

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Thursday, 12 April 1984, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. J. Dhanapala

(Sri Lanka)

GE.84-61630

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. A. TAFFAR

Mr. A. BOUBAZINE

Argentina:

Mr. J.J. CARASALES

Mr. R. GARCÍA MORITAN

Mr. R. VILLAMBROSA

Australia:

Mr. R. BUTLER

Mr. R. ROWE

Ms. J. COURTNEY

Belgium:

Mr. M. DEPASSE

Mr. J. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA

Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. TELLALOV

Mr. P. POPTCHEV

Mr. C. PRAMOV

Mr. N. MIHAILOV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI

U PE THEIN TIN

U THAN TUN

Canada:

Mr. G.R. SKINNER

Mr. R.J. ROCHON

Mr. F.R. CLEMINSON

China:

Mr. QIAN JIADONG

Ms. WANG ZHIYUN

Mr. LIANG DEFENG

Mr. YANG MINGLIANG

Mr. SUO KAIMING

Cuba:

Mr. P. NÚÑEZ MOSQUERA

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. VEJVODA
Mr. A. CIMA
Mr. J. MATOUSEK

Egypt:

Mr. S. ALFARAGI
Ms. W. BASSIM
Mr. I. HASSAN
Mr. A. WAHER ABBAS

Ethiopia:

Mr. F. JOHANNES

France:

Mr. F. DE LA GORCE
Mr. H. RENTIE
Mr. G. MONTASSIER

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. ROSE
Mr. J. DEMBSKI
Mr. H. THIELECKE

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. H. WEGENER
Mr. W.-D. VON DEM HAGEN
Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. M. GERDTS

Hungary:

Mr. MEISZTER
Mr. F. GAIDO
Mr. H. TOTH

India:

Mr. DUBEY
Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mrs. P. RAMADHAN
Mr. HARYOMATARAM

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Mr. N. KAMYAB
Mr. J. FALIPNEA

Italy:

Mr. M. PAVESE
Mr. B. CABRAS

Japan:

Mr. M. IMAI
Mr. M. KONISHI
Mr. T. KAWAKITA

Kenya:Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA
Ms. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI
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Netherlands:

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Mr. C.V. UDEDIBLA
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Mr. M. AHMAD
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Peru:

Mr. C. CASTILLO RAMIREZ

Poland:

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Mr. G. CZEMPINSKI
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania:

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Mr. T. MELESCANU
Mr. P. BALOIU
Mr. A. CRETU
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Mr. R. ÅNGSTRÖM

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

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Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. R.M. TIMERBAEV
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV
Mr. P.Y. SKOMOROKHIN
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Mr. N. CLYNE
Mr. N. CARRERA
Ms. K.C. CRITTENBERGER
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Mr. R. NORMAN
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Mr. C. PEARCY
Mr. J. PLUNKETT

Venezuela:

Mr. O. GARCÍA GARCÍA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. K. VIDAS

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Ms. ESAKI EKANGA KABEYA

Secretary-General of the Conference on
Disarmament and Personal
Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The PRESIDENT: The Conference on Disarmament is called to order.

The Conference continues today its consideration of item 8 on its agenda, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

You will recall that our time-table for this week includes the holding of an informal meeting, if necessary, to consider organizational questions. I intend, therefore, to suspend the plenary meeting after we have listened to those speakers inscribed to address the Conference today and to convene an informal meeting to consider the following questions: (a) our programme of work for the week beginning on 16 April; (b) the question of how to proceed in connection with proposals under agenda items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7; and (c) the opening date for the second part of the 1984 session.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Spain, Brazil, Bangladesh, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Senegal.

I now give the floor to the representative of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): Mr. President, let me, in the first place, welcome you as President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of April. I can assure you that you will have the full support of my delegation in your effort to get the Conference on Disarmament dealing effectively with all the items of its agenda. At this juncture I should like to thank Ambassador Datcu of Romania for his persistent effort in the same direction last month.

It is my intention to address today a very old item -- that of the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons. Next year we shall take note of the 70th anniversary of the notorious "Black Sunday" of 22 April 1915, when chemical weapons were used for the first time causing the suffocation of thousands of French soldiers under merciless green-brownish clouds of chlorine released from German trenches near Ypres. In the following years 113,000 metric tons of toxic agents were used causing 1,297,000 casualties, of which 91,200 were lethal.

It can be argued that the fear of possible use of toxic chemicals for hostile purposes preceded by far their actual use. Thus we can find the first explicit mention of toxic weapons in the Declaration on Laws and Means of War, signed in Brussels 110 years ago. A number of other treaties dealt with this problem more or less extensively, for example, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the peace treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Neuilly, Trianon, Sèvres and Berlin, signed between 1919 and 1921, as well as the Washington Treaty of 1922. The significance of these treaties was later reflected in the Geneva Protocol of 1925 which, until today, remains the most important international document aimed against chemical warfare. It remains fully valid despite the fact that the process of its ratification took, in some countries, half a century.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

It is the considered opinion of my delegation that today, virtually 60 years after the conclusion of the Geneva Protocol, the problem of the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons is fully ripe for its effective and definite solution. Not only because it is an old, almost an ancient, matter, but, above all, because it is about to acquire a new, dangerous dimension. I would hardly be saying anything new if I reminded distinguished delegates that on 27 June 1980 the United States House of Representatives approved the funds required for the erection of a new production facility for binary chemical weapons in the Pine-Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas. On 8 February 1982 the production of binary weapons was approved by the relevant presidential letter to the Congress. Thus, the United States programme of chemical rearmament was launched. The fact that the United States Senate had passed resolutions on freezing the funds for the production of chemical weapons should not obscure the intensive activities undertaken in the United States with a view to carrying through their binary weapons programme. According to United States sources, the development of binary weapons cost 3 to 4 billion dollars in the 1970s. The first such types of weapons to be produced are the 155 mm XM 687 binary artillery shell with GB-2 filling. The 8-inch XM 736 binary artillery shell and the 500 lb Big-Eye binary guided aerial bomb filled with VX-2 should soon follow suit.

This new round of the chemical arms race and plans for the modernization of the United States chemical arsenal supported by an envisaged 6-7 billion dollars over the next five years open a dangerous perspective for us all. A new super-toxic lethal intermediate-volatility nerve agent, IVA, combining the high percutaneous toxicity of VX with higher volatility and much higher penetration capability through a clothing barrier is the result of intensive military chemical research and development in the United States. This agent should replace present nerve agents in future.

There are also plans to use it widely in binary weapons mounted on Pershing II and Cruise missiles, as well as for remotely piloted vehicles, binary target-guided submunitions, aerially deployed land mines, long-range artillery munitions, and so forth.

If the United States were to proceed with its plans for chemical rearmament it would seriously undermine international efforts to prohibit and destroy chemical weapons. That would be highly regrettable since in recent years active negotiations have been under way, and now our Conference and its Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons have, under the new mandate, a unique opportunity to respond to the urgent call to ban these cruel and inhumane weapons.

However, in order to succeed in doing so it would be necessary that we all approach the adopted mandate as a complex whole. Attempts to stress separately its various aspects cannot serve our purpose. On several occasions in the Working Groups it was remarked that we should not be engaged in the final drafting of the convention. Well, we never insisted on a final drafting in so far as the most important part of the mandate, calling on us "to start the full and complete process of negotiations, developing and working out the convention", is reflected in our daily work. As is now clearly demonstrated in Working Group C, and to some extent in Working Group A, work based on concrete texts and formulations is more conducive to solve problems and to reflect ideas more clearly.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

The progress achieved in Working Group C, dealing with the national implementation measures, speaks clearly in favour of the method chosen by its Chairman. In particular, work on the element "consultation and co-operation" was further advanced, and an understanding was reached on various aspects of "fact-finding". Constructive discussion is under way on "challenge procedure" and the structure of the relevant part was tentatively agreed upon.

