of such inhuman practices. This cruel regime is today still continuing its inhuman deeds without mercy and pity.

It is therefore surprising that members of the international community who profess belief in justice and dignity have remained aloof and have not condemned the open aggression and savage and criminal acts of the Iraqi regime. Instead, many countries secretly and some, like France, openly, in flagrant violation of international moral principles, are pouring armaments and sophisticated war material into Iraq. These actions will certainly contribute to the realization of the evil intentions of this cruel regime in killing innocent people through continued aggression and occupation of our territories.

France, in order to assist the obvious aggressor more effectively, has not only provided the Iraqi regime with the most devastating arms in advance of the time, but has also refused to deliver Iranian patrol boats under different pretexts which they change according to circumstances. As a result of this policy the mortal capacity of the aggressor's army is being increased to the detriment of the Iranian nation, a victim of aggression, which is only fighting

(Mr. Dabiri, Iran)

to liberate its territories from foreign occupation and exercises its legitimate right of self-defence in accordance with article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Whatever the French pretexts might be, this hostile act of the French Government can by no means be justified because it permits an obvious aggressor to intensify its aggression. In this context we believe that the war cannot be won only by sophisticated arms and munitions such as French Mirages and Soviet T-55 tanks but by the faith and morale of the nation. An army that does not draw its moral strength from popular support is an army that does not have real strength. Such an army even with the latest innovations in weapon gadgetry is doomed to failure. Our nation is resolute and determined to continue the fight until the last Iraqi soldier is expelled from our holy territory.

It is against this background that we have resumed our seat in this familiar chamber. For the past several days this august body has been once again the forum for one of the most vital negotiations. The historic challenge to mankind inherent in the issue of war and peace makes disarmament an important objective in the present grave international situation.

Iran, being involved, against its will, in a war of aggression and paying dearly for the maintenance of its territorial integrity and sovereignty is deeply aware of the full meaning of the search for peace and the ways of promoting it in all possible areas, in particular through striving for disarmament. Experiencing at present the ravages of a war of aggression, the debate on disarmament conveys to us a particular sense of realism and urgency.

The immutable objective of the United Nations as defined by its Charter is: to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. But in this respect the system of renunciation of force and of peaceful settlement of disputes embodied in the Charter of the United Nations has not proved effective. New tensions and new conflicts have led to an arms race unprecedented in human history. Nuclear deterrence and the balance of power and terror, based on unimaginable destructive power of thermonuclear weapons, are now the main elements of the precarious stability between the two major military blocs. This precarious stability is constantly jeopardized by destabilizing elements inherent in an arms race characterized by continuous competitive accumulation of sophisticated arsenals and their constant refinement. With the growing importance of the problem of economic development, increasing attention is being paid to the unjustifiable waste of financial resources, research capacity and raw material devoted to the arms race. It is therefore necessary to intensify our efforts with a view to strengthening the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially those of the renunciation of force and of peaceful settlement of disputes and thereby increase the mutual confidence and release the necessary resources for a more rapid economic development leading to an international order based on greater security, justice and prosperity.

Today at the beginning of the 1981 session of the Committee on Disarmament we have to look back on our efforts during the first two years of existence of the CD. During the past two years we have absorbed the literature put out by the international arms control élite and applied our minds to it. New procedures and guidelines were devised to create new momentum. And finally last year we were able to reach consensus on the question of the establishment

(Mr. Dabiri, Iran)

of ad hoc working groups in four areas of the activities of the CD. These meagre achievements were only made possible due to greater efforts made by peace-loving members of the Committee on Disarmament. The agreement on the establishment of the working groups was even hailed as a historic event. Yet the balance-sheet of our cumulative efforts on the substance of disarmament has remained a record of consistent failures.

This, needless to say, has been due to no lack of enthusiasm, dearth of talent or absence of an abundance of ideas, proposals or solutions. The simple truth is that we have been operating in an international enclave with little or no input into the mainstream of political decisions. The voices which echo in this room vanish into stacks of documents, never allowed to bother the conscience of those whose judgements and decisions matter in shaping world events.

To be sure, disarmament as a goal has been given support by the great Powers at a high level of rhetorical consistency. But the political will to act has failed to emerge through their powerful military bureaucracies, influential weapon industries, lobbies and captive legislators.

This basic truism remains central to the evaluation of the performance of the great Powers, whose representatives here often try to infuse the illusion of a forward movement into a process that is essentially retreating.

