

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 18 August 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Pierre Morel (France)

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I call to order the 431st meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference will continue today its consideration of the reports of its ad hoc subsidiary bodies and its annual report to the United Nations General Assembly. Nevertheless, in keeping with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any representative wishing to raise any matter relevant to the work of the Conference may do so.

I should like to remind you that, immediately after the plenary meeting, the Conference will hold an informal meeting to begin consideration of document CD/WP.287, containing the technical part of the Conference's report to the forty-first session of the General Assembly on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, and document CD/WP.288, concerning the Conference's report to the forty-second session of the General Assembly. These documents had been placed in delegations' pigeon-holes by last Friday at the latest.

Following the informal meeting, and if, as I hope, we make rapid progress on the technical parts of the reports, the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons will meet in this room to finalize its report for presentation to the Conference.

On the list of speakers for today I have the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Hungary and India. I give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, His Excellency Ambassador Rose.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, this year, the Conference on Disarmament has made sound headway in drawing up the text of a convention banning chemical weapons. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden and the three co-ordinators for their untiring efforts.

The presentation on 6 August by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs, Comrade Shevardnadze, has lent a fresh impetus to our work. My delegation appreciates the USSR's determined endeavours to resolve the challenge inspection issue on the basis of equality, and it considers the invitation to see chemical weapons installations in the Soviet Union as a valuable step to build the trust needed for the conclusion of the convention.

Regrettably, the negotiating pace has slowed down during the summer session. We are asking ourselves whether it is a coincidence that, at this very juncture, preparations for the production of binary chemical weapons have been entering a crucial phase. The attempts on the eve of the conclusion of the convention to increase the weight of chemical arms in military and security planning are bound to harm the negotiating climate, and can in no way be regarded as being helpful in finding solutions to unresolved problems.

We would all enjoy more security if we sought to finalize the convention text as early as possible so that the treaty may come into force soon.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Stability and security at the time when the convention becomes effective also presuppose that the ban on the production, acquisition and use of chemical arms, as well as any other obligation undertaken, are valid, and compliance with them is reliably verified from the very first day on. If all stocks of chemical weapons were placed under "international arrest" until the accord takes effect, we would have a useful additional security measure. No State party will be able, in its storage facilities for chemical weapons, to engage in any activity prohibited under the treaty since those facilities will be subject to stringent international control. The fears of all the sides in question would thus be allayed, including the concerns of those who do not possess chemical weapons, as is the case with my own country.

Let me now talk about some of the aspects of the work to be done during the inter-sessional period. Progress on the jurisdiction and control issue would be instrumental in establishing the responsibilities of States parties, which will have to ensure, for example, that anyone under their jurisdiction and control refrains from activities prohibited under the convention. Furthermore, it would be their responsibility to take appropriate measures guaranteeing that all their natural and juridical persons, even if they are not in the territory of their home countries, abide by the accord. The question of what would be "appropriate" will have to be answered on the basis of the constitutional and legal systems of the various States parties. Once this is recognized as a principle, it ought to be possible to come up quickly with a formula acceptable to everyone.

Negotiations on a chemical-weapon ban have progressed this year to the point where verification has moved out of the realm of non-committal polemics -- hopefully for good -- into the area of serious professional work on constructive solutions. Detailed verification provisions have been drawn up for articles IV, V and VI. A text setting forth guidelines on the international inspectorate has been agreed after thorough deliberations. The most important thing to do now is to lay down the ground rules governing challenge inspection and, in so doing, to put the keystone into the verification edifice. I am sure everyone will appreciate the fundamental significance of the steps which the Soviet Union has taken in this respect, and on which Ambassador Nazarkin elaborated on 11 August. We hope this will induce other parties to make their positions more transparent. If this were the case, we would be considerably closer to a text on the challenge inspection procedure.

In our efforts to solve the on-site challenge verification issue in such a way that the legitimate interests of the receiving State are taken into account, while ruling out any misuse, the functions to be performed by the inspectors are increasingly becoming the focus of attention. It will be their duty to record the facts needed to clarify cases of suspicion. This is exactly what must guide their conduct. They will have to act on the basis of guidelines issued by the technical secretariat. The Canadian and Norwegian studies on inspections in the event of the alleged use of chemical weapons are very useful in this context.

Whenever the requesting and receiving States are locked in dispute over an alternative measure suggested, tried and tested procedures should be available to settle the argument. Thus, objective elements would be added to the procedure, leaving less room for arbitrariness.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

The role of the Executive Council in the event of a challenge inspection is a major subject in discussions and negotiations these days. Challenge procedures are of particular interest not only to the parties immediately involved, but also to all other signatories to the future convention. That is why the Executive Council will have a crucial role to play, especially when it comes to assessing the findings of the team of inspectors. It is from those findings that the requesting country will draw its conclusions. However, the organization of States parties will only be in a position to react to the findings, say by taking action against a particular party to the convention found to be in violation of its obligations, if one of its organs -- namely, the Executive Council -- has had a chance to evaluate the inspection results independently. My delegation subscribes to the view expressed in the United Kingdom paper CD/715 that the Executive Council should be enabled to take into consideration the inspection report as well as any other material available and the opinions of the principal parties involved.