The treatment accorded to the problem of "old stocks" found after initial declarations could also be considered as a positive sign. These stocks have finally been given the place corresponding to their very limited significance when compared to the operational chemical-weapon stockpiles. An understanding was reached to solve this problem as a special case in an annex with a different regime of destruction and verification than in the case of the operational chemical-weapon stocks.

My delegation looks eagerly for all positive signs in the treatment by the Conference on Disarmament of the problem of chemical weapons, and is always prepared to help them evolve and develop. At the same time, looking realistically at what has been achieved during the current spring session, we are certainly far from satisfied.

The reluctance of some delegations to take an active part in the process of negotiations, mentioned above, is most clearly reflected in Working Group B. We appreciate the effort of its Chairman who has engaged in a number of informal consultations, but these, it seems, have not brought any tangible results despite the fact that important constructive and compromise proposals were recently advanced concerning the questions falling within the ambit of Working Group B. This is a disquieting and dangerous phenomenon. This room is not the right place for ignorance or obstruction of acts of good faith. The price of the possible consequences will have to be paid by us all.

We conclude that it is now insufficient and meaningless simply to call, in general terms, for the intensification of the elaboration of the chemical weapons convention. The time has come to say aloud what and who is preventing us from doing so. We fully endorse what was said by Ambassador Issraelyan in his statement of 29 March, especially with regard to the negative role played by a new United States proposal heralded quite some time ago. In this connection I would like to recall what was said by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, K.U. Chernenko, in his answers to questions from the newspaper "Pravda" on 8 April, which you will find before you today. "For several months already the American leaders have been promising to table in Geneva some proposals on this score. But promises remain just promises; besides, nothing is known at all about what are they finally going to amount to, while in the meantime, as it follows from the President's remarks, a programme of building up and renovating chemical weapons, which are being deployed both on American territory and beyond it, is being accelerated in the United States."

As to the problem of verification, my delegation has always considered, and continues to do so, that verification provisions should be determined by the scope and specific nature of the disarmament measure involved. When applied to the process of destruction of chemical weapons, this principle means that the verification of stock destruction should be differentiated according to the types

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of chemical weapons being destroyed, to the volume of the stockpile and to the output of the destruction facility. Thus, we consider that the tightest verification provisions should be applied to the most dangerous chemical weapons, i.e., super-toxic lethal chemicals, both filled and in bulk, as well as their precursors and binary (multicomponent) ammunitions and devices. This principle as well as practical needs should always be taken into account when the relevant verification provisions are worked out.

In this respect we fully agree with the distinguished Ambassador of France who said in his statement of 5 April 1984 that "... a continuous and effective human presence is not necessary everywhere and in all cases ...". With respect to verification I would like to reiterate our opinion that a combination of national and international forms of control is necessary. International inspections must make use of the national executive and control systems, their documentation as well as their technical monitoring.

Let me also say that our delegation considers it necessary to be as precise as possible in determining the extent of the prohibition so as to ensure that nothing important, either today or in the future, escapes it. For this reason we also prefer the explicit mentioning of such systems as binary and other multicomponent weapons. At the same time we can hardly agree with the efforts to cover in the prohibition too wide a spectrum of chemicals, as reflected, for instance, in the lists of key precursors submitted by a number of delegations where we can find, inter alia, phosphorus trichloride or phosphorus oxichloride, which can be considered as irrelevant within the scope of the convention. As far as the definition of key precursors is concerned we see some merit in the approach suggested by the Federal Republic of Germany, which we continue to study thoroughly.

Recently, at a theoretical-tactical exercise calculated for the territory of Bavaria, it was assumed that the 21st United States infantry division received 14,000 rounds of GB ammunition. Consequently it was concluded that even well-trained and protected troops would suffer great losses from eventual chemical-weapon use. The civil population remaining in the combat area would suffer a death rate that would be almost 20 times higher. Theory aside, there remains the hard reality that on the territory of the Federal Republic of Germany, our neighbour to the west, huge stockpiles of United States chemical weapons are stored. According to J.P. Robinson, this amounts to about 2-4 per cent of total United States chemical-weapon stockpiles: no wonder that neither our people, with its historical experience, nor the people of the Federal Republic of Germany wish to accept this United States military chemical presence, as is witnessed by indignant protests from Hessen, Württemberg-Baden, Westpfalz and Bavaria, i.e. from those Federal States, where United States chemical stockpiles are deployed. My country knows only too well the data on "tactical exercises" by the United States Armed Forces, where it was assumed that daily some 2,000 tons or more of toxic warfare agents would be deployed on the Central European theatre. I hardly need to add anything to demonstrate that our interest in the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons is nothing less than vital.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Before concluding, Mr. President, let me remind my distinguished colleagues that two days ago we noted the 12th anniversary of the opening for signature in Moscow, Washington and London of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. I should like to recall in this connection that my country, together with other socialist countries, originally proposed that the problem of biological weapons be solved together with that of chemical weapons. It would have been much easier to ban these weapons in 1972 than it is today or than it will be in the future. Let us therefore spare no effort in achieving now what we failed to do 12 years ago.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Conference at its 249th plenary meeting, I now give the floor to the representative of Spain, Ambassador de la Serna.

Mr. DE LA SERNA (Spain) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, first of all I should like to express here my satisfaction at participating as the representative of Spain in this single multilateral negotiating body of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. I should also like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the weighty responsibility you have shouldered in presiding over the Conference on Disarmament, a truly difficult task but one which, thanks to your well-known diplomatic abilities and the co-operation of the distinguished and highly qualified representatives gathered in this chamber, will, I am sure, be able to produce the positive results which the peoples of the entire world expect of this Conference.

The main objective of this United Nations body, the preparation of international disarmament agreements through multilateral negotiations, is complex but certainly also essential, in order to increase international security, and thereby enable mankind to live free of tension and even of fear of world nuclear conflict or of regional or bilateral wars.

It is all the more difficult to achieve this objective at the present time of dangerous international tension, but precisely for that reason the need to achieve positive results in this major forum is all the more crucial.

The success obtained by 35 States at the Madrid Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) with the adoption of a Final Document which is both substantial and balanced after three years of valiant effort and in the midst of serious crises which rarified the international political climate, is a sign to all, including the distinguished members of this Conference, that despite the difficulties surrounding us, success can always be achieved if the political will of Governments exists. That political will must be offered intelligently and trustingly on behalf of the work of this body, in view of the vital importance of the items which the Conference on Disarmament is dealing with, and the appeal repeatedly expressed by the international community for the conclusion of international disarmament agreements.

Of course, this negotiating body would see its work made easier if viewpoints could be harmonized and agreements concluded in the other forums of negotiation on arms reductions and disarmament. The Spanish Government has already expressed in

(Mr. de la Serna, Spain)

due time its concern at the decision to suspend the bilateral INF and START talks; my Government hopes that the United States and the Soviet Union will, in the manner and at the time they consider opportune, resume their negotiations aimed at achieving satisfactory agreements to establish nuclear armaments at the lowest possible levels. A new effort towards this objective is required. Furthermore, Spain notes with hope the negotiations on conventional arms and troop reductions in Central Europe which are being held in Vienna, and is working with dedication in the first stage of the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures currently taking place in Stockholm.

In all these disarmament forums, co-operation and détente must replace tension and distrust.

All the items included in the agenda of this Conference are of great importance for maintaining and strengthening international security, some of them, indeed, for the very survival of mankind. I should now like to refer specifically to some of the issues to which my Government attaches the greatest importance.

