

FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDREDTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 26 March 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Ambassador Lechuga Hevia (Cuba)

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I call to order the 400th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, it is a particular pleasure for me to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency the State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Wu Xueqian, who is attending the Conference today and will be our first speaker.

His presence among us at this plenary meeting is of particular significance since this is the first time that the Foreign Minister of China has been here with us since his country took its place at the Conference on 5 February 1980. I do not need to say how important China's role is in the negotiations on disarmament. Suffice it to recall the effective contribution that was made to the organization of work of the Conference during this session by my predecessor in the Presidency, Ambassador Fan Guoxiang. The way in which he conducted our business made it possible to resolve a number of pressing matters and considerably facilitated our work. I am sure that the statement to be made by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of China will be followed with particular interest by all members of the Conference.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference today is to continue the consideration of agenda item 4, "Chemical weapons". In accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, however, members who so desire can make statements on any other question related to the work of the Conference. The representatives of China, France and Mongolia are on my list of speakers for today.

I now call on the first speaker on my list, His Excellency the State Councillor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Mr. Wu Xueqian.

Mr. WU XUEQIAN (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, I am greatly honoured to have the opportunity of meeting you and other representatives, and of making this statement here during my visit to Switzerland. First of all, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference for this month. I am confident that under your able guidance the Conference on Disarmament will achieve fresh progress.

The Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, is charged with the important mission of negotiating international disarmament agreements. The representatives of various countries attending the Conference are engaged in an arduous and yet significant task. On behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to extend my greetings to you and hope that your work will yield positive results.

The presence of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva often calls to mind recollections of the past. This magnificent Palais des Nations stands as a witness to history. Soon after the First World War the people of the world, having experienced the hardships and sufferings of war, were strongly opposed to the arms race among the Powers and urgently called for disarmament in the interests of world peace. It was in this very building of the League of Nations that an international disarmament conference was held to address the question of how to bring about disarmament and safeguard peace. However,

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owing to reasons known to all, the conference failed to achieve the results that had been expected. What followed was the disaster of another war for the world's people. The past few decades since the end of the Second World War have witnessed tremendous changes in the international situation. However, the task of halting the arms race and promoting disarmament, far from being lightened, has become even more acute for the people of the world, requiring as it does their unremitting efforts.

The present-day question of disarmament has taken on some new characteristics as compared to the past.

First, the rapid advance of science and technology has given birth to, among other things, various types of sophisticated weapons, especially the nuclear weapon, which is the most destructive weapon ever invented in human history. The existing nuclear arsenals are enough to destroy the world many times over. Should a nuclear war break out, it will bring an unprecedented holocaust upon mankind. This is something unimaginable 50 years ago. To remove the threat of nuclear war and prevent a nuclear catastrophe is now a major issue of common concern to all the peace-loving countries and peoples of the world.

Second, the super-Powers possess not only over 95 per cent of nuclear weapons, but also the largest and most sophisticated conventional arsenals in the world. Their armaments far exceed those of all the other countries, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. What is more, their arms race is proceeding on a scale and with a scope hitherto unknown. Therefore, they should stop the ever-escalating arms race between them if the international tension is to be relaxed and world peace maintained. The super-Powers bear a primary and unshirkable responsibility for nuclear as well as conventional disarmament.

Third, the rise of the Third-World countries and the increasingly important role the small and medium-sized countries play in international disarmament affairs have brought to an end the control and monopoly by a few big Powers over the question of disarmament. The Third-World countries, with three quarters of the world's population, have cast off the yoke of colonial rule and won political independence, and are in urgent need of an international environment of peace in which to develop their economies and consolidate their political independence. They are taking an active part in the world struggle for disarmament and demand an end to the arms race between the super-Powers, thus making important contributions to the maintenance of world peace and security.

Fourth, peace is the general desire of the developed countries in Europe and elsewhere in the world, which, having suffered from the calamities of world wars, clearly understand what grave consequences war would bring them. This is particularly true of Europe, where there is a high concentration of economically-developed countries and where the two major military blocs are locked in direct confrontation. The people of Europe do not want to see the recurrence of the scourge of world war on their continent. Opposing tension and war and striving for détente and peace, they constitute an important force for peace and have made persistent efforts in promoting disarmament.