At this advanced stage in the drafting process, it would seem a good idea to have a closer look at the issues pertaining to the structure of the organization to be created. The wide range of important tasks to be tackled calls for an organizational framework that measures up to high political and professional standards. It is imperative that the organs to be set up be vested with political authority in order to ensure that States parties fulfil all their obligations. Moreover, in view of the host of details to be coped with in overseeing the operation of the treaty and verifying compliance with it, efficiency is needed. In our search for the most appropriate solution, the following notion is gaining currency: the system of organs to be established in consequence of the convention should have the character of an international organization with a legal status of its own, comparable to that of other international agencies within the United Nations system. The creation of such an organization would also undoubtedly enhance the international status of its officers, including international inspectors.

The powers and functions of the principal organs of the organization to be set up must be developed further on the basis of the concrete tasks defined in the convention. The maintenance of strict democratic principles and the effective use of existing means under a modern and rational style of working require that the responsibilities of the various organs and their interrelationships be sharply delineated. In formulating the provisions concerning the highest organ -- the conference of representatives of all States parties to the convention -- we must ensure that it establishes the organization's general policies and see to it that the process of implementing the treaty is properly overseen and continuously reviewed.

It would then be incumbent upon the executive organ to run the day-to-day affairs of the organization, represent the highest organ when it is not in session and take the decisions required for the work of the technical secretariat and other subsidiary bodies.

Democratic principles, respect for the security interests of all parties to the future convention, political weight and an efficient style of work are high standards which this body will have to meet. This is what must determine the composition and the decision-making procedures of the Executive Council so that it will be able to carry out its duties, essentially through decisions

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

achieved in a process of co-operation, and so that the possibility of its work being stymied or stalemated is largely excluded. For all these reasons, the organ must be composed of a relatively restricted number of members. The various political groups should be represented in a balanced fashion, and due regard should be given to the equitable geographical distribution of seats.

My delegation feels it is time that we conducted more purposeful consultations to solve those important issues. Any headway with regard to the problems posed by article VIII will most certainly have a favourable impact on our negotiating activities as a whole. In drawing up the convention, we are creating an element of the system of co-operation among nations which will ensure their security more reliably than ever before, since a dangerous class of weapons of mass destruction -- the class of chemical weapons -- will be eliminated from arsenals.

At the end of the 1987 session, we are again drawing up a balance sheet and seeking an answer to the question of how the Conference should proceed in the future. Conclusions for the next session of the United Nations General Assembly and the forthcoming special session on disarmament need to be formulated.

This year's meetings of the Conference have been marked by an obvious contradiction. On the one hand, the general climate has improved. On the other, the concrete results attained are lagging far behind what the Conference is supposed to accomplish according to its mandate. This is especially true of the efforts to curb the arms race and achieve disarmament in the nuclear field. I would like to make some observations on this particular subject.

High hopes are being pinned the world over on the negotiations between the USSR and the United States on the elimination of two categories of weapons of nuclear mass destruction. In fact, those negotiations have also had a positive impact on the atmosphere at this Conference. By including the Pershing 1A nuclear warheads in the number of arms to be scrapped, the main obstacle to the early conclusion of the negotiations can and must be removed, as was so convincingly argued on 6 August by Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. The "double zero" option would pave the way for radical steps to end nuclear arms competition and arrive at nuclear disarmament. For the Conference to play a more active role, the following would be necessary.

Firstly, a consensus is needed under which the curbing of the nuclear arms race and the attainment of nuclear disarmament would be regarded as practical priority tasks of international politics on the road to peace and the safeguarding of man's existence. Any action based on that consensus would rule out invoking the so-called nuclear deterrence doctrine.

Secondly, recognition on the part of all the sides concerned that bilateral and multilateral negotiations must interact with each other in a meaningful way. Nobody is disputing the particular responsibility which the major nuclear States have. It is impermissible, however, to refer to it in order to prevent the Conference from commencing practical work. Clearly, the issue we are talking about touches upon the vital interests of all peoples and needs to be resolved with the participation of all countries.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Thirdly, the futile quarrel about procedural matters, which has been going on for so many years now, must end. Despite diametrically opposed philosophies, accommodation must be sought. Compromises are possible. In whatever we do, we should be guided by the mandate of the Conference, which we all approved.

What is particularly disappointing to us is the fact that we have once again been unable to set up a committee on item 1 of our agenda, i.e., on a nuclear test ban. There is a wealth of material waiting to be discussed in a business-like and detailed manner. Suffice it to mention in this context the "Basic provisions" which the socialist delegations have submitted to the Conference in CD/756. Yet nothing is happening. One simply cannot overlook the United States position and its undisguised opposition to a negotiating mandate, as well as the effect this is having on this forum. Still, it will always be worth trying to seek agreement on individual issues and to go as far as possible in the preparations for a treaty. We are not fatalistic about it. On the contrary, we are convinced that the political will to conclude an accord will finally prevail.