This is best illustrated in the balance-sheet of the results of the immense efforts of the international community during the first Disarmament Decade. Those results, although combined with a favourable international climate, were not encouraging. But we did not submit to despair and disillusionment because the process of disarmament did continue due to the existence of a favourable international climate.

As a result of the continued military occupation and repression of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, the Second Disarmament Decade has started in an atmosphere marked by serious deterioration of the international climate.

In this connection we believe that the implementation of resolution 35/37 of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the recent decision of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries in New Delhi on the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from Afghanistan is an important step for the improvement of the international climate enabling the international community to pursue realistic disarmament measures.

Another source of constant tension and concern has been the continued occupation of Arab territories by Israel and denial of the inalienable national rights of Palestinians. The United Nations General Assembly, while condemning Israel, has, in its resolution 35/207, clearly set the basis for a just and durable solution of the Middle East and Palestinian problem, calling for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of Israel from the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, and affirming the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and the establishment of its independent State in Palestine. Obviously the realization of the above-mentioned resolution will also reduce tensions and enhance mutual security, facilitating the difficult task of disarmament negotiations.

(Mr. Dabiri, Iran)

In our statement to the Committee on Disarmament on 19 February 1980 (CD/PV.61, dated 19 February 1980), we emphasized the interlocking relationship between the international climate and disarmament and expressed our deep concern about the increasing deterioration of the international situation. It is obvious that the aggravation or improvement of the international climate depends above all on the behaviour of the two Superpowers and their unique roles and responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security cannot be overemphasized.

The two Superpowers, instead of acknowledging their responsibilities by engaging in a fruitful dialogue, have intensified their rivalry and competition. As one of the consequences of this rivalry the United States, by resorting to all kinds of pretexts is increasing its military presence in all possible parts of the world and especially in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Ominous statements and indications point to the revival of a psychology reminiscent of the cold war era. Absurd theories that nuclear war is wageable and even winnable are being aired and publicly advocated. In the same vein the possibility of the deployment of neutron warheads in Europe is being once again discussed. There is also no inhibition on the part of responsible officials to show off capabilities for the deployment of brute force under the heading of "rapid deployment force". In short, the propensity for adventurism seems more pronounced than at any time in the past. It is clear that such actions do not contribute to the creation of a climate of peace, stability and understanding. It heightens only mutual suspicions and leads to further aggravation of the arms race at both the global and regional levels. A very sad feature of this power play is the part imposed on the third world countries that often unwillingly are dragged into similar arms race patterns.

Turning to the items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament, the question of nuclear disarmament has undoubtedly the highest priority. Paragraph 45 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament makes this abundantly clear. The priority is not new. It started with the beginning of the nuclear age. But as time passes the widening gap between ever more sophisticated weapons and the failure of efforts to control or eliminate them becomes more and more alarming and important. The Final Document of the first special session states, inter alia, that "nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization" (para. 47), and that "in the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear-weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility" (para. 48).

In this connection, it is disturbing to note that SALT II has not yet been ratified, notwithstanding the fact that it was signed on 18 June 1979. Ominous voices are being raised to destroy the results of eight years of hard bargaining in a vain and adventurous effort aimed at obtaining a so-called nuclear superiority. The General Assembly of the United Nations, in resolution 35/156 K dated 16 January 1981, deplores the present situation of SALT II and urges "the two signatory States not to delay any further the implementation of the procedure provided for in article XIX of the Treaty ..., taking particularly into account that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples are at stake in this question".

(Mr. Dabiri, Iran)

In the important field of nuclear disarmament, only the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons stands out as a really significant multilateral arms control measure. The failure of the second Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT to adopt a final declaration is still fresh in our memories. Although the importance of the NPT was not called into question and the NPT Parties expressed their continued support for the Treaty, failure to adopt a final declaration, mainly due to dissatisfactions with the implementation of Article VI, clearly shows that substantial progress on nuclear disarmament is of critical importance to the future and survival of the NPT regime. It is therefore necessary that the Committee on Disarmament in discharging its responsibilities as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body should start negotiations on nuclear disarmament immediately. In the same vein, a comprehensive test-ban treaty should remain the primary objective of the Committee on Disarmament. Agreement to halt all nuclear explosions is an essential step in the field of nuclear disarmament. It is also an important element in the non-proliferation regime. Above all, the CTBT has become a symbol of a negotiation breakthrough. Failure to reach agreement on this issue would seriously undermine the prospects of further arms limitations. The Group of 21 has repeatedly stated its view that working groups are the most suitable machinery for conducting negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament. Taking into consideration the extraordinary importance and urgency of the questions of nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive test-ban treaty and the positive experience of the Committee on the utility of the establishment of ad hoc working groups from last year we hope that ad hoc working groups on these two items of the Committee's agenda will be established soon.