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In the face of this new situation, we set forth the following basic views in the interests of maintaining peace, preventing war and promoting disarmament.

First, in the world of today, only the two super-Powers are capable of waging a world war. It is, therefore, a matter of course that they should take the lead in reducing armaments, particularly nuclear armaments. To address the issue of disarmament without bearing this in mind is bound to be pointless. In fact, only after the two super-Powers actually take the lead in putting an end to the testing, production and deployment of all types of nuclear weapons and drastically reduce and destroy, on the spot, all types of their nuclear weapons deployed at home or abroad, will it be possible to create conditions for other nuclear-weapon States to participate in nuclear disarmament.

The United Nations General Assembly, at its forty-first session, adopted by consensus resolution 41/59 F calling on the two super-Powers to take a lead in drastically reducing their nuclear armaments. This has fully reflected the common desire and demand of the world's people.

Over the past year or so two summit meetings were held between the United States and the Soviet Union, during which they put forward various disarmament proposals and plans. People have noted that both sides indicated that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and that each put forward its proposal for a 50 per cent reduction of strategic nuclear weapons as a first step. This is a welcome development. However, fundamental differences still exist between the two sides and those disarmament proposals and plans remain only on paper. No practical actions for disarmament have been taken so far. It is the ardent hope of the peoples of the world that the United States and the Soviet Union will set store by the overall interests of world peace and security, earnestly undertake the special responsibility of taking the lead in disarmament and reach, through serious negotiations, agreements which are truly conducive to halting the arms race, lowering the level of armaments and relaxing international tension without prejudice to the interests of other countries. We have taken note of the recent proposals put forward by the two sides respectively on the question of medium-range missiles. In our view, the two major nuclear Powers should heed and respect fully the opinions of the European countries. It should also be pointed out that world peace is indivisible; security in Europe and security in Asia are equally important. The medium-range missiles deployed by the Soviet Union and the United States in Europe and Asia should be reduced simultaneously and in a synchronous and balanced manner until they are totally eliminated.

Secondly, the fundamental way for the prevention of nuclear war lies in the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. In order to reduce the danger of nuclear war and create conditions for the removal of its threat, all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances and undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-free zones, and then proceed to conclude an international convention banning the use of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, it is also necessary to avert conventional war, if nuclear war is to be effectively prevented, for both world wars and the hundreds of wars and armed

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conflicts following the Second World War have been fought with conventional weapons. In the present-day world an overwhelming part of the annual military expenditure of nearly \$US 1,000 billion are spent on conventional weapons. More important is the likelihood that a conventional war may escalate into a nuclear war. Therefore, while striving for nuclear disarmament, mankind should also work hard for conventional disarmament. The two should go hand in hand and promote each other. The international community has every reason to ask the super-Powers with the largest and most advanced conventional arsenals and the two major military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact Organization, to take the lead in drastically cutting their conventional armaments, first and foremost offensive conventional forces, and reach relevant agreements in the interests of maintaining peace and stability in Europe and the world at large.

Thirdly, it is our view that the issues of disarmament concerns secure the interests of all countries in the world and must not be monopolized by a few big Powers. All countries, big or small, strong or weak, aligned or non-aligned, nuclear or non-nuclear, developed or developing, have the right to participate on an equal footing in the discussion and settlement of the question of disarmament. The super-Powers should respect and accept reasonable proposals and suggestions of the other countries in their bilateral talks. The composition of the Conference on Disarmament embodies the principle of equal participation by sovereign States in the discussion and settlement of the question of disarmament in the world. The Conference is the only authoritative organ for multilateral disarmament talks in the world today and its role should be increasingly strengthened rather than weakened or limited. And still less should bilateral talks be used as an excuse to obstruct multilateral talks.