The delegations of the Group of Socialist States have gone a long way to bring about agreement on a mandate. They are also prepared to support the official proposal tabled by the Group of 21 in document CD/772, which could well serve as a possible compromise. My delegation is very appreciative of the considerable efforts of the presidency of our Conference, some of whom have put forward informal or personal papers in order to achieve an understanding. This goes in particular for Ambassador Vejvoda, who guided our meetings in the month of April.

I do hope it will eventually be possible, when the Conference on Disarmament opens its 1988 session, to start practical work on a wide range of problems. It is for this reason that my delegation welcomes Minister Shevardnadze's proposal that a special group of scientists be assigned the job of working out recommendations for the structure and function of a system to verify any agreement on the non-conduct of nuclear weapon tests.

In conclusion, allow me to address a word of goodbye to two colleagues of ours who will be leaving us at the end of this session. My warm thanks go to Ambassador Turbanski for four years of excellent and friendly collaboration. His expertise and dedicated work for progress at the Conference, which became particularly manifest when he chaired the Committee on Chemical Weapons, are truly exemplary. I wish him every success in his future activities.

Much to my regret, the Conference will also be losing Ambassador Beesley, who has represented his country at this forum with outstanding diplomatic skill. I should like to express to him my sincere gratitude for the relations of close co-operation which we have shared. I wish him good luck for the future.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary, His Excellency Ambassador Meiszter, who in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons will introduce the Committee's report, contained in document CD/779, which has been distributed.

Mr. MEISZTER (Hungary): Mr. President, I have requested the floor today to introduce the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, but before turning to my main point, may I avail myself of the opportunity of having the floor to say a few words in my capacity as a national representative. As the head of the Hungarian delegation, I would like to welcome you on your accession to the presidency for the month of August. August, in the CD, is traditionally the month of winding up the business done in the course of the session, making last efforts to accomplish what the CD might have failed to achieve during the previous month and, of course, the month of report-writing. We are fully aware that this is not a simple exercise. But, Mr. President, I am confident that your diplomatic skills and personal capabilities will prove to be a valuable asset to the CD to successfully cope with that task. May I express my appreciation to you for the contribution you have already made to our work during the first half of the month, and wish you further success in discharging your responsible task. Speaking still in my personal capacity, I would like to extend a hearty welcome to our new colleague, Ambassador Marcos Castrioto de Azambuja of Brazil, and assure him of my readiness to co-operate with him.

I have taken the floor today to present the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons on its work during the 1987 session. The report of the Ad hoc Committee has been made available to delegations under symbol CD/779.

At the outset may I recall the decision of the Conference on Disarmament, taken at its 387th plenary meeting on 10 February, to re-establish the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for the duration of the 1987 session, with a view to reaching agreement on a convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. The Committee was invited to report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work before the conclusion of the 1987 session.

When it embarked on discharging the task entrusted to it, the Committee paid due attention to the recommendation contained in the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for 1986 to the effect that the Committee should consider ways and means of how best to proceed further. In the course of the exchange of views held in that connection, delegations stated their readiness and desire that the Committee should pursue its task in a more vigorous manner and produce tangible results. It was recognized that the two questions before the Committee, i.e. the prohibition of radiological weapons in the traditional sense and the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities, were both important issues requiring early solution. Delegations stressed their interest in making substantive headway, and proposed ideas to work out, or stated a readiness to go along with, a new method of work as a possible means of approaching the desired result.

(Mr. Meiszter, Hungary)

Following and on the basis of that exchange of views, the Ad hoc Committee decided to establish two contact groups: contact group A to consider the prohibition of radiological weapons in the traditional sense, and contact group B to consider the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities. It was further decided that each contact group would be chaired by a co-ordinator, that the groups would meet parallel with each other, and that the Committee would periodically review the progress of work in the two groups and the results achieved.

The new procedure could not do away with, and has not done away with, the substantive differences which continue to exist concerning the two subjects under consideration. Nevertheless, I am confident that it is a step in the right direction. The substantive work contributed to the clarification and better understanding of the different positions and approaches in relation to both important subjects. Seeing in a clearer way the existing differences on substantive issues may facilitate advance in future work when the Committee resumes its work next year, should the Conference on Disarmament approve the recommendations made to it in the appropriate section of the report.

The clarification and better understanding of different positions and approaches, in my view, is a positive factor also in the sense that delegations participating in the work will have comparatively exact and structured guidance as to the future formation and perhaps modification of their respective positions on substantive issues. Such guidance may well prove useful when delegations prepare themselves for next year's work in the period between the two sessions.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my appreciation to the co-ordinators of the two contact groups, Mr. Sadaaki Numata of Japan and Mr. Hadi Wayarabi of Indonesia, who did the lion's share of the work. Beyond doubt they deserve the appreciation of all of us for the intensive work done in an innovative spirit that the Committee was so much in need of. I also thank them for the spirit of co-operation and friendship that I enjoyed and highly valued throughout our joint work.