At its thirty-fifth session the General Assembly, in resolutions 35/145 A and 35/152 B, expressed its support for the setting up of ad hoc working groups on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests and on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

As a result of the business-like approach of the Committee on Disarmament we succeeded in deciding expeditiously on the re-establishment of the four ad hoc working groups which were set up last year. We consider this decision as the expression of the will of all members of the Committee to enter into substantive negotiations and to contribute more directly to the accomplishment of the mandate entrusted to us by the international community. In the same vein, we hope that decision on the establishment of ad hoc working groups on nuclear disarmament and a CTBT will follow soon. Agreement on the establishment of the working groups in question will certainly strengthen the business-like atmosphere of the Committee.

At the beginning of the Second Disarmament Decade and with the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament already in sight for next year it is imperative to use our last session of the CD before the special session for constructive negotiations and to concentrate on substantive issues rather than procedural rhapsody.

Throughout our disarmament debate there is a great lack of sense of reality. One feels that even the bitterest and hardest realities such as war, destruction and bloodshed are all being reduced to statistical abstractions. One tends to forget that while we are dealing intellectually and without much sense of realism with those abstractions, the dynamics of war and armament continue their accelerating course. Our sense of these negotiations is different because we are experiencing the ravages of a war of aggression. We are therefore prepared to contribute effectively to disarmament negotiations with a special sense of realism and urgency.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I should like to speak for a moment as the representative of France. The statement made by the representative of Iran justifies the exercise of the right of reply by the French delegation. This it will do at the end of the meeting.

Mr. SKINNER (Canada): I would like to put before the Committee this morning some thoughts on the Canadian position on the first item on our agenda, the comprehensive test-ban. The fact that it is the first substantive item of our work programme clearly reflects the consideration that it is one of our highest priorities. In deciding on our work programme we agreed that the Committee will conduct its work bearing in mind the contribution that it should make to the success of the United Nations General Assembly's second special session on disarmament. One of the two comprehensive test-ban resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session recognized that the conclusion of such a treaty would create a favourable international climate for the second special session: we could also envisage the second special session as confirming the universal importance of the treaty.

It is sobering to recall that none of the five nuclear-weapon States was able to endorse fully the recommendations of the First Committee last year on a nuclear test-ban, one of the few specific measures of a multilateral nature which could hold the promise of successful negotiation. The realization of a comprehensive test-ban treaty would be the most significant development in the field of nuclear weapons non-proliferation since the conclusion of the non-proliferation treaty in 1968: it is essential to slow, halt and begin to reverse the momentum of nuclear weapons development. The urgency of the early realization of an effective, multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty continues to be underlined by the ongoing rapid pace of nuclear-weapons testing, about 40 such tests having been conducted during 1980, including one in the atmosphere.

Some States have suggested, partly, no doubt, due to the apparent deadlock in the trilateral negotiations, that a moratorium on testing may be the answer in the interim period before a comprehensive test ban. Indeed, this was alluded to this morning by an earlier speaker. We do not think so. In reiterating Canadian policy, the Canadian representative on the First Committee of the General Assembly said that we should not settle for a moratorium on nuclear testing, which would not be verifiable and which could delay the negotiations, and consequently the conclusion of such a treaty.

Canada welcomed the tripartite report contained in document CD/130 of 30 July 1980 as an important step toward the elaboration of an effective multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty. Such a treaty will become a permanent restriction on the development of nuclear weapons only if an agreement among three of the nuclear-weapon States, which we are now urging, rapidly results in the ending of all testing. Recognizing that several political as well as technical problems are still at issue -- and these problems have been discussed in this Committee -- in the trilateral negotiations which will have to be resolved before the three negotiators table the key elements of a treaty to this Committee on Disarmament, we urge the United States of America, the USSR and the United Kingdom to resume their negotiations in the immediate future. Not only must the trilateral negotiations

(Mr. Skinner, Canada)

continue, but it is important that this Committee begin, now, to take a substantive part in the elaboration of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Work by the Committee on Disarmament could be both useful and helpful in accelerating the conclusion of the multilateral negotiation of a treaty when the basic elements of that treaty are tabled in the Committee on Disarmament by the three negotiating States. My delegation will be glad to contribute to discussions leading to the definition of the Committee's substantive role in the realization of a nuclear test-ban treaty in time for the second United Nations special session on disarmament.