In his statement during the general debate at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fernando Morán, recalled the need to conclude a treaty for the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, as an effective barrier to the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons.

Spain agrees with the rest of the international community that the preparation by the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty for the complete and permanent prohibition of nuclear tests, and its adoption by the largest possible number of States, is an objective which we should attain. Such a treaty should prohibit all nuclear-weapon tests.

The development of a suitable international verification system, and its inclusion in the text of the treaty, is a matter of the utmost importance. Nevertheless, this should not stand in the way of tackling immediately and simultaneously, through multilateral negotiations, both the elaboration of such an international verification system and the negotiation of the remaining provisions of the treaty.

It is the wish of the Spanish Government that the exploration of space should be continued and indeed expanded, with the participation of an ever larger number of States, provided that the fruits of this great enterprise should rebound to the benefit of the international community as a whole. We are therefore firmly in favour of qualitative and quantitative progress in the exploration and utilization for peaceful purposes of outer space.

Nevertheless, the Spanish Government is concerned at the possible stationing of means of destruction in outer space, a possibility that is increasingly close at hand, which could represent yet another step in the arms race with unforeseeable consequences which should be studied in depth.

Satellites, the product of technological research and the instrument of space exploration, should be devoted to exclusively peaceful purposes: peaceful objectives include. inter alia, both those which contribute to mankind's present store of scientific knowledge, and those which strengthen international stability and security by facilitating the verification of compliance with the disarmament agreements entered into, or by serving as a secure network of intergovernmental communications which are so necessary at times of crisis and indeed once a conflict has already broken out.

(Mr. de la Serna, Spain)

It is the responsibility of each and every one of the States of the international community to preserve outer space in as peaceful a state as it has enjoyed since the beginnings of the universe, but this responsibility is particularly great in the case of States which have the honour to belong to this negotiating body, and even greater for the States which today possess developed space technology.

Spain will support the future work of this Conference aimed at developing the existing agreements on the exploration and use of outer space and at drawing up new arms control and disarmament agreements made necessary by the development of new technology.

Another disarmament issue to which Spain has attached the greatest interest in the past, and continues to do so at present, is the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. Confining myself solely to this forum, I may recall that all the preceding statements by representatives of Spain have reiterated in this body my country's concern about the use of chemical weapons, as well as the urgent need to have an international treaty prepared in this Conference to supplement the 1925 Geneva Protocol and prohibit for all time the development, manufacture, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, as well as providing for the destruction of existing stockpiles and production facilities. Spanish experts are working on this matter, and some of them are following the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons set up by the Conference and in previous years by the Committee on Disarmament. In connection with this item a Working Paper on precursors and key-precursors was submitted during the working meetings of 1983.

We hope that the progress achieved during 1983 in the Ad hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, ably chaired by Ambassador McPhail, will make it possible this year to take the decisive step which we need in this field. In this connection, we consider promising the statement made in February indicating the Soviet Union's readiness to give positive consideration to the permanent presence of international representatives responsible for verifying the destruction of chemical weapons. Likewise, the draft agreement shortly to be presented by the United States suggests a major contribution to reaching the final objective of this Conference's work on chemical weapons.

Spain wishes to place on record in this forum its full support for all efforts aimed at the total and universal suppression of the production, possession and use of chemical weapons. It also considers with interest other efforts made in the field of the limitation or elimination of such weapons.

In conclusion, I cannot fail to reiterate once again the Spanish Government's interest in participating in the important work of this organ. It is an interest which, in view of its present status, it cannot for the time being manifest through the working contribution it would wish but which it hopes to be able to increase enormously when the present member States take a positive decision on the announced possible increase in membership. Spain would then wish, as all representatives know, to participate as a full member of this key organ of the United Nations for disarmament negotiations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Spain for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil, Ambassador Souza e Silva.

Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil): Mr. President, since I joined this international forum almost five years ago, you are the third representative of Sri Lanka I have the pleasure to work with. Like your predecessors, my good friends Ambassadors Fonseka and Jayakoddy, you have already acquired the respect of your colleagues in this Conference, for your competence and seriousness in accordance with the high standards of your country's diplomacy. May I also express my appreciation for the endeavours displayed by Ambassador Datcu of Romania in the Presidency of the Conference during the month of March.

As the first part of the annual session of our Conference draws to a close, it seems to my delegation a timely opportunity to take stock of the achievements and failures in this long process of multilateral negotiations on disarmament that has been going on, without interruption, for almost a quarter of a century now. The proceedings of this international forum and its predecessors have encountered incentives and obstacles. One should acknowledge, however, the fact that those proceedings have been taking place for such a long time, in spite of adverse political odds, which constitutes an incentive that should not be overlooked. One might even say that the mere existence of this multilateral forum represents by itself an important achievement.

As for the concrete results of our endeavours, we must also recognize that some measures of non-armament have been agreed upon, which means that arriving at agreements is not beyond our reach. However, one might wonder, if non-armament agreements have proven feasible, why has this negotiating forum been unable so far to agree upon one single measure of disarmament? After 20 years of fruitless pursuit we find ourselves more distant than ever from our first and foremost duty: to negotiate agreements leading to the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In the light of this fact we cannot but accept the evidence that our failures far outweigh our accomplishments.

Directly responsible for this state of affairs are the same Powers that share the main responsibility for the prevailing situation of increasing insecurity, universal apprehension and widespread fear. They have **condemned** mankind to live in a delicate balance of terror, in hope that the fallacious doctrines of deterrence will work forever through the threat of general and complete annihilation without any international control, not even their own.

At the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, only two years ago, we were told that nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented, and that thanks to their existence there has not been another world-wide conflagration for almost four decades. Maybe this is the reason why the Superpowers are expanding their nuclear arsenals to endless bounds, while the lesser nuclear-weapon Powers have decided to emulate them to the limit of their material and technological possibilities.

In accordance with their doctrines, as long as there are five nations self-appointed as responsible, yet capable of bringing about total and indiscriminate destruction, the rest of the world may be subject to local or peripheral conflicts, but world wars shall never occur again. It would almost seem that the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in a new and more promising period of the history of humanity.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

It is precisely this kind of reasoning that explains the causes of our failure and has prevented any forum, multilateral, trilateral or bilateral, to achieve progress in disarmament negotiations.

As for the restricted fora, the experience of bilateral talks between the Superpowers has shown that one cannot expect more than agreements for the management of the arms race, to accommodate their own interests at higher levels of destructive might and of technological inventiveness. Not a single system of existing weapons has ever been banned or scrapped under any agreement concluded between them or among the nuclear-weapon Powers as a whole. They have, on the contrary, displayed much activity and effort at ensuring that the power at their command remains forever off-limits to any nation outside their exclusive circle. This unholy alliance thrives in perpetual confrontation, each entrenched in its ever-growing capability of devastation but all equally bent on denying any other nation access to the summit of responsibility which their might bestowed upon them.

In such circumstances, as long as weapons that can destroy the whole world are credited with the maintenance of peace, and as long as a handful of nations claim the right to be the only ones responsible enough to hold the instruments of such destruction and to supervise such peace, no progress will be reached on matters of vital interest for all nations alike. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, why the nuclear-weapon Powers will always find one argument or another to prevent this forum from discharging its duty on any issue related to nuclear problems.

A comprehensive test ban is already doomed to failure, since one Superpower, the United States, has now transformed it into an "ultimate goal", a convenient euphemism to avoid any constraints, for an indefinite period of time, upon its programmes of testing, developing and improving its nuclear arsenals. Besides, two other nuclear-weapon Powers, China and France, also abiding by the same doctrines, decided to ignore the universal clamour for a halt in atomic explosions for military purposes. It is worth mentioning, en passant, that nuclear-weapon testing accounts for the overwhelming majority of all explosions conducted since the inception of the nuclear age. The only tests ever relinquished have been those which were no longer needed.