Fourth, disarmament is an important issue which has a direct bearing on world peace and security but it is not the only issue. Its realization requires the necessary international environment and conditions. The current international situation remains disturbing. On the one hand, the arms race is still going on, extending from the Earth's surface to outer space. On the other hand, there are unceasing regional conflicts, invasion, intervention and military occupation of other countries threatening and jeopardizing the sovereignty and security of many small and medium-sized countries. It can hardly be imagined that genuine disarmament can be achieved in a tense and turbulent international environment. In order to safeguard world peace and security and achieve effective disarmament, it is imperative to oppose hegemonism and power politics, check aggression and expansion and eliminate regional trouble-spots. In international relations all countries should strictly abide by the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefits and peaceful coexistence. It is impermissible to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries or violate their sovereignty in any form or on any excuse. This is the only approach conducive to the maintenance of world peace and progress of disarmament.

China is a socialist as well as a developing country, pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace. Having suffered untold hardships from foreign aggression and the scourge of war in the past, China is engaged in a

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socialist modernization drive today. The Chinese people hope to approach and catch up with the developed countries in terms of economic development through the hard work of several generations. Therefore, China needs an international environment of durable peace -- peace not only in this century but also in the next century. For this purpose the Chinese Government has been conducting its foreign affairs with the basic objective of opposing hegemonism and power politics, maintaining world peace, developing friendly co-operation with other countries and promoting common economic prosperity. China will not enter into alliance or a strategic relationship with any super-Power. It will endeavour to establish and develop friendly relations in co-operation with other countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Upholding the arms race and promoting the realization of disarmament is an important part of China's independent foreign policy of peace. China maintains that the arms race, nuclear or conventional, on the ground or in space, should be brought to an end. China has always stood for the complete prohibition and the thorough destruction of nuclear, chemical, biological and space weapons as well as a substantial reduction of conventional arms. China is in favour of the peaceful use of outer space and is opposed to the arms race in outer space no matter who conducts it and in what form. The development of space weaponry will lead to further intensification and escalation of the arms race and greater tension and turbulence in international situations. The United States and the Soviet Union, the only two countries that possess space weapons and continue to develop such weapons, bear a special responsibility for the cessation of the arms race in outer space. It is our hope that they will heed the voice of the peoples of the world and take immediate and effective measures to halt the arms race in any form in outer space by refraining from developing, testing and deploying space weapons and destroying all existing space weapons.

China, a non-chemical-weapons State, was once the victim of the use of this weapon. China has all along stood for an early conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, and made positive efforts to this end. We are pleased that marked progress has been made over recent years in the negotiations on chemical weapons at the Conference on Disarmament. We are of the view that the future convention should, as a priority, provide for the thorough destruction of the existing chemical weapons, as well as their production facilities, should ensure the non-production of new chemical weapons without harming or affecting the peaceful development of civilian chemical industry in all countries and should stipulate necessary and effective verification measures.

China supports all proposals that contribute to the cause of disarmament and takes an active part in the world endeavour for disarmament. On the issue of disarmament, China's actions are consistent with its words. China has no intention of evading and will never evade its due obligations and responsibilities. As is known to all, from the very first day of its possession of nuclear weapons, China explicitly undertook not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. Accordingly, China also undertook not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-free zones. In March last year, China declared that it would conduct no more atmospheric nuclear tests. The year before last, China started to cut the size of its armed forces by 1 million,

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and this work has been progressing smoothly. The proportion of military expenses in China's budget has been going down year by year. In addition, China's military industry is being reoriented on a large scale to civilian production and some military facilities have been opened or turned over to civilian uses.

Not long ago, the Chinese Government formally signed the Additional Protocols attached to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. The Chinese Government and people willingly, and by concrete actions, are making contributions to the relaxation of international tension and the maintenance of world peace.

Today we are still living in a grim international environment and the danger of war still exists. However, it is gratifying to note that the factors against war and the forces making for peace have been growing. The popular will for peace has become an irresistible trend in the current world. We are convinced that as long as the peoples of the world make concerted and persistent efforts, war can be averted and peace preserved. The future of the world is bright. The Chinese Government and people are ready to work together with the Governments and peoples of all the countries in the world to this end.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank His Excellency the State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of China for his interesting statement and the kind words addressed to the President. I now call on the representative of France, Ambassador Morel.