Mr. SOEPRAPTO (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, taking the floor for the first time at a formal meeting of the current session of the Committee, may I avail myself of this opportunity to join previous speakers in expressing the great pleasure of the Indonesian delegation to see you preside over this Committee at this very important stage of its work. During these last two weeks you have demonstrated your great ability, flexibility and patience in conducting the deliberations of this Committee. May I also extend the appreciation and gratitude of my delegation to Ambassador Terreffe of Ethiopia, your predecessor, who presided over the Committee during the month of August last year, for his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee. My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the other delegations in welcoming to this Committee this year the new heads of delegations of Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Zaire.

As has been stated by other delegations, the 1981 session of the Committee has a particular importance because it is the last full session before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to which the Committee has to submit a report on the progress of its work since its establishment. It is also significant because it coincides with the beginning of the Second Disarmament Decade. When the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament meets next year, it would not only consider the report to be submitted by the Committee but would also assess whether the Committee has successfully discharged its function as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament.

Thanks to your wise chairmanship and the spirit of co-operation prevailing in this Committee, we have made a sound start to our work by solving problems of a procedural nature and by the reactivation or re-establishment of the working groups that existed last year. My delegation wishes to congratulate the Chairmen of these working groups and to assure them of its full co-operation.

The question now under consideration by this Committee as the first item on its agenda, a nuclear test ban, has been the subject of examination by the international community, the United Nations and other international forums, for more than a quarter of a century. Partial solutions to the problem have indeed been arrived at by, inter alia, the conclusion of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water in 1963 and of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1968. In spite of these treaties, the objectives of which include, inter alia, the reduction of the number of nuclear-weapon tests, such tests have nevertheless continued unabated. It is an irony that the number of nuclear explosions that have taken place since the conclusion of the 1963 test-ban Treaty is much higher than the number that took place before the conclusion of the Treaty. Whereas between 1945 and 1963, or in 18 years, there were

(Mr. Scepapto, Indonesia)

only 488 explosions, in the 16 years since the conclusion of the test-ban Treaty in 1963, 733 explosions have been registered (CD/86, p. 57). Needless to affirm that the carrying out of such explosions runs counter to the efforts made by the international community to prevent vertical and horizontal proliferations of nuclear weapons, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the attainment of nuclear disarmament.

One may argue that banning nuclear-weapon tests is not an effective disarmament measure because it does not lead to a reduction in the volume of existing nuclear weapons or prevent the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Indonesia, which is a party to both the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty and the 1968 non-proliferation Treaty, believes that the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests constitutes an important step towards the prevention of vertical and horizontal proliferations of nuclear weapons, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and the attainment of nuclear disarmament. It is a matter of disappointment that, 18 years after the conclusion of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty whereby the Parties to the Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States in particular, expressed their determination to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time, the negotiations among the nuclear-weapon States Parties to that Treaty have not produced concrete results. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim stated in 1972 before the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem of a nuclear test ban had been fully explored and that only a political decision was necessary to achieve agreement. Where do we stand now in 1981, nine years after that statement, 13 years after the conclusion of the 1968 non-proliferation Treaty and 18 years after the signing of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty?

During the Committee's session of last year, nuclear test ban was included in the agenda as its first item. The proposal for the creation of an ad hoc working group, on which very much depends the progress of the substantive negotiations on the matter, did not unfortunately materialize. The report submitted by the three nuclear-weapon States involved in the trilateral negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon test explosions to the Committee in 1980 contains very useful information on the status of the negotiations. In spite of the fact that the Committee stated in its report to the General Assembly that it would continue to treat the question as a matter of the highest priority during its 1981 session (CD/139, para. 36), and although the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/145 B, requested the Committee to take the necessary steps, including the establishment of a working group, to initiate substantive negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty as a matter of the highest priority at the beginning of its 1981 session, and that, following that resolution, proposals were made accordingly in this Committee to establish such a working group, it is a matter of regret that the immediate creation of the proposed working group was not agreed upon by the Committee during the early stages of our work this year. Given the importance of the establishment of such a working group in order that we can really engage in business-like and substantive negotiations on the matter, it is the hope of my delegation that, pursuant to the fourth paragraph of the decision taken by the Committee on 12 February 1981 (document CD/151), and following consultations to be held in the Committee, the two working groups relating to items 1 and 2 of the agenda will finally be created during the current session.