The prevention of nuclear war, and all related matters, can hardly be seriously tackled if one simply takes into account that the adoption of concrete legal measures to prevent nuclear war would run counter to the professed doctrine of nuclear deterrence, that is, the capability and the stated willingness to wage nuclear war as the only way to prevent it. As a contemporary thinker has correctly observed, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, which ultimately rests on making a threat credible, deters even the possibility of its own discussion.

A similar conclusion may be applied to the state of play on the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, this once undiscovered country that may become soon a new launching pad for threat and destruction, still for the sake of upholding and strengthening deterrence.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

Last, but certainly not least, the item on the cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, our first and main goal, cannot even be touched upon, lest its mere discussion might disturb the unconstrained freedom to expand and improve existing nuclear arsenals.

At this point, it might not be out of order to recall some historical facts that could provide a better perspective of the doctrine under examination: the contention that weapons of mass destruction at the disposal of a few can prevent a world catastrophe that would engulf all. No less a personality than Alfred Nobel wrote in 1890, after the invention of dynamite, that "perhaps my factories will put an end to war even sooner than your congresses". He went on to state that "all war will stop short instantly" if war is made "as death-dealing to the civil population at home as to troops at the front".

Experience does not seem to warrant either the contention of deterrence or Alfred Nobel's well-intentioned hopes. In the history of wars never a weapon was spared, regardless of its destructive capability or the cruelty of its consequences. War did not cease to exist either. If we confine our recollection to the present century, two examples would suffice. Chemical weapons were employed by the major Powers involved in World War I as long as they were considered militarily useful; their use was discontinued in World War II not because of their cruel effects or out of moral considerations, but simply because of their self-defeating character. Likewise, in World War II, as soon as a nuclear bomb was available and there were military advantages to be gained from its use, no other consideration prevailed against it being actually dropped over population centres.

If the destructive or cruel effects of weapons have not proved to be sufficient deterrence to their actual use, what lessons can we learn from historical experience concerning the States that have today at their disposal the most destructive and cruellest of weapons, and which uphold security doctrines that contemplate their use? Again leaving aside the more remote past and confining ourselves to the twentieth century, experience and prospects are simply frightening.

In its nuclear expression, the doctrine of deterrence is not a new concept, but a modern variation of the policy embodied in the old Roman dictum: si vis pacem, para bellum. If you want peace, prepare for war. There is, however, one fundamental difference, that should be acknowledged without difficulty. The effects of the successive generations of conventional weapons, destructive and cruel as they might be, would be exhausted not too far away from the countries and peoples at which they were aimed.

The same, of course, cannot be said of the present generations of nuclear weapons, not to mention those still on the drawing boards of military engineers and scientists in the five nuclear-weapon States. Countries and peoples far away from the targeted objectives may become defenceless and innocent victims of their use. Indeed, as a recent study shows, above a certain level of detonated megatonnage the world as a whole might be the casualty of a nuclear conflagration. Those predictions have not been refuted by any of the advocates of the use of nuclear weapons as a means to deter war. The old Roman dictum has thus acquired

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

a new and sinister dimension which bears on military, political and ethical considerations. It might be paraphrased today as si vis vitam, para mortem. If you want to live, prepare for death.

To revert to historical fact, one should note that the States which possess such weapons and uphold such doctrines are the same ones that in the brief span of 31 years were engulfed in two world wars in which over 60 million people were killed and untold destruction was unleashed. Between those two wars national genocides were committed as a matter of policy in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, in the name of racial superiority or by compulsory ideology, as if civilization had turned back to its darkest ages. Furthermore, since the end of World War II not a single year has gone by without the eruption or continuation of some armed conflict elsewhere in the world, but always, or almost always, either with the direct participation of one or more of the nuclear-weapon Powers or by proxy. From the Far East to Central Asia, from the Middle East to Southern Africa, from Central to South America, we have witnessed in the past 39 years a constant display of naked force backed by the self-anointed guarantors of peace in our time.

Today, one might be even derided just for asking for strict compliance with the usual norms of international law as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations: juridical equality of States, territorial integrity, non-intervention, non-use or threat of use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes. Those legal rules seem to have been downgraded to rhetorical expressions sometimes useful for domestic consumption or international propaganda. The interests of the Superpowers have long outgrown their own boundaries or their geographic region, and now encompass the whole world which is reduced to the role of spectator and hostage of their confrontation. Support for the existence and continuity of this situation is referred to as "realism". One could not, however, be labelled as unrealistic by rejecting the prevailing structure of power and its theoretical foundations.

Past and present experience, as well as the dire prospect of the aggravation of the balance of terror, do not in any way warrant any assurance that a safer world will emerge because a handful of States acquired an unmatched superiority of power. As such historical experience clearly tells us, all States are subject, and some seem indeed prone, to make mistakes. If their mistakes are repeated to the same extent as in the all too recent past, the consequences will put in serious jeopardy not their own individual existence only, but the survival of every other nation as well.

Gone and seemingly forgotten are the days when a great statesman, over 40 years ago, dreamed of a post-war world in which all mankind would share four fundamental freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear. On three counts the promise of his dream has come partially true. There is considerable freedom of speech and religion in vast areas of the world, although in others they are still today being trampled upon and turned into a sad mockery. As for freedom from want, people in both East and West of the industrialized Northern hemisphere live comparatively free from material need, whilst most of the Southern half of the world sinks deeper in poverty and hunger. Technology and hopefully human solidarity may yet realize that fundamental freedom.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

But in the nuclear post-war world fear knows no boundaries. The lust for supremacy of power by a few has turned fear into a universal disease that infects all.

International relations based on fear can only lead to disaster. Let us hope that those responsible for this state of affairs will finally come to grips with reality and realign their ambitions with the fundamental aspirations of mankind, including their own peoples. Let us pray that their present statesmen will heed the lessons of the past and will seriously and responsibly address nuclear disarmament as the only path toward freeing the world from fear of its own extinction.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Conference at its 249th plenary meeting, I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh, Ambassador Morshed.

Mr. MORSHED (Bangladesh): Mr. President, the Bangladesh delegation would like to express through you our sincere thanks to the Conference on Disarmament for the opportunity to address it for the first time.

We deem it particularly auspicious that we should do so at a moment when the President is the representative of Sri Lanka, a close neighbour of Bangladesh to which we are bound by race and culture and shared history and values. My delegation would also like to acknowledge the proven skills, the dedication and the high sense of purpose that you bring to this important Presidency.

Permit me, Sir, also to pay our tribute to your immediate predecessor, Ambassador Ion Datcu of Romania, whose vast experience, broad sympathies and unfailing charm have made him a most valued colleague and whose brilliant handling of varied issues at hand have helped to steer the deliberations of the Conference in constructive and positive directions. His country has been an important contributor of economic and technical assistance to Bangladesh.

The first 13 years since our independence have been of necessity devoted to the task of national reconstruction and development. All our energies and resources have been turned to limiting our extreme vulnerability, inherent in our geographical situation to the effects of a fast-rising population and to meeting the growing demand for food. In many ways my country represents a social and economic limiting case. In a territory of 55,000 square miles is concentrated a population of 95 million people. This is easily the highest rural density of population anywhere in the world. Yet, from our very earliest days the Bangladesh people have shared the commitment of the Non-Aligned Movement, to which we belong, to the ideal of complete and general disarmament. Increasingly this area of international discourse and negotiation has become our central concern. The Government and the people of Bangladesh are determined to devote generously our existing resources in trained manpower, technical as well as diplomatic, to this field of endeavour in this unique multilateral negotiating body, in the General Assembly and in other fora including the Non-Aligned Conference, the Islamic Conference and the Commonwealth.