The product of the substantive work conducted in the two contact groups is reflected in their reports, which are attached to the report of the Ad hoc Committee. The reports are attached to the report of the Ad hoc Committee on the understanding that they are not binding on any delegation, and do not prejudice the positions of delegations on any of the issues under consideration. In my view, however, they represent a valuable asset for future work, and hopefully they have created and will create a momentum for advance in the consideration of the two issues.

In closing my short presentation on the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for the 1987 session, I would like to express my gratitude to the Conference on Disarmament for having honoured me by entrusting the responsible work of the Chairman to me. May I express my thanks and appreciation to all delegations for the spirit of co-operation they displayed throughout the session, enabling me thereby to discharge my duties.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for introducing its report. I should like to inform the Conference that I shall submit the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons for adoption at the plenary meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 25 August. I also thank the representative of Hungary for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of India, His Excellency Ambassador Teja.

Mr. TEJA (India): Mr. President, permit me to take this opportunity to extend to you the felicitations of my delegation on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference for the month of August. We are happy to see the distinguished representative of France, a country with which India enjoys close bilateral ties of friendship and co-operation, preside over our deliberations. You have exhibited qualities of a skilful diplomat and effective negotiator, and I have personally enjoyed working with you both in the Conference on Disarmament and elsewhere. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full co-operation in the discharge of your heavy responsibilities during this crucial month. I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to convey our appreciation for the manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador Terreffe of Ethiopia, presided over the Conference during the month of July. Let me extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues who have joined us, Ambassador Nihal Rodrigo of Sri Lanka, and Ambassador Marcos Castrioto de Azambuja of Brazil. I look forward to working in close co-operation with them. We shall miss the presence of Ambassador Alfarargi of Egypt, who recently conducted the proceedings of this Conference in his usually able and competent fashion. I should like to wish him well in his new and important assignment. We shall also be missing Ambassador Turbanski of Poland and Ambassador Beesley of Canada. Both of them have made distinguished and signal contributions to our work, and I would like to join others of my colleagues in wishing them much success in their new assignments.

The month of August is of special significance for the CD. In this crucial month, we enter into a more intense phase of our activity -- drafting the annual report for the General Assembly, an exercise which calls for introspection, as this will be the last annual report before SSOD-III scheduled to be held next year.

It is only logical, therefore, that I should begin my statement today with reference to our work on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, an undertaking that is almost as old as our Conference. The results have been rather meagre, though not for want of trying. Since 1981, the Ad hoc Committee has functioned under the able chairmanship of Ambassador García Robles of Mexico. Our first deadline for the CPD was SSOD-II, held in 1982, and now we are faced with another deadline imposed on the Conference by the General Assembly in decision 41/421. It is a matter of some regret that in this interim five-year period, not only have we been unable to resolve the outstanding issues, but we have succeeded in some cases in increasing the number of brackets, by the simple expedient of questioning previously agreed texts. The key issues of principles, priorities and objectives of the CPD are also being questioned, and what is of concern to my delegation is the fact that some formulations of the Final Document of SSOD-I

(Mr. Teja, India)

are now being questioned. Clearly our consensus on the CPD cannot be obtained by dismantling the consensus on the Final Document reached at SSOD-I! The CPD must build upon the Final Document, in accordance with the established priorities and in progressive stages, which can lead us to the universally acknowledged goal of general and complete disarmament.

My delegation attaches the highest priority to the first three nuclear issues on our agenda. To put it frankly, our record this year on these has been anything but satisfactory. For the fourth year in succession, we have found ourselves unable to set up an ad hoc committee on agenda item 1, to which my delegation attaches particular importance. A number of delegations had expressed optimism at the beginning of our spring session on the basis of perceived changes in the voting patterns of some countries in the General Assembly last year. It is a matter of regret that this perception of apparent flexibility was not reflected on the floor of the CD. The only concrete proposal tabled this year, in document CD/772, was put forward by eight Group of 21 countries. This has been rejected by one group of countries on the grounds that there was nothing new in it. At the same time, this very group of countries reaffirmed their commitment to their own four-year-old draft mandate. My delegation would find it rather difficult to interpret this as a sign of either flexibility or even serious intent to negotiate.

On the issue of the prevention of nuclear war, the situation is much the same. The CD has continued to ignore the repeated resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly adopted with overwhelming majorities, year after year, asking it to undertake substantive work on this item. Once again, the flexibility of the Group of 21 reflected in the non-negotiating mandate contained in CD/515/Rev.3 has not found a matching response, despite assertions to the contrary.

We are grateful for the efforts of Ambassador Vejvoda of Czechoslovakia and Ambassador Alfarargi of Egypt during their periods of presidency, which enabled us to have a structured discussion on the subject of "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". It was a modest beginning, and we do hope that the positive approach of the delegations will enable us to take up this item in an ad hoc committee during 1988. In the view of my delegation, sufficient preliminary work on this item has been accomplished, as will be evident in the CD's report.