(Mr. Soeprapto, Indonesia)

As I stated earlier, it was as early as 1972 that the Secretary-General of the United Nations stated that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem of a nuclear test ban had been fully explored and that only a political decision was necessary in order to achieve agreement on the subject. During our last year's session, not less than eight documents relating to the matter were submitted to the Committee. As was reiterated by the Group of 21 in its statement at the conclusion of the 1980 session of the Committee, it is also the position of my delegation that this Committee provides the best framework for negotiations on the matter which has been the subject of consideration by the United Nations and other international forums for more than 25 years and of more than 40 resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Considering that the current session is the last full session of the Committee prior to the convening of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, and that the Committee has been called upon by the General Assembly to exert all efforts urgently to negotiate with a view to reaching agreement and submitting agreed texts where possible to the General Assembly at its special session on questions of priority including, inter alia, a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty (resolution 35/46, annex, para. 12 (a)), my delegation thinks that we should spare no efforts in taking all possible steps which would lead to the commencement of substantive negotiations.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of Indonesia for his statement and also for his kind words regarding myself.

Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): Today my statement is devoted to one specific problem inscribed in our programme of work for this week, the complete and general prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic welcomes the consideration of the question of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests already at the very beginning of our negotiations on the main agenda items within the Committee on Disarmament. The importance of reaching an agreement on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests becomes ever more evident. It would without any doubt contribute to curbing the nuclear arms race and to making headway in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Strictly speaking, this would be an important measure in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Therefore it is not surprising that at present especially those forces striving for the continuation of the arms race and military superiority are attacking such an agreement, putting new obstacles on the road to an effective ban of all nuclear-weapon tests.

My delegation would like to express its concern over the fact that resulting from the policy of confrontation pursued by imperialist and hegemonistic forces the conditions for the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests have become more complicated. Seeking to obtain the material basis for a "counter-force" strategy or a strategy of a "limited nuclear war", the promoters of this policy are intensifying the arms race, especially in the nuclear field. This includes such well-known programmes -- to mention only some of them -- as MX, Trident II, cruise missiles, Pershing II and others.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

At the same time the forces interested in those programmes are trying, against their better judgement, to justify the continuation of nuclear-weapon testing with the pretence that tests are needed to maintain confidence in the reliability of their stockpiled weapons. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, however, in his report on a comprehensive nuclear test ban (CD/86) justly points out that the state of stockpiled nuclear weapons can be checked without nuclear testing. One also has to approve the view expressed in this report that the less confidence there is in nuclear weapons, the less would be the temptation to rely on them. It is only all too obvious that the forces interested in "reliable" nuclear weapons need tests in order to be able to wage a nuclear war effectively.

In the process of efforts to stop all nuclear-weapon tests great importance should be attached to the trilateral negotiations. We hope they will be resumed soon and will be brought to a rapid and successful conclusion. The tripartite report presented last year shows that considerable progress has been achieved in the course of the negotiations. But at the same time there are a number of undoubtedly complicated issues still to be solved. We share the view that these primarily technical problems should not be used as a pretext for a further delay in achieving an urgently needed agreement on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. There must be political will on all sides. We state with satisfaction that the USSR has manifested this will with quite a number of constructive steps with regard to verification, peaceful nuclear explosions and participation. If all the parties concerned had this political will, an agreement on the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests could be achieved still in the immediate future.