Mr. MOREL (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, the French delegation wishes first of all to convey to you its warm congratulations and gratitude for the way in which you have been guiding our work since the beginning of the month. Members of the Conference have long been familiar with your considerable diplomatic abilities, your wisdom and your courtesy. Once again they have the opportunity of appreciating these qualities.

I also wish to stress how pleased my delegation is to see the representative of Cuba occupy the Presidency. France has friendly and thriving relations with Cuba, a country to which it is close both because of our Latin roots and also because of geography, since the Caribbean Sea is also that of the French Antilles. I should like also to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Fan Guoxiang, for his work during the month of February. He managed, with extraordinary energy, talent and patience, to resolve the complex problems that always arise at the opening of the Conference's sessions. The Conference is in particular greatly indebted to him for the prompt establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

My delegation has listened with special interest to the statement just made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China. We share with China a broad community of outlook on the topic of disarmament, and we do not forget that our two countries joined in the work of this Conference at the same time with the firm resolution of making a full contribution to multilateral disarmament endeavours.

(Mr. Morel, France)

I should also like to thank all those who gave me such a warm welcome when I arrived at this Conference. I was struck by the spirit of co-operation and friendship here, quite apart from our substantive differences of view. You may rest assured, Mr. President, that I shall always take part in the work of this Conference in the same spirit.

As we know, the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is at present working on issues relating to non-production of chemical weapons. The French delegation wishes to make an active contribution to the discussions on a topic to which it attaches great importance, and therefore now has the honour to introduce today document CD/747, entitled "Non-production of chemical weapons", which spells out the details of the preliminary remarks expressed by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jean Bernard Raimond, on this subject a month ago, on 19 February, in this chamber.

The starting-point for our approach is that it has gradually become clear from discussions on article 6 of the convention that it is not desirable to build a convention that would be perfect for the present but which would be threatened with obsolescence in the near future and would therefore become increasingly inoperative. We do not think that it is useful to establish a definitive schedule of substances to be prohibited, with their attendant régimes of verification. The convention must obviously be comprehensive and binding for everything with which we are familiar, but precisely in order to ensure the full observance and authority of the convention we must also be able to make provision for all that at present remains hypothetical, little-known or indeed unknown. How, for example, can we regulate, without harming the legitimate interests of each country, the potential inherent in industries that are producing for permissible requirements substances that could be diverted for weapons purposes? How can the scientific and technological progress which will certainly come about, both in the chemical industry and on the control and verification side, be taken into account? Such questions cannot but convince us that, while we must be absolutely firm in everything relating to the goals, principles and ground rules, flexibility is essential in the application of the convention for everything that is not yet fully identified.

Thus, our document identifies the areas where, taking this evolutionary perspective I have outlined, developments may well occur.

With regard to the schedules of substances to be controlled, the essential and most difficult task is to define the toxicity criterion. Here we have to set aside the idea of attaining theoretical perfection and rather seek agreement on a definition and procedures of acquisition that are acceptable to everybody and could serve as a reference.

With regard to super-toxic lethal chemicals which are not chemical weapons, we do not think that, given their characteristics, it would be useful to draw up an exhaustive list at this stage. What is essential is to establish definitional criteria to assess the possibility of any particular substance becoming a chemical weapon, and to set a production threshold over which its manufacture must be declared.

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Finally, we must give thought to monitoring new products and technologies, a major sphere on which the survival of the convention hinges, and which the Committee has not yet discussed.

Quite clearly, some of the tasks I have mentioned could best be carried out by a special body, and that is what is proposed in our document. We suggest that a Scientific Council should be set up, consisting of independent eminent persons, chosen solely for their scientific competence. As stated in our document, this new body would have responsibilities at the following stages: First, following the declaration of stocks, to finalize the lists of chemicals to be prohibited and monitored, for by definition, the exact composition of the stockpiles will be known only after each country has made its declaration, which will happen on the entry into force of the convention.