I would now like to turn to item 5 of our agenda -- "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" -- which has been under discussion in the Ad hoc Committee for three consecutive years. Despite the efforts of many delegations to move closer to concrete achievements, this year's proceedings in the Ad hoc Committee leave us with a sense of déjà vu. It might well be an indication of an apparently exhausted and all too inadequate mandate. What we now need is a more concrete and purpose-oriented mandate, which can enable structured work on the numerous proposals before the Conference.

The subject of an ASAT ban is one such proposal on which a considerable convergence of views is in evidence. The time is ripe to translate this convergence into concerted action. Since ASAT weapons are the existing space weapons, to begin with work on prohibition of ASAT weapons would reflect a sense of pragmatism and also open the path to the prohibition of other space

(Mr. Teja, India)

weapons, including those based on new technologies. In our opinion, the political climate too could not be more opportune, as both the leading space Powers are currently observing a moratorium on the testing and deployment of such weapons.

A number of proposals of a substantive nature have been submitted. Reference can be made to CD/777 submitted by the German Democratic Republic and Mongolia, which contains basic provisions of a treaty text. Strengthening of the Registration Convention, declarations of non-deployment of weapons in space, amendment of article 4 of the outer space Treaty, are all possibilities containing merit and deserving serious consideration. Such work will also raise technical issues on which the CD would benefit from inputs from space technologists. Beginning with the ASAT weapons ban, such inputs from a group of experts would help in developing a shared perception of other elements of relevance to our work. As I indicated in my statement of 21 July 1987, the first such exercise could relate to the development of criteria pursuant to the 1975 Registration Convention in order to examine the possibility of making a distinction between military and non-military space satellites. Undoubtedly, the issues of verification and definitions of ASAT will require a considerable amount of work, but this should not prevent us from giving the Ad hoc Committee an adequate mandate within which such work can be undertaken.

I would now like to turn to the subject of chemical weapons. It would not be an exaggeration to state that under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, we have achieved remarkable progress and are within sight of a convention. Difficult issues such as the destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities, challenge inspection, and the legal liabilities of States parties in terms of jurisdiction, are a few remaining areas, but here too agreement would seem to be close. At this stage I would, however, like to draw attention to the fact that the basic objective of the chemical weapons convention is the destruction of chemical weapons and related production facilities. A related objective is to ensure that these weapons are never produced again. This kind of monitoring is quite unique in the disarmament field, and none of the existing safeguard régimes provide us with a valid precedent. The Ad hoc Committee will need to exercise creativity, rather than look backwards to inadequate precedents. In this connection, I may add that the time has also come for the Ad hoc Committee to focus attention on articles X and XI of the convention. In the light of important linkages between disarmament and security on the one side, and economic development on the other, the CW convention should necessarily include provisions relating to the unhindered development of chemical industry for peaceful purposes, with special emphasis placed on the needs of the developing countries. Such an emphasis can be placed in two ways: by ensuring that none of the provisions will be interpreted so as to hamper the development of chemical industry for peaceful purposes, and in a positive way, by introducing special provisions intended to promote international co-operation to assist in the development of chemical industry for peaceful purposes. Naturally such undertakings would also include in-built means of verification.

(Mr. Teja, India)

We can almost see the light at the end of the tunnel. In view of the widespread optimism, it would be worthwhile to look at our mandate which stops us short of the final drafting of the CW convention. We hope that the positive developments will enable the Conference to provide the Ad hoc Committee with a mandate which will remove the restrictions to enable the Conference to present to the world community a complete chemical weapons convention.

Before concluding, let me focus briefly on some of the procedural issues. We had a paper, CD/WP.286, developed on the basis of the deliberations of the Group of Seven. I myself had the privilege of being one of the Seven. I hope that the lack of open discussion on this paper and the ease with which it seems to have been passed over this year will not set a precedent for the future. A valuable effort had been made by Ambassador Fan, Chairman of the Group, to devise a consensus document. It is one single document dealing with the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament. Any attempt to project it as two papers in the belief that report-writing should receive priority over other issues will not achieve the desired objective. My delegation does not share the belief that report-writing should be merely an exercise in cosmetics. The report must reflect the actual state of affairs within our Conference. It would, therefore, be reasonable to accept that the implementation of measures for improved functioning will naturally lead to a better and less time-consuming system for report-writing.

We are approaching a period in which it would be realistic to expect an intensification of international efforts towards disarmament. At the multilateral level, we shall shortly be participating in the United Nations Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. Next year SSOD-III will give a political impetus to accelerating the disarmament process, and also strengthen the role of multilateral negotiations. Elsewhere there have been positive developments such as the agreement at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. The most reassuring is, however, the bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States, where we find a growing convergence of views. The "global double zero" which includes shorter-range INFs and longer-range INFs in Europe and Asia, if accepted, will open the way for the first genuine disarmament agreement and the first dismantling of an operational system since the Second World War. In one sense it proves the often stated point that it is not the increase but only the reduction of nuclear stockpiles which can lead to enhanced security. As Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi stated at the inauguration of an international seminar on world peace held last week in New Delhi:

"We hope that this will lead subsequently to the complete removal of all sea-based and air-based missiles and the dismantling of all nuclear presences in Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific and all over the world."