My delegation shares the repeatedly expressed view that the Committee on Disarmament should play a more active part in the solution of tasks of complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. This could be done in our view in particular through the creation of a corresponding ad hoc working group. We are gratified to note that at the outset of this year's session not only the Group of socialist countries and the Group of 21 but also a number of other CD member States expressed their interest in such a step. We refer in this regard to the recent statements of Canada, Japan, Australia, Belgium and Italy. The delegation of the German Democratic Republic expresses its hope that the other States, too, will join this promising trend. In the course of our debate numerous valuable suggestions have been made concerning the mandate of the ad hoc working group to be set up. There is obviously general agreement on its objective, i.e., to reach a long-lasting agreement on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. In particular, I should like to stress the following points expressed in our debate concerning the ad hoc working group on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon test ban to be set up:

The ad hoc working group should be established immediately, as was said, on the basis of a realistic mandate;

All nuclear-weapon States should be members of that group: this would open up favourable opportunities for all of them to take a more precise position on their approach to the question of the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests;

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

The group should not interfere in the trilateral negotiations but complement them effectively.

Some delegations have expressed the view that the Committee should concentrate on the institutional and administrative measures which are necessary for an international seismic monitoring network and for an effective verification system. These questions are no doubt of great importance. However, they cannot be discussed separately from the basic question, namely, the scope of the treaty. As to the scope, the German Democratic Republic holds the view that all nuclear-weapon tests of all nuclear-weapon States have to be prohibited. We would be interested in listening to the views of all the nuclear-weapon States on this idea.

Like other delegations, we attach great importance to effective measures of verification of compliance with a future CTBT. But under no circumstances should the verification issue serve as a pretext for delaying the conclusion of such a treaty. We reject any attempt to look endlessly for new verification "shortcomings" in order to block the way to a comprehensive test ban. Of course, as was already said, verification cannot be foolproof. However, the national technical means of verification existing nowadays, a system of international exchange of seismic data to be established and certain procedures of international co-operation, including on-site verification on a voluntary basis, would ensure to a sufficient extent compliance with a corresponding treaty. My delegation fully shares the view expressed on 3 February in this Committee by Mrs. Thorsson, the distinguished representative of Sweden, that the likelihood of the detection of clandestine nuclear-weapon tests is very high, and that the existing verification means are adequate. We must ask the opponents of a nuclear-weapon test ban: is not the risk of a violation of the treaty much less than the threat caused by the absence of such a treaty?

Concluding my statement, I should like to make some brief remarks on the activities of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. Its progress report (CD/150) presented last week shows that the Group has worked intensively. Valuable findings have been made as to a number of detailed problems, which eventually will be auspicious for establishing an international monitoring network within the framework of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. In particular we support the demand expressed in the report for the inclusion of additional seismic stations located in the southern hemisphere in the global network. This would increase considerably the effectiveness of such a system. It goes without saying that a global system for international co-operative measures to detect and identify seismic events could be established only after the conclusion of a CTBT. In our view the seismic Group constitutes the appropriate framework for a more comprehensive consideration of the administrative and institutional aspects of a global data exchange. Progress towards the solution of the essential questions of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests would make it possible to specify the mandate in this respect and to enhance further the role of the Group.

We hope that the Committee will live up to its responsibilities and undertake the necessary efforts with a view to achieving -- already during this session -- concrete results on the way to the effective prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement and I should like now to apologise to His Excellency Ambassador Voutov, the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, for not giving him the floor when his turn came according to the list of speakers. I hope that he will be good enough to forgive me.

Mr. VOUTOV (Bulgaria): I think that it is not necessary for you to apologise, Mr. Chairman, since today we are discussing the question which has the highest priority in the work of the Committee and I listen with great interest to all the statements made. However, at this stage, it is not my intention to discuss this question. In my statement of 12 February, I dealt with the problem of a nuclear test ban and I reserve the right of my delegation to deal with this question again. Today I would like to present the document which was circulated this morning in the Committee, document CD/153.

With reference to my statement on 12 February may I draw the attention of the Committee to this document, CD/153, submitted by the Bulgarian delegation under item 3 of our agenda, namely, "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". I do not intend now to repeat what I said in my previous statement on the substance of that document, as well as on the way we see the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Assurances this year. At this juncture, I only wish to express our belief that the Working Group will soon embark on substantive negotiations with a view to making, in the last year before the General Assembly's second special session devoted to disarmament, significant progress towards further strengthening the security guarantees for the non-nuclear-weapon States. To this end, the Bulgarian delegation will be happy to co-operate with other interested delegations in the search for a common approach to agreeing on a meaningful solution.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): This statement will probably be one of the shortest I have ever made in the Committee on Disarmament. This is for various reasons, one of the main ones being that I do not wish to waste my time or, even less, the time of the Committee. In fact, the question of the cessation of all nuclear-weapon test explosions which, according to the time-table we approved, we are to consider at today's meeting, has been considered exhaustively in all its aspects for more than a quarter of a century. Since my delegation has had the opportunity to contribute its grain of sand to the consideration of this question in many international forums, including the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and this Committee, I wish to confine myself today simply to mentioning the statements on this matter that we have made in this Committee during the two years of its existence. These statements can be readily referred to in the verbatim records of the meetings whose numbers I shall now list, together with the dates on which they took place:

1979

1. Second meeting, held on 24 January;
2. 34th meeting, held on 21 June;

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

1980

3. 61st meeting, held on 19 February;
4. 69th meeting, held on 17 March;
5. 80th meeting, held on 22 April;
6. 81st meeting, held on 24 April;
7. 87th meeting, held on 26 June;
8. 94th meeting, held on 24 July;
9. 97th meeting, held on 5 August;

1981

10. 101st meeting, held on 3 February.

In these 10 statements you will find fully set forth the reasons which undoubtedly prompted the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 35/145 A of 12 December 1980, to urge all States members of the Committee on Disarmament "to support the creation by the Committee, upon initiation of its session to be held in 1981, of an ad hoc working group which should begin the multilateral negotiation of a treaty for the prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests".

My delegation dares to hope that this appeal, in the same vein as that launched by the Group of 21 and supported by the Group of socialist States and by various members of the Western group of States and others, will now at last be heeded by all the States that are represented in this Committee.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, my statement this morning consists of two parts, two different sections: first, a statement I shall make on behalf of the members of the Group of 21, and then a statement I shall make as the representative of Venezuela.

As co-ordinator of the Group of 21, I should like to reiterate today most emphatically the firm conviction of all the members of that Group that the Committee should proceed without delay to the establishment of two ad hoc working groups to concern themselves with items 1 and 2 of the Committee's agenda, entitled, respectively, "Nuclear test ban" and "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". That is the statement I wished to make on behalf of the members of the Group of 21.

I shall now proceed to make a statement on behalf of Venezuela. Today, when the Committee is to consider the item on a nuclear test ban and intends to examine additional proposals concerning working groups, I must express the anxiety and impatience of my delegation at the fact that it has not yet proved possible to adopt decisions for the setting up of working groups on agenda items 1 and 2.

My delegation hoped that, in accordance with the decision adopted at the 105th plenary meeting held on 12 February, the Committee would proceed as soon as possible to the urgent consideration, as the decision puts it, of the proposals for

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

the establishment of those working groups, and that such consideration would give all States members of the Committee the opportunity to show the necessary political will to proceed to the establishment of these groups which are so necessary for the substantive consideration of these two most urgent and priority items on our agenda.

My delegation heard with genuine sorrow the categorical statement made this morning by one of the nuclear-weapon Powers participating in the tripartite negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests that his country was not in favour of the establishment of a working group on the subject of a nuclear test ban. I cannot but admit that this statement is a source of deep disappointment to my delegation.

My delegation, together with those of the other countries members of the Group of 21, has consistently advocated the setting up of working groups in connection with items 1 and 2 of the Committee's agenda. It feels that it might be useful at this time briefly to recall the various statements made on this subject by the Group of 21, statements to which my delegation, as a member of that Group gave its full support.

First, in document CD/64 of 27 February 1980, the Group of 21 expressed its conviction that working groups represented the best available machinery for the conduct of concrete negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament. Although the Committee has set up four working groups on four agenda items, nevertheless, despite the repeated urgings not only of the Group of 21 but also of other sectors of the Committee, it has, as you know, not so far been possible to achieve a consensus for the establishment of similar machinery with respect to the two other priority items on the Committee's agenda. I should also like to recall the statement contained in document CD/72, of 4 March 1980, in which the Group of 21 urged the establishment of a working group to undertake the negotiation of a treaty for the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. Subsequently, in document CD/134 of 6 August 1980, in which it gave its assessment of the work of the Committee's 1980 session, the Group of 21 expressed its regret that it had not been possible to initiate multilateral negotiations on that subject within the Committee on Disarmament, and it expressed the hope that a working group would be set up at the opening of this current spring session in order to undertake without delay substantive negotiations on the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon testing in all environments.