(Mr. Morshed, Bangladesh)

Several speakers in the present discussion have remarked on the present state of international relations -- the unrestrained arms race, wars in various regions of the world, hotbeds of international tension and the harsh global economic situation, marked by huge levels of unemployment and unutilized industrial capacity in the developed countries and escalating debt, stagnation and deepening misery in the poorest countries. These elements of the present situation both reflect and account for the degradation of the international climate, the palpable loss of trust and confidence and the ensuing breakdown and impasse in international multilateral as well as bilateral negotiations, especially in the field of disarmament.

In attempts to analyse the underlying causes of the present situation certain linkages suggest themselves and have indeed stimulated considerable debate and documentation. One of these linkages is that between disarmament and development which figures in the mandate of this Conference. The Honourable President of Bangladesh has already pointed out that the link between disarmament and development is based upon the theory of opportunity cost which itself is of undoubtedly modern origin. Our own experience suggests there are several other linkages, some well known and others perhaps unsuspected, which have yet to be fully investigated and whose relevance may, therefore, have been ignored. I refer for example, to the insidiously dreadful link between war and famine which is at least as old as human history.

In 1943 the people of Bangladesh glimpsed apocalypse. That was the year of the Great Bengal Famine which is authoritatively estimated as accounting for 3 million deaths. According to one authority the famine at its peak exacted 26,000 deaths a week, which must surely make it one of the most efficient killers of modern times.

There were many remarkable things about this famine. For instance, it was acknowledged on all sides that the famine was related to the war situation even though the area of its occurrence was not in the immediate vicinity of a theatre of operations. Another feature was that the famine was, in the vivid phrase of Professor A.K. Sen, "a boom famine". It occurred amidst historically high foodstocks.

The "excess rate of mortality" continued well after the peak in December 1943 which suggests parallels with the projected mortality rates and patterns of certain modern weapons of mass destruction. In 1943, in short, for the people of Bangladesh famine was war fought by other means. We believe therefore that a study of the relationship between war and famine may yet yield important insights for the programme of general and complete disarmament.

In 1967 the great scientist Professor Abdus Salam, Nobel Laureate in physics, issued a memorable warning. He warned against falling into what he called the "technological trap". My delegation respectfully believes that Professor Salam's warning, though voiced in a totally different context, continues to be of profound relevance, especially for disarmament negotiations today. There

(Mr. Morshed, Bangladesh)

is a tendency to believe that certain modern weapon systems are so awesome in their potential for annihilation that their very existence invalidates the living stock of human experience since nothing in that experience corresponds to the paradigm of ultimate destruction. In our view this is an apt example of the "technological trap". Disarmament negotiations are conducted by men for whom the available stock of living human experience remains the primary source of reference and of inspiration. To this stock of human experience countries small or great, militarily significant or militarily negligible, have something to contribute. It is in this sense that we understand the words of the Final Document where it says that disarmament is of universal interest, and later that all States have a right to participate in disarmament negotiations; and it is for this reason that Bangladesh believes that our own historical experience may be of some relevance.

In 1979 Bangladesh acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We did so in the conviction that this Treaty was one of the momentous steps forward in the field of disarmament and in the search of the international community for an adequate system of security. Bangladesh will actively participate in the Third Review Conference to be held in 1985 because we believe that the non-proliferation regime of the Treaty continues to be viable and contains elements of growth and vitality. It is also one of those areas where militarily negligible States have been able to make a significant contribution. Indeed, it is perhaps remarkable that of the over 100 States Parties to the NPT about half may be described as militarily negligible, including my own.

Bangladesh has consistently supported, with many other like-minded developing countries, the early conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. In our view this constitutes one of the highest priorities of an eventual comprehensive programme of disarmament. It would, we believe, lead to the eventual freeze in the production, research and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. In our opinion the twin principles of verification and access have a key significance in this field. Naturally, we welcome the submission this week of the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts. It is our hope that an early implementation of the recommendations of this Ad Hoc Group will contribute positively to the development of a global seismological verification system which is of paramount importance for the conclusion of the comprehensive test-ban treaty itself.

Bangladesh has always believed that the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction should constitute one of the most urgent measures of disarmament. We therefore feel encouraged by the positive efforts which have been undertaken in this Conference for the conclusion of a comprehensive Convention on Chemical Weapons. The time and atmosphere may have never been so opportune as it is now to achieve major breakthroughs in this particular field. Only recently the President of the United States of America declared that his country would be submitting a draft treaty on chemical weapons to this Conference. The distinguished representative of the USSR, Ambassador Issraelyan, for his part declared on 21 February 1984 before this august body the intention of his country

(Mr. Morshed, Bangladesh)

to permit the permanent presence of international controllers at sites for the destruction of chemical weapons. We welcome these positive developments and hope that they will lead to an early agreement.

Another disarmament issue which is of particular urgency is the prevention of an arms race in newer horizons namely, the extension and the escalation of the arms race in outer space. We believe that all attempts to use outer space for military purposes should be halted immediately and outer space declared to remain as the common heritage of mankind to be used only for peaceful purposes.

Bangladesh has also actively supported the creation of zones of peace and nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. We have shown an active interest in the creation in the Indian Ocean of a zone of peace, and hope that we shall ultimately be able to attain this goal with the co-operation of all concerned, including the co-operation of all littoral States -- big or small. In our own region we have also been making relentless efforts to promote peace and stability through the creation of a climate of trust, understanding and co-operation. Bangladesh has made a specific initial contribution to the creation of the South Asian Regional Forum, which has made significant and concrete progress against all expectations.

Mr. President, permit me to conclude my statement by reiterating our conviction that all States and all people in the world have a common stake in the preservation of peace and a common responsibility to promote the cause of peace through contributing positively to the process of disarmament. We for our part are wholly committed to discharging our share of this responsibility both here in this forum and elsewhere. We shall not fail to continue, as in the past, to offer all our assistance in this regard which will be of service to the collective effort of the international community to attain peace through mutual co-operation and negotiation and through the elaboration and implementation of effective disarmament measures.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Fields.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President. It is with great pleasure that I take the floor under your Presidency of our Conference. For myself and my delegation, I congratulate you and extend our best wishes. In keeping with the warm and friendly relations between our two countries, the United States delegation looks forward to continuing our work under your guidance for constructive progress in the discharge of the important tasks of the Conference.

I wish, through you, to salute your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Ion Datcu of Romania, and give him a hearty "Well done".

In my statement today, I wish to address the subject of item 5 of our agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

My delegation fully realizes the important uses of outer space. There are many peaceful uses which enrich mankind. These include: the exploration of neighbouring planets in our solar system, the establishment of reliable and economic world-wide communications, the prediction of weather, the accurate mapping of the earth's surface, and the discovery of the keys to unlock the mysteries of the earth's past and to help to predict its future. I have only mentioned a few of the benefits that mankind's efforts in space offer us. My country has, I am proud to say, contributed much in these and other peaceful endeavours in space. Furthermore, we recognize that other countries, including the Soviet Union, have also made significant contributions in these fields.

We likewise recognize that there is another side to man's use of outer space and it is clearly ambiguous. The same satellites that provide military intelligence information provide an important means of ensuring that parties comply with provisions of arms control agreements. Early-warning satellites contribute to international stability by making a surprise attack, nuclear or conventional, a more difficult and risky undertaking. Navigational satellites can assist both naval and civil maritime vessels. Finally, the same communication satellites used for the command and control of military forces for combat are of equal, or even greater, importance in crisis control to prevent war. It is this duality which often confuses our efforts to understand this extremely complex subject.