Secondly, during the administration of the convention. The Scientific Council should inform the Consultative Committee of the appearance of any new substance or new technology which might pose a risk to the convention, and propose appropriate measures and verification procedures.

We attach a great deal of importance both to the independence of the eminent persons selected, and to a precise definition of their powers, so as to avoid any duplication with other bodies. Thus, the Scientific Council would have an advisory role but no power of decision whatsoever. One annual meeting could be scheduled, together with meetings at the request of the Consultative Committee where necessary.

My delegation is today submitting document CD/747 with the intention of breaking new ground while at the same time paying due heed to the need for realism and flexibility. The document suggests some practical measures, which I have summarized, but it also seeks to prompt us to think about how the convention will actually work. Very strict rules are essential, but they will not be enough in themselves. We have also to provide for instruments, tools, criteria for action, and therefore for an administration that is suited to the future circumstances of research and production in the chemical industry. What we are building must not be a great monument that is threatened by time but a living, active, credible institution. This is the spirit underlying our proposals, and of course we are quite open to any comments and suggestions to which they may give rise on the part of member States.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of France for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President, as well as his reference to my country. I now call on the representative of Mongolia, Ambassador Bayart.

Mr. BAYART (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, first of all allow me to congratulate you on your occupation of the post of President of the Conference for March. It is especially pleasant for us to see you occupying this post. You are one of the veterans of multilateral disarmament bodies, an eminent diplomat representing socialist Cuba whose active foreign policy activities intended to consolidate peace and international security enjoy well-deserved authority and respect on the part of all peace-loving States. It is also pleasant for us to note that my

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country and Cuba are linked by fraternal friendship and close co-operation. I can assure you that my delegation will continue to co-operate closely with you and give you every assistance in the successful performance of your duties as President.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the distinguished representative of the People's Republic of China, Ambassador Fan Guoxiang, for his fruitful work as President in February. My delegation would like to join in with the words of welcome addressed to the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Wu Xueqian. We listened with great attention to his important statement.

In his declaration made on 28 February this year, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, advanced the proposal that the problem of medium-range missiles in Europe be taken out of the package of issues relating to nuclear disarmament discussed at the Soviet-American Summit Meeting in Reykjavik, and that a separate agreement be immediately concluded on that issue.

It is difficult to overestimate that initiative, which opens up real prospects for a real breakthrough in nuclear disarmament.

The Mongolian People's Republic fully approves of and supports this qualitatively new and major step on the part of the Soviet Union, which is aimed at building a world free from nuclear weapons and creating a comprehensive system of international security.

Implementation of the Soviet initiative on a broad base would meet the interests not only of the countries and peoples of Europe but also of Asia and the whole world and would significantly consolidate the foundations of international peace and security.

In our opinion, there is every justification to count on the rapid implementation of the Soviet initiative, since already at Reykjavik to all intents and purposes agreement was reached on the question of medium-range missiles in Europe.

Whilst we attach enormous significance to rapid translation of this accord into a specific agreement, Mongolia at the same time does not wish in any way to play down the immediacy and urgency of achieving agreement on the limitation and elimination of strategic weapons and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

As we understand it, the Soviet-American agreement to the effect that these questions be considered and resolved together remains in force, and needs to be translated into practical political policy and specific actions.

Time is passing and the international community is more and more concerned at the threat that space will become a new sphere for the arms race. This threat is related to the United States plans to develop and deploy a large-scale anti-missile system with space-based elements.

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The United States Strategic Defence Initiative plans for emulation between strategic offensive and defence weapons. Its proponents strenuously argue that, compared with the early 1970s when the Soviet-American ABM Treaty of indefinite duration was drawn up, new scientific and technical possibilities have appeared which supposedly would make it possible to rely on this "up-to-date defence", and thus rid the world of nuclear weapons.

However, it is quite evident that the development of a large-scale ABM system might be a major stimulus for the qualitative development and quantitative build-up of strategic offensive weapons, both delivery vehicles and nuclear warheads. Up-to-date technology might equally lead to the development of missiles and also to the creation of new types of weapons.