Furthermore, in document CD/116 of 9 July 1980 -- and I am here referring to the proposals made in that document on the establishment of a working group on agenda item 2 -- the Group of 21 proposed that the Committee on Disarmament should set up an ad hoc working group to begin negotiations with a view to reaching agreement on various issues which would contribute to progress towards achievement of the disarmament measures envisaged in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Similarly, in document CD/134, to which I have already referred, containing an evaluation of the Committee's 1980 session, the Group of 21 stressed the urgent need to initiate negotiations on nuclear disarmament and on measures to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race, and it recalled its proposal, which I have already mentioned, for the setting up of a working group for that purpose.

I wanted to recall these background facts at this stage because in the document circulated by the Chairman containing the programme of work provision was made after this meeting --and I imagine that it would be in the very near future -- for an informal meeting of the Committee to consider the question of the establishment of new working groups or the proposals for new working groups that have been submitted. It was with this circumstance in mind that I wanted to go over the background to this matter and reiterate the position of my delegation.

Mr. VALDIVIESO (Peru) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I intend to be extremely brief. In the statements we have heard during the general debate, the delegations from all the groups have all declared that in order to make our work more effective we must be pragmatic and flexible and act like business men -- "in a business-like manner", as it is said. I think that up to now we have all done this, and especially the countries of the Group of 21. However, the flexibility we have shown should not be confused with docility. And in this connection my delegation believes that the countries which do not possess nuclear weapons ought to act as permanent judges of the behaviour of the nuclear-weapon Powers and also that they are under an obligation to insist on the fulfilment of undertakings with respect to the attainment of full and complete disarmament and to ensure the carrying out of the mandate given to the Committee on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating body, to promote the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. We therefore believe that working groups on a nuclear test-ban treaty and on nuclear disarmament should quickly be set up and to this end we urge the distinguished representatives of the nuclear-weapon Powers to inform the authorities of their respective countries of the anxiety expressed by the Group of 21 through its Chairman, so that, paying heed to this expression of concern, their Governments may give them the instructions they need for the setting up of the working groups in question.

We make this appeal because we are sure that the establishment of these working groups will satisfy, at least in part, the expectations which the Committee on Disarmament and the General Assembly have helped rouse in world public opinion through the convening of special sessions devoted to disarmament and the naming of decades to the same end. We believe that failure to do this will increase the scepticism with which the world at large views the work of the Committee on Disarmament and the General Assembly in this matter.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I should like for a moment to take the floor as the representative of France. The French delegation wishes to express its regret concerning certain remarks made during this meeting by the distinguished representative of Iran, and it obviously cannot accept them. The distinguished representative of Iran has questioned the attitude of the French Government in matters falling exclusively within its sovereignty. The French delegation reserves its right to revert to this point if its national authorities consider that necessary.

I should like now to pass on to the matter we considered at an informal meeting a short while ago, namely, the request submitted by the Government of Switzerland regarding its participation in the discussions of the Committee. Working Paper No. 29, which has been distributed to you, contains a draft decision with respect to this request. I call your attention to the fact that the participation of States non-members of the Committee in the working groups is to be considered later. The draft decision contained in Working Paper No. 29 must, in accordance with our practice, be read out by the Chairman before being adopted. The working paper reads as follows:

"In response to the request of Switzerland [CD/154] and in accordance with rules 33 to 35 of its rules of procedure, the Committee decides to invite the representative of Switzerland to participate during 1981 in the discussions on the items relating to effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and chemical weapons, at plenary and informal meetings of the Committee.

(The Chairman)

"The decision in regard to participation in the meetings of the two ad hoc working groups dealing with those items will be communicated later."

In the absence of objections or observations I shall take it that there is a consensus in the Committee on this decision.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): We had planned to hold an informal meeting today to consider the proposals submitted for the establishment of other ad hoc working groups on items 1 and 2 of the Committee's agenda and also to consider the possible need for the setting up of other subsidiary bodies. It is too late now to embark on a discussion of this matter. The Chair would therefore suggest -- and you will find this suggestion in the informal document distributed to you today -- that the Committee should hold an informal meeting to consider this matter next Monday at 3.30 p.m. The time-table distributed, and to which I am referring, is, of course, merely for guidance, and we can adjust it in accordance with the progress of our work. I should like to know if the Committee agrees to my suggestion regarding an informal meeting for an exchange of views on certain proposals that we know about, a consideration of those proposals -- something we have not yet undertaken.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): The next plenary meeting of the Committee will therefore be held on Tuesday, 24 February, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.