The United States is a party to the Outer Space Treaty which bans weapons of mass destruction from outer space and limits the use of celestial bodies exclusively to peaceful purposes. We are also a party to the Treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems and, in fact, unlike the Soviet Union, chose not to continue to exercise the provision in that treaty allowing limited anti-ballistic missile system deployments. Long and tireless United States efforts to negotiate these agreements are historical evidence of my country's commitment to the principle of using outer space in ways that promote peace and international stability. We appreciate and value the contributions to security which they represent.

My delegation indicated over a year ago our willingness to consider the vast range of issues dealing with the "prevention of an arms race in outer space" and to that end co-sponsored document CD/413 which called for the identification, through substantive examination, of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In so doing, the proposed mandate specifies that the Ad hoc Subsidiary Body should take into account all existing agreements, existing proposals and future initiatives.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

We therefore reject the assertion that we have held up significant work in this Conference on the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Conference's work has been held up by those who persistently strive to impose preconditions on our discussions. They believe the cart should be put before the horse. We can hardly talk about negotiations before we have a clear idea of the issues involved. My delegation was prepared a year ago, and continues to be prepared, to consider these issues in detail in an ad hoc committee. While I agree with those who seek a proper examination of these issues, appeals for immediate action, based on the notion that technology will soon pass us by, are not shared by my delegation. We simply do not see the logic in establishing an ad hoc committee which would not begin at the beginning in order to define clearly possible areas of negotiation.

On 22 March, my distinguished colleague from the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan, addressed this Conference on the subject of the spread of the arms race to outer space. The inconsistency on which his statement was premised is apparent and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it; however, I am concerned that some misperceptions could still remain, based on the exaggeration and distortions in that statement. For this reason, I feel it is necessary to set the record straight.

First, let me discuss the Soviet announcement of a unilateral moratorium on the launching of anti-satellite weapons. I think it is instructive to note that neither Ambassador Issraelyan nor any other Soviet official has yet acknowledged the existence of the operational Soviet orbital anti-satellite interceptor system. It is common knowledge that the Soviet Union has tested this weapon system over a dozen years. It is, and has been for over a decade, the world's only operational ASAT weapon system. In addition, this very system was tested in June 1982 in conjunction with a major exercise of Soviet nuclear forces, a co-ordinated test that military experts judge to have important strategic implications. Now, having established this military advantage in space, for the Soviet Union to propose a moratorium on testing of such systems strikes my delegation as monumental cynicism. The announcement was made practically on the eve of my country's first test of a system designed eventually to counterbalance this long-held Soviet advantage. The Soviet Union also proposes to eliminate existing ASAT systems. But the draft treaty text deals in generalities with the enormous verification problems involved in such agreement. The draft treaty provides for an unspecified combination of national and international verification measures as well as some undefined "additional measures" to be employed to solve these problems. The Soviet objective here is clear and not without precedent. Their objective is to preserve unchallenged a unilateral Soviet strategic capability in outer space.

I would like to call your attention to another case that brings into question Soviet intentions in outer space. I refer to the Soviet ocean surveillance satellites designed to provide targeting data for the attack of naval ships and maritime vessels. Their existence is well known since two of these nuclear-powered satellites caused world-wide alerts during their break-up and re-entries to the earth in 1978 and 1983. On one of those occasions considerable nuclear residue was spread on the territory of a nation represented in this body today.

These are two examples of Soviet deeds that are widely known and certainly at variance with the Soviet Union's exaggerated claims to a commitment to the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Mr. President, before closing, allow me to note Ambassador Issraelyan's considerable use of the free press of the United States as a source for criticism of my Government. He obviously places significant trust in the accuracy of opinions expressed in that medium. As we are all aware, a genuinely free press offers many views, often conflicting, in order for the reader to assemble the facts, assess the arguments and decide for himself. In this spirit, I want to offer additional material from a United States publication for the consideration of the representatives here. The following paragraphs are from a 1982 New York Times magazine article written on the 25th anniversary of the Soviet launching of Sputnik I which marked the debut of the Soviet Union's satellites into outer space:

"Last year alone, despite severe problems in its domestic industry and agriculture, the Soviet Union devoted an estimated \$18 billion to its space programme. In proportion to the size of the Soviet economy, that is five times the size of NASA's current budget. In absolute terms, the Soviet budget is three times the size of NASA's and about 30 per cent more than the combined space budgets of NASA and the Department of Defense."

"The United States last year launched a total of 18 satellites, the Soviet Union put a staggering 125 satellites into orbit. What do the Russians do with all of these satellites? Sixty-nine per cent are designed for military purposes, in the last two or three years, Moscow has launched 10 times as many military satellites as Washington."

"By undertaking a massive military space programme designed to gain control of space, Moscow is attempting to shift the balance of power substantially in its favor."

"How much significance should be attached to Russian space stations? Military uses of these stations are certainly a part of Soviet planning. Two of the seven Salyuts launched thus far have been singled out by the Russians themselves as military, and observers of the Soviet programme believe that others may be also."

These, Mr. President, are the opinions voiced in the New York Times in 1982.

There are numerous other articles along similar lines. Taken together they present a far different picture of Soviet intentions in space than what some would have us believe. We long for the day when we might see an article in Izvestiya by some prominent Soviet citizen criticizing the official line on the Soviet space programmes. We long for the day when everyone in the Soviet Union will have the ability, right and responsibility to judge the Soviet Government by their actions as well as by their noble-sounding calls for peace.

My purpose today has been to provide a different perspective from that portrayed by my distinguished Soviet colleague on 22 March. I leave it to our colleagues in this chamber to decide if his criticism of my country's actions is well founded, and if on the other hand his country has pursued only peaceful and humanitarian goals in outer space.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Since my mission today is to "set the record straight", I cannot let this opportunity pass without pointing out, through you, to the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia that the United States has not and does not produce chemical weapons, binary or otherwise; furthermore, we hope that we shall not be compelled to produce such weapons. The issue is to a significant degree in our hands here in the Conference on Disarmament.

When President Reagan proposed to the Congress the chemical modernization programme, he advised the Congress that he took this action only to redress a dangerous imbalance in chemical weapons which had taken place in the years since 1969 -- when President Nixon ordered the end of United States production of chemical weapons. Regrettably, the Soviet Union did not reciprocate this unilateral gesture, and we are now faced with the need to correct the gross imbalance in this category of weapons. The President took the action also in his words "to provide an incentive for the Soviet Union to negotiate in good faith on a complete and verifiable ban on such weapons".

Thus, if we are successful here in a timely fashion in producing a verifiable ban on these odious weapons, there will be no binary weapons in the future!

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ambassador Issraelyan.

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, today the Soviet delegation takes the floor in order to submit an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, CD/497, distributed at our request, which contains the answers of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Konstantin Chernenko, to questions by the newspaper "Pravda", published in the Soviet press on 9 April 1984.

These answers touch upon the whole range of the most acute problems of the present-day international relations. They clearly lay down the position of the USSR on the basic problems of arms-race limitation and disarmament, including those which are on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

In particular, K.U. Chernenko recalled that it is not the first year that the Soviet Union is pressing for an accord directed at preventing the arms race from spreading to outer space. The USSR is constantly raising this question before the leadership of the United States. It is doing so because the Soviet Union clearly realizes the formidable consequences that the militarization of outer space would have.

"But meantime", Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out, "the American President officially informed the United States Congress a few days ago that the Government is starting the fulfilment of a broad programme of the arms race in outer space and has no intention of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union on preventing the militarization of space supposedly because of the difficulties of verification".