(Mr. Teja, India)

Our Conference works on the basis of consensus, and it is but natural that differences of approach or emphasis should arise from time to time. At the same time we also share the common goal of general and complete disarmament. What is therefore needed is the mustering of the necessary political will to reach agreements on contentious issues. Only in this manner can we hope to make the Conference on Disarmament truly an organ for multilateral negotiations in the field of disarmament, which we all agreed to a decade ago.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of India for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Mr. President, on an earlier occasion during this month I participated in an impromptu exchange of views at the Conference table, but that did not permit me to do what I take great pleasure in doing now, which is to offer you my delegation's congratulations at your assumption of the presidency of this Conference. As you know, the relations between our two countries are deep and have existed for a very long time. We have always admired the diplomatic skill of France, of which you are the distinguished representative.

I have sought the floor on this occasion to respond briefly to remarks that have just been made by the distinguished Ambassador of India with regard to working paper 286, which incorporates some of the first results of the deliberations of the group called the Group of Seven. Like the distinguished Ambassador of India, I too had the privilege of being one of the seven persons that took part in that work, and I join with him instantly in commending the working paper to this Conference, and in expressing our gratitude to the guidance given to the Group of Seven by Ambassador Fan. I also join with him in expressing regret that we seem, at this session of the Conference, to have passed over with what the distinguished Ambassador of India called "ease" -- I suggest that in addition to "ease" there was perhaps a touch of haste -- that we passed over somewhat hastily the findings that are advanced in working paper 286. I think he would understand if I took issue with him over the view that he expressed with regard to the paper being a single document. It clearly is a single document in the sense that it represents one sheet of paper, but it is not a single document in our view, in the sense that it does include the recommendations of the Group of Seven, not on one subject but on two subjects.

It has been of particular regret to my delegation -- and I believe I can say this too on behalf of a group of Western delegations -- of particular regret that a degree of linkage between these two subjects covered in the paper has been drawn so that where progress may have been possible on one of the subjects covered in the paper but not on another, that degree of progress has been prevented because a link seems to have been drawn between the two subjects covered in the paper.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

The subject on which I think progress has been available immediately is that of report-writing. The process in which we are now involved under your guidance, Mr. President, as you and others know, is proving as difficult or detailed as it has proven in the past, and one of the reasons why the Group of Seven under Ambassador Fan's guidance decided to address initially the subject of report-writing, as well as the other subject of the formation of subsidiary bodies, was because it was hoped that decisions could be taken now on the basis of the recommendations of the Group which would have had application now, this year, in the construction of our report.

And another reason why it was decided to address the report in that fashion, that is, to seek a new basis on which it is drafted, was because at this time last year there was a debate in the plenary following suggestions that were made for reform in the report-writing process, at the conclusion of which it was agreed by the Conference that we would change the rules this year. That was specifically agreed, and it was as a consequence of that agreement that the Group of Seven met and drew up the recommendations that now appear in document 286. I can only join the Ambassador of India again in regretting that the Conference has not been able to act on that paper. I do not agree that it is one paper and that we could not have acted on the part referring to report-writing even though we may not have been able to act now on the part referring to subsidiary bodies, and this failure is all the more regrettable because, as I have just mentioned, we did in fact at this time last year agree that we would implement this year new procedures on the basis of which our annual report would be drawn up. It is our hope that this paper will stay alive and that we will act on it in the future without further delay.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Australia for his kind words addressed to the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of India, Ambassador Teja.

Mr. TEJA (India): Mr. President, I appreciate Ambassador Butler's joining me in sharing my sense of disappointment that the document produced by the Group of Seven was not the subject of any in-depth discussion which should have taken place. I would only wish to draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that of course it is not for me to interpret the recommendations of the Group of Seven as a member of the Group because our President has already made a statement on that when introducing the subject, and the views which I expressed were my views as head of the Indian delegation.

Speaking in the same capacity, I see that the document which has been presented in CD/WP.286 has a clear title which says "Report of the Group of Seven on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament", and then in paragraph 1 it lists certain proposals which the Group reviewed and on which it has submitted the report. If there were two reports then there would have been two papers, so I do not need to belabour the point that this is one paper. Of course it contains recommendations on one subject. Originally there were four aspects, and only two were discussed this year because of lack of time. Why these two? Because of the organic linkage between acts and deeds, between what we do and

(Mr. Teja, India)

how we present it. As I said earlier, I think the report should be allowed to speak for itself. Every delegation by virtue of its membership of the CD is, of course, free to interpret it in its own way, but I for one do wish that the Conference had spent more time and gone into precisely the kind of issues which Ambassador Butler raised.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of India for his statement.