So-called defensive space weapons can quite justifiably be considered as offensive weapons. They will be capable of destroying the most important early-warning, detection and communication satellites of the other side. Deployed in orbit these weapons will be a constant threat to the space apparatus on which the degree of confidence of States in their own security greatly depends. These weapons threaten to destabilize us and weaken the strategic balance. If weapons were based in space, any significant technical breakdown in an orbiting satellite could be inaccurately interpreted and taken for the signal of an attack, and the consequences of such an error would be catastrophic.

We are informed by the press that American scientists are working on four types of lasers, in particular, nuclear-pump X-ray lasers. As we know, the source for such an explosion would be a nuclear warhead, and any such warhead could be used as an offensive weapon.

In view of these developments, in parallel with the bilateral negotiations between the USSR and the United States, the Conference on Disarmament must really come to grips with the tasks of preventing an arms race in outer space.

The Mongolian delegation expresses its satisfaction at the comparatively rapid re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on item 5 of our agenda, and for this we are greatly indebted to the President of the Conference in February, the representative of the People's Republic of China, Ambassador Fan Guoxiang, who spared no effort to find a compromise solution in the elaboration of a mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee. But at the same time, we regret that the Conference did not manage to produce a negotiating mandate, in accordance with the recommendation of the General Assembly of the United Nations contained in resolution 41/53.

Now, the task is for the Ad Hoc Committee to adopt its programme of work for the current year as soon as possible. The current situation is that the Ad Hoc Committee was established just one month ago, but substantive work is not under way. Is it worth continuing wasting even more time on procedural matters? Would it not be better to get down to the implementation of the mandate, and begin the consideration of matters related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space? Thus, we could come very close to the next, the basic stage: negotiations to conclude an agreement, or agreements, as appropriate, not to allow weapons into outer space.

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For this purpose, the Ad Hoc Committee has all that it needs. Over the last two years of its activity, it has accumulated considerable experience. In 1986, it discussed, very thoroughly, the first two items in its programme of work, namely, the consideration and definition of issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and existing agreements relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It also dealt with the third item in its programme, existing proposals and future initiatives intended to prevent an arms race in outer space. Here, we note that the volume of the content of that third item is growing, because new initiatives are coming to the fore all the time. Today, the Ad Hoc Committee has before it a whole range of constructive proposals and ideas intended to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Various countries have submitted specific proposals on the preparation of an international agreement to guarantee immunity for objects in outer space, and on the prohibition of the development of new anti-satellite systems and the elimination of existing ones. There have been many other proposals as well.

Recently the distinguished representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Taylhardat, came up with the interesting idea of a possible addition to article 4 of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. That idea is along the same line as the proposal by Italy on the preparation of an additional protocol to that Treaty.

The Soviet delegation has tabled a new proposal for the creation of a system of international control for the non-deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind, envisaging the establishment of an international inspectorate. We are impressed by the idea of an international inspectorate. This measure will be especially effective if we achieve a full ban on all types of space weaponry -- space-based anti-missile weapons, anti-satellite weapons and space-to-Earth weapons. If the ban is a partial one, for example, just covering one class of outer space weapons, then, obviously, we will need additional control measures. This, by the way, is just another argument in favour of a full ban.

An inspectorate would probably not exhaust all the control possibilities in such a system. We could think about combining such an inspectorate with national means of verification and control and collective consultative machinery which would deal with disputes.

We hope that the idea of an inspectorate will be discussed in the Conference. It would be interesting to hear the reactions of representatives of other countries, in particular those traditionally especially interested in such issues of control.

Obviously, this idea will be further developed in more detail as we work towards the elaboration of specific measures to prevent an arms race in outer space.

There can be no doubt that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is a high-priority task, one of the most important tasks, in fact, which

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awaits a solution. Therefore, the Mongolian delegation, like many others, considers that this task should occupy its due place in the draft Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament which is being elaborated.