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

This lack of any desire on the part of the United States to achieve an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is well known to the members of the Conference on Disarmament, where the United States thwarts the negotiations on this item. As Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out, the United States "is expressing readiness to talk with the sole aim of agreeing that accord on this issue is impossible". Different manoeuvres here in Geneva, as evidenced specifically by today's statement by the representative of the United States, are designed to impose upon the Conference's subsidiary body on the prevention of the arms race in outer space a mandate which would be confined to a fruitless examination of the existing norms of international law concerning the use of outer space.

Let us take another issue -- the prohibition of chemical weapons. It was already in 1972 that the USSR and other socialist countries proposed in the Disarmament Committee the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. It was also then that they submitted a draft of such a convention.

Subsequently the USSR returned to this matter more than once, specifying its proposals. But all these years the United States impeded the conclusion of a convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons, suspended in 1980 the bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations, which as is well known to the members of the Conference produced many positive results.

In the answers of Comrade K.U. Chernenko, an important place is attributed to the questions relating to the state of bilateral Soviet-United States relations.

In this connection the Soviet leader pointed out that in spite of the fact that peace-loving rhetoric is sometimes heard from Washington it is impossible, however hard one tries, to discern behind it any signs whatsoever of readiness to back up these words with practical deeds; in other words, the introduction of new words does not mean a new policy.

The actions of the United States, stressed Comrade K.U. Chernenko, "do not tally in any way with the task of ending the arms race. And it is not at all by chance that the United States has deliberately frustrated the very process of limiting and reducing nuclear arms, and torpedoed the talks both on strategic arms and on nuclear arms in Europe".

Referring to the necessity for people to stop living in a state of constant fear for the world, Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out that first of all it is necessary for the policy of States, especially States possessing nuclear weapons, to be oriented at eliminating the danger of war, and at consolidating peace.

Along with the solution of the other major problems mentioned above, we are convinced that a resolute turn for the better in the world would have been facilitated by an undertaking by all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear arms and also on the quantitative and qualitative freezing of nuclear arsenals.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

It is extremely important in general that certain norms, directed towards aims of peace, shall be introduced in relations between States possessing nuclear arms. The position of the USSR and other socialist countries on these issues is laid down in detail in documents CD/444 and CD/484.

The task of creating an atmosphere of trust in international relations is an urgent one. This requires a responsible and balanced policy on the part of all States and also the adoption of relevant practical measures leading in this direction.

"The Soviet Union", Comrade K.U. Chernenko stressed, "is prepared to co-operate with all States in the attainment of these aims." Efforts should be directed first of all at stopping and reversing the arms race. It is time to move from generalities about the usefulness of talks to eliminating the serious obstacles that have been erected in the way of the limitation and reduction of armaments, the development of trust and mutually advantageous co-operation.

The Soviet delegation expresses the hope that the answers of Comrade K.U. Chernenko will be carefully studied by the delegations represented at the Conference.

With regard to the remarks contained in the statement of the representative of the United States at today's meeting, we would like to point out that they constitute yet another attempt to camouflage the United States unwillingness to negotiate on the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. However, we wish to comment on some points of that statement.

The representative of the United States attempted to demonstrate that the Soviet Union has an alleged superiority in anti-satellite weapons and that supposedly that is why the USSR is proposing the introduction of a moratorium on such weapons. As we may see, the method is the same as the one the United States uses in refusing, for instance, a freeze on nuclear weapons or a moratorium on nuclear-weapon testing: the method of asserting the existence of a so-called "Soviet superiority".

The question must be asked, however, does the Soviet Union in fact have a so-called anti-satellite superiority? No, it does not. In the 1960s the United States already began testing such weapon systems. This idea began to be carried into practice 20 years ago with the development of the manoeuvrable SAINT (Satellite Inspector Technique) spacecraft. In the 1960s, two ground-based anti-satellite systems were developed: in 1963, on Kwajalein Island, in one of the Micronesian atolls, on the basis of Niki-Zeus anti-missile missiles, and in 1964 on Johnston Island using various modifications of the Thor missile. Currently, an airborne ASAT anti-satellite system based on the F-15 fighter is being completed. It is planned to establish two squadrons of F-15 jets equipped with interceptor missiles with self-guided warheads.

Or there is a very recent fact: the United States has just used the space Shuttle to remove an Earth satellite from its orbit. That is a fact. On this occasion it was done, we are told, for peaceful purposes. But who can guarantee that the United States will not do the same for military purposes at a convenient moment? As is well known, the Soviet Union has never done anything of the kind. Who then can be said to have the superiority in the development of anti-satellite systems? Ambassador Fields tried to create the impression that the Soviet Union

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

is in favour of an arms race in outer space, and quoted an article from the New York Times magazine concerning the 25th anniversary of the launching of the first Sputnik into space. To reciprocate, so to speak, I shall quote from the Soviet press, likewise from an article on the 25th anniversary of the launching of the Soviet Sputnik into space, and answering the question of the Soviet Union's purposes in space: "The Soviet Union, which 25 years ago opened the era of the peaceful use of outer space, today remains true to its position. This is illustrated by the successful activity of the Soviet section of the international COSMOS-SARSAT system for searching for ships or aircrafts which have suffered accidents. With the help of 'satellite rescue', as many United States sources call our 'COSMOS 1383', a number of aircraft which have been involved in accidents have already been found. The flights of the Soviet automatic spacecraft 'Venus-13' and 'Venus-14' which set off for that distant, entirely mysterious planet over a year ago, are of great usefulness for Earth sciences. Using Soviet, French and Austrian devices mounted on those spacecraft, the study of the atmosphere and surface of Venus is continuing, and they have carried experiments to study interplanetary space." Soviet experiments in outer space are widely used for peaceful purposes, and redound to the benefit of mankind. Clear evidence of this is provided by the large number of joint flights between Soviet cosmonauts and cosmonauts of other countries. And I am glad today to express our gratification that yesterday a joint flight of Soviet cosmonauts and an Indian cosmonaut came to an end; it had exclusively peaceful purposes, needless to say, as in the case of previous flights.

Another question may be raised: what is the position of the United States on the issue of outer space? Is the United States trying to achieve equality, so to speak, in this field or not? To this question we must answer with a clear negative: this is not what the United States is trying to do. They are trying to extend the arms race into outer space, to achieve superiority over the Soviet Union in this field too. And although my colleague, Ambassador Fields, clearly does not like it when I quote from the American newspapers, I cannot help quoting a very interesting article, which I recommend everyone to read carefully, that appeared in today's International Herald Tribune. The author is Peter Clausen. Allow me to read out a few extracts in the original:

[Speaking in English]: "Hiding behind dubious arguments about verification, the Reagan Administration refuses to negotiate with the Soviet Union to restrain anti-satellite weapons. In January, the US Air Force began testing an anti-satellite weapon which could wreck hopes of controlling these weapons. Meanwhile, the United States is pressing ahead with the President's star wars programme - an implausible quest for weapons to shield the American people from nuclear attack by intercepting Soviet missiles in flight. These ill-advised policies foreshadow a new space race at great peril to US security".

I quote from further on in the article: "Why then does the Administration shun negotiations?" asks the author of the article. And he replies: "For two reasons. The first is straightforward, if shortsighted: the Administration wants the option of attacking Soviet satellites, even if the price is to forfeit any restrictions on Soviet anti-satellite weapons. The second reason is the 'Star Wars' connection. Development and testing of the weapon offers technological stepping stones to missile defence systems operating in space".

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

And finally, the author draws the following conclusion:

"To prevent a new arms race in space, the United States must shift course. It must suspend testing of anti-satellite weapons and start negotiations to halt the further development of them, and give up the costly, futile and dangerous pursuit of 'Star Wars' missile defences".