I have no other speakers on my list for today, except for the representative of China, to whom I give the floor: Ambassador Fan.

Mr. FAN (China) (translated from Chinese): Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, as the representative of the Chinese delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency for this extremely important month. The presidency of August is the longest as well as the most important, because in this month the results of our work will be reflected. China and France enjoy friendly relations, and our two delegations have maintained close co-operation, so I am pleased to see that a lot has been achieved under your presidency. I also hope that by the end of this month we will be able to make positive progress in drafting the report. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my regret that two of our distinguished colleagues, Ambassador Turbanski of Poland and Ambassador Beesley of Canada, are leaving us. Both of them have worked here for many years and have contributed a lot. I once again express my deep regret at their departure, and I hope they will achieve successes in their new assignments.

Secondly, I would like to say a few words in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Seven. The Group met seven times in a period of six weeks. All seven of us enjoyed a good working relationship with each other. I would like to thank the other members as well as the Secretary-General and his deputy for their co-operation. Thanks to this co-operation we have achieved this result, i.e. CD/WP.286. During our discussions, I believe that all of us worked in a spirit of co-operation and mutual accommodation. Of course, everyone made his own contribution, and it was these contributions that made such a working paper possible. Naturally, as the Chairman of the Group, I also hope the plenary meeting of the CD will give the paper positive consideration, since the Group reached a consensus. In the meantime I am also aware that each delegation may have its own views with regard to the paper. In my view, even if we cannot achieve any result in the plenary this year we do have a basis for future work. As far as I am concerned, I have many personal views. However, to facilitate our work in the future, I think I can withhold them until the Group of Seven resumes its meeting, which may produce better results.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. Do any other delegations wish to speak? I give the floor to the representative of the United States, Ambassador Friedersdorf.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): Mr. President, I feel obligated to respond briefly to my good friend, the distinguished Ambassador from the German Democratic Republic, who laid a major share of the world's problems on the doorstep of the United States this morning. He mentioned the binary production start-up by the United States; he charged the United States with blocking the conclusion of a missile agreement with the Soviet Union because of the Pershings; and he charged that we were blocking a nuclear test ban. These are all old charges, of course, mentioned frequently here in this forum and responded to frequently, but I think I would like to remind my good friend the distinguished Ambassador that with regard to the binary programme, I think he knows that that is a modest response to an overwhelming Soviet build-up in chemical weapons that proceeded for 17 years despite a unilateral United States moratorium initiated in 1969.

With regard to the INF negotiations with the Soviet Union and the Pershing issue, I think that it is well established that the long-standing United States position is very clear. The United States will not negotiate on third-country systems, or on existing programmes of co-operation with our allies, in these bilateral negotiations. In regard to the INF negotiations with the Soviets, I would like to just read a very brief excerpt from a speech the President of the United States gave recently, just in the last couple of days, to the American people regarding that negotiation. The President said:

"In the months ahead I also hope to reach an agreement, a comprehensive and verifiable agreement, with the Soviet Union on reducing nuclear arms. We are making real progress on the global elimination of an entire class of nuclear weapons, the US and Soviet intermediate-range or INF missiles. I first proposed this idea to the Soviets back in 1981. They were not too keen on it and, in fact, walked out of the negotiations at one point, but we kept at it. Until recently the Soviet Union had insisted on the right to retain some of its INF missiles, but in mid-July General-Secretary Gorbachev announced that he was prepared to drop this demand. That was welcome news indeed. We have come this far because in 1980 you, the American people, gave me a mandate to rebuild our military. I have done that. Today we are seeing the results. The Soviets are now negotiating with us because we are negotiating from strength. This would be an historic agreement. Previous arms control agreements merely put a ceiling on weapons, and even allowed for increases. This agreement would reduce the number of nuclear weapons. I am optimistic we will soon witness a first in world history -- the sight of two countries actually destroying nuclear weapons in their arsenals. Imagine where that might lead!"

With regard to the nuclear test ban, I have often stated our position here, but I would reiterate to the distinguished Ambassador that the United States believes nuclear testing is necessary to maintain its deterrent capability. As long as that deterrent is necessary, we must continue to test.

Finally, as long as he brought up that issue of nuclear testing, I would be remiss if I did not mention a recent announcement in Washington last Thursday. State Department spokesman Charles Redman announced that a Soviet nuclear test explosion early this month vented radioactive debris into the atmosphere which has been detected beyond Soviet borders, in violation of the

(Mr. Friedersdorf, United States of America)

1963 limited test-ban Treaty. The spokesman said the United States had conveyed its concern to the Soviet Union over "this failure to comply with its treaty obligations". He said it was the second such Soviet venting this year: the first occurred in February. Redman told questioners the radioactivity detected from the 2 August Soviet test -- and we are all fortunate in this -- "does not pose calculable health, safety, or environmental risks". "A Soviet nuclear test conducted on 2 August 1987 at Novaya Zemlya caused the release of radioactive debris into the atmosphere", a State Department statement said. I mention that because I think that an object of this nuclear test ban was to rid the atmosphere of those kinds of radioactive elements and protect the health of all the people all over the world, and I think it is sad that this event which occurred on 2 August was not announced to the people that might be effected by such an accident until almost two weeks later.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the United States for his statement. Do any other delegations wish to speak? I give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Rose.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, I have listened with due attention to the remarks made by my good friend Ambassador Friedersdorf. I do not want to deal with all the aspects he raised here, but I would simply say that as far as a CTBT is concerned, I think we are in full agreement in describing the position of the United States on this question.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the Ambassador of the German Democratic Republic for his statement. Are there any other requests? I give the floor to the representative of the Soviet Union.