I would now like to make a few comments on the question of a chemical-weapons ban. A definite amount of success has recently been achieved in the drafting of the chemical-weapons convention. Many positions of principle and specific technical issues have been reconciled and there is the necessary basis for further progress. Amongst the unresolved questions of principle is the question of on-site challenge inspection. At this stage of the negotiations this is a basic problem of universal significance for the convention.

What is the actual situation as regards the solution of this problem? Several positions have been stated in the negotiations. Each of them reflects the interests of one or another group of delegations or the interests of specific delegations. These interests have to be taken into account and brought into line with the common aim: the elaboration of a convention which can universally and really be implemented.

The socialist countries are in favour of a régime of challenge inspections which would be as effective as possible and, at the same time, would not be detrimental to the higher interests of States. This aim, we feel, is met by the approach set out in the proposal of the United Kingdom contained in document CD/715, and in particular the central idea of that proposal -- the possibility of proposing and applying alternative measures.

It seems to us that the proposal that challenge verifications concerning declared locations and facilities and also in cases of suspicion of the use of chemical weapons should be mandatory is a promising one from the point of view of finding a compromise. Perhaps we should think about those other cases which we could include in the list of those where a refusal to allow full verification to be carried out would not be allowable.

For many years it was impossible to agree on questions of verifying the destruction of chemical weapon stocks and the elimination of their production facilities, as well as the permitted sphere of activities.

The proposals made by the Soviet delegation take account of the position of the Western and non-aligned States and fully remove any obstacle to the elaboration of comprehensive and strict control over chemical weapon stocks, production facilities and permitted activities. On these issues we have practically all the necessary basis for the formulation of articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Nevertheless, unfortunately, we cannot but note certain negative factors which are delaying the consolidation of the success achieved: for example, the unexpected difficulties which have arisen in resolving questions such as diversion of chemical weapons (the delegation of the United States of America has departed from its earlier position just when the USSR

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delegation took its preoccupations into account and tried to accommodate them), as well as the elaboration of provisions concerning chemicals in the second category. The singling out of super-toxic lethal chemicals used for pharmaceutical, medicinal, scientific and research purposes, which do not have the set of properties peculiar to chemical warfare agents, is a step towards accommodating the wishes of the Western delegations. Nevertheless, the selfsame Western delegations are not devoting the due energy towards the solution of this issue.

These delegations are also delaying a solution to the question of irritants. The use of chemical weapons based on harmful chemicals against developing countries which do not have the necessary level of protection could be extremely detrimental to their defence capability. In the first place, there would be suffering on the part of the civilian population and damage to the peaceful spheres of activity in those countries. We also need to see a solution to the issue of the use of herbicides for military purposes.

There is nothing insoluble about these issues. All we need is a will to bring about a constructive agreement.

The important problem of the destruction of chemical weapon stocks and the elimination of production facilities has in principle been resolved. On the destruction of stocks, we have not yet achieved agreement on the order for their destruction. However, there does exist a common understanding that the régime for destruction would have to be simple and fair. The discussion of the idea of using equivalence in comparing various categories of chemical weapon stocks has shown that the practical implementation of this idea is going to be extremely complicated. The most simple and realistic way would lie in the grouping of chemical weapons in comparable categories which would have to be destroyed in equal amounts by weight during each period of destruction of stocks.

In the preparation of the convention there are a significant number of separate technical issues which, of course, have to be resolved. We cannot play down the importance of these questions, but I would like to appeal to the parties to the negotiations first and foremost to work for the completion of the provisions of principle. We cannot allow the possibility that progress in preparing and agreeing on the convention should get bogged down in the technical details.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Mongolia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President and to my country. I have no further speakers on my list for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor? I see none. At my request, the secretariat today has distributed the timetable of meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies for next week. As usual, the timetable has been drawn up in consultation with the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees; it is purely indicative and can be changed if necessary. You will note that the

(The President)

Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons will hold its 1st meeting on Friday, 3 April, at 3 p.m. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I shall now proceed to adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 31 March, at 10 a.m. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.