Mr. JARKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Thank you, Mr. President. In connection with the statement by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States of America, may I say the following. The statement by the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, E.A. Shevardnadze, the issues which were highlighted in that statement, showed the weakness of the United States position on a whole series of issues which are on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. This is the first point.

Secondly, I should like to acquaint those present here with a TASS communiqué regarding assertions that radioactive substances had been carried beyond the borders of the USSR in connection with the conduct of a nuclear test explosion on the island of Novaya Zemlya. The communiqué reads in part as follows:

"When the nuclear explosion was conducted on the island of Novaya Zemlya, all necessary safety measures were taken so as to preclude radioactive fall-out, in keeping with the obligations of the Soviet Union under the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water. The population was exposed to no risk of radioactivity, a fact which was confirmed by the Soviet national monitoring systems.

(Mr. Jarkov, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

"Following requests received, the competent Soviet organizations conducted additional comprehensive checks, which showed that the explosion was followed by the emission of an insignificant amount of gaseous products which did not lead to the formation of radioactive fall-out. This rules out the possibility of radioactive fall-out in any States as a result of the underground nuclear explosion carried out on the island of Novaya Zemlya.

"The Soviet Union attaches great importance to strict and unswerving observance of the provisions of the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water, which it considers an important means of limiting the arms race. The appropriate Soviet organizations unfailingly carry out all necessary measures to ensure compliance with the requirements of this international instrument.

"Our goal is the general and complete prohibition of nuclear weapon tests. The Soviet Union once again reaffirms its proposal for immediate negotiations on this issue -- in any form and in any set-up. Whether nuclear explosions take place or not depends first of all on the United States of America. We wait their reply."

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of the USSR for his statement. Do any other delegations wish to speak?

Before closing the plenary meeting, I should like to remind you that at our last plenary meeting, the representative of the Soviet Union, His Excellency Ambassador Nazarkin, called on the Conference to adopt before the end of the annual session a decision of principle concerning the establishment, at the beginning of the 1988 session, of a special group of scientific experts which would be assigned the task of submitting to the Conference recommendations on the structure and functions of a verification system for a possible nuclear-test-ban agreement. I believe that consultations are under way on this proposal by the representative of the Soviet Union. I hope that the proposal will be examined at the group meeting tomorrow morning, so that we can take it up.

I also consider it my duty to inform you that the work of some of the ad hoc committees is not proceeding in accordance with the timetable. As you know, the Conference can no longer hold night or weekend meetings, with technical services, because of the budgetary constraints facing the United Nations. We are now approaching the end of the annual session, and we have nine actual working days left. We have yet to examine the technical parts of the reports to the General Assembly, adopt the reports of the subsidiary bodies, study the substantive paragraphs on the agenda items for which no subsidiary bodies have been established, and also take other decisions. I am sure I can count on your co-operation in the days to come so as to complete our work as scheduled.

As I announced to you at Thursday's plenary meeting, I will be submitting to the Conference for decision at the end of the next plenary meeting the recommendations contained in paragraph 17 of the report of the Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, relating to the dates proposed for the Ad hoc Group's next session, from 7 to 18 March 1988.

(The President, translated from French)

I should also like to remind you that, after the informal meeting which we will be holding immediately following the plenary to consider the reports to the General Assembly, the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons will meet in this same room.

Finally, I wish to inform you that, at Thursday's plenary meeting, the Conference will have as its first speaker His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Mr. Sten Andersson. As in the past, I would like to suggest that we begin the meeting punctually at 10 a.m. in order to facilitate the arrangements relating to the Minister's visit.

Before closing this meeting, I give the floor to the representative of Australia, Ambassador Butler.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President. I will not delay the proceedings for very long. I have listened now to your appeal for our co-operation in the production of the report, and I certainly assure you of my delegation's co-operation with you in that task.

I have sought the floor, Mr. President, because of the fact that you drew attention to a proposal that has been made by the delegation of the Soviet Union. I thank you for doing that. It is, of course, only one of a number of proposals that have been put to the Conference and, in this context, I would draw attention to the fact that my delegation has proposed that this Conference take a decision this year on the establishment of a global seismological monitoring network.

The PRESIDENT (translated from French): I thank the representative of Australia for his statement. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 20 August at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.