[Speaking in Russian] I share the views of the author of this article, and should like to point out that whether Ambassador Fields wished it or not, today he has been drawn into a discussion of the draft Soviet treaty on the non-use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. This is merely an illustration of the fact that both the Soviet draft and the issue itself are of crucial topicality, and that the draft may be the basis of negotiations.

I should like to point out here that many other delegations have publicly, at the meetings of the Conference, and in talks with us put forward their remarks, observations and even amendments concerning the Soviet draft. Surely all this indicates that the time has come for negotiation: tomorrow may be too late.

Finally, I cannot pass over in silence something to which I have heard references too often: I mean the so-called "free press". I read this "free press", which every day throws mud at my country, my Motherland, my people; the "free press", in which a good word is rarely found for the Soviet Union. No one should wait for the day when Izvestiya would publish articles criticizing the position of the Soviet Government on the issue that outer space should be peaceful. That will not happen. The Soviet people wants outer space to be peaceful, and only articles to that effect appear in Izvestiya. But to have a correct perception of the Soviet press, I would strongly urge you, including my colleague from the United States, to read that press better. If you did so, you would know that it contains a considerable amount of critical material concerning various aspects of the life and activities of the Soviet people. The Soviet people is a self-critical people; and our press is self-critical. But to publish articles and reports which run counter to the spirit of the people, which has suffered from war, which abhors war, to publish articles which are at variance with the feelings of other peoples, which also call for a peaceful outer space, for a freeze, for a moratorium -- demands shared by the American people and by all the peoples of the earth -- that is something the Soviet press will not do.

I apologise, Mr. President, for having had to dwell on this question. It is one often raised in this Conference. As you know, the Soviet delegation endeavours not to involve in the Conference's work issues which are not concerned with disarmament. I believe, however, that my colleagues will understand me. From time to time unjustified and gratuitous reproaches have been addressed to the Soviet people and its press at this Conference. I considered it my duty to reply to them.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement.

The time is almost 1 p.m. and we have not concluded our list of speakers. I am informed that the duration of the statement of the next speaker will be approximately half an hour. Bearing in mind our intention to convene an informal meeting to consider organizational questions, I propose to suspend the plenary meeting now and resume it at precisely 3 p.m. in the afternoon. The first speaker will be the representative of Senegal, Mr. Sy.

If I hear no objection, the plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 1 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Conference at its 249th plenary meeting, I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal, Mr. Sy.

Mr. SY (Senegal) (translated from French): Mr. President, allow me first of all to extend to you my warmest congratulations on your becoming President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of April. My delegation is very happy to see you presiding over the Conference, since your country is one of the pioneers of the movement of non-aligned countries and as such has made a valuable contribution to the cause of peace, independence and equality of all States. You yourself, Mr. President, have demonstrated wisdom, skill and efficiency in the conduct of the work of the Conference.

Allow me also, Mr. President, to thank Ambassador Datcu of Romania for the masterly and competent manner in which he guided the work of the Conference during the month of March.

Mr. President, I should also like to express my gratitude to the delegations that were good enough to authorize the participation of my delegation in the work of the 1984 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

In deciding to take the floor in the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, my delegation wishes primarily to express its concern at the dangerous situation into which the world is being increasingly drawn.

Since the world entered the nuclear age 40 years ago, the spectre of self-destruction and of a final holocaust has remained ever present. The nuclear age has taken on the countenance of nuclear terror. As Orwell, the British writer, had foreseen, in the name of peace, the most destructive weapons are being constructed and, in the name of security, the lives of billions of people are being held hostage. Finally, in the name of the preservation of the right to life some \$800 billion are being swallowed up in the building of armaments stockpiles, while billions of persons are slowly wasting away because of poverty, malnutrition and famine.

While we are assured that nuclear weapons have helped to preserve the peace, we can only note that since 1945, the peoples of the South have experienced hundreds of armed conflicts, including colonial wars, wars by proxy and foreign occupation.

As to the peoples of the North, who generally belong to the developed countries, their enjoyment of the benefits of their economic prosperity is spoiled by the anguish of a sudden catastrophe.

That international situation, so uncertain, so fraught with threats, has suddenly become more serious today.

The period of détente between the Superpowers, which had proved to be full of promise, is now giving way to confrontation.

The arms race, which seemed to have slowed somewhat with the agreements on strategic weapons, is taking off again and being extended to outer space.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

Strategic doctrines are evolving towards the acceptance of the use of nuclear weapons. The disarmament negotiations have for the most part come to a standstill.

Lastly, the use of force in international relations is not only increasing but is taking place openly, without disguise. In some regions of the world, as in the southern part of Africa, racist and colonial regimes are in the process of acquiring nuclear weapons, thereby threatening the security of all African States.

That combination of situations and factors is leading mankind down the dangerous slope of a general conflagration.

That is why it is now important for measures to be taken urgently to halt the nuclear-arms race, to avert the danger of a nuclear war and to strengthen international peace and security.

If there is now an objective which should be pursued unceasingly and receive all our attention and all our efforts, it is indeed the halting of the nuclear-weapons race. It is something which is aggravating international tension, swallowing up vast material and human resources and is constantly calling into question nuclear deterrence, doctrines and measures. Such doctrines and policies, on which the nuclear-weapons build-up is based, are frequently justified by their alleged positive effect on international peace and security.

The old saying that he who wishes peace should prepare for war would thus be confirmed.

However, in listening to the many complaints by the Superpowers of the loss of parity or the strategic advantage of the adversary in a particular weapons category, one cannot help thinking that the arms race has destabilizing effects on the balance of power and that the nuclear deterrent is fundamentally precarious.

Therefore, how is it possible to be sure that such an unstable weapons build-up will always maintain the balance of power and guarantee the non-use of nuclear weapons?

And how can one help thinking that the nuclear deterrent, unlike the conventional means of deterrence, claims an unduly high price for the stability that it claims to give us?

In fact, everything indicates that it has the result of holding hostage the lives of millions of persons in order to preserve the security of a few States.

That is an option which is morally unacceptable and politically dangerous, since the slightest armed conflict can lead to a nuclear war and the annihilation of all life on Earth.

It is because we believe that there can be no stability as long as the nuclear-arms race continues that we consider that the international community cannot rely solely on the nuclear deterrent to ensure the security of all.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

In this regard, strengthening the system of collective security provided for by the Charter of the United Nations would be of considerable importance. The current deterioration in international relations is due, among other things, to the fact that the world is witnessing an increased use of force, particularly against the developing countries, but also because détente has been confined to one geographical region and has not been extended to the rest of the planet.

Thus, the process of the relaxation of international tension which was envisaged by the Superpowers and which was to accompany and stimulate arms limitation has proved to be fragile and inadequate. It has demonstrated the limits of bilateralism and shown that security is the business of all and requires the active contribution of all.

It is with these elements in mind that my delegation supports the position of the Group of 21 that multilateral negotiations on the halting of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament through the adoption of concrete measures are urgently required. In this regard, the States possessing the greatest nuclear arsenals have a very special responsibility and should facilitate the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the matter.

My delegation considers that the prevention of nuclear war is an urgent issue, although it recognizes that it is a highly complex one.

It depends to a large extent on an agreement concerning the identification of the potential causes of a nuclear conflict. In that regard, attention is focused primarily on the increasing tension between Superpowers, which gives rise to great concern.

This tension carries the risk of a slide into a nuclear conflict, a risk which has proved to be so great that various proposals have been made to promote the freeze on nuclear arsenals and the non-first-use of nuclear weapons.

My delegation endorses those proposals and considers that they can serve as a useful point of departure for negotiations aimed at reducing the danger of nuclear war.

However, the risk of nuclear war cannot be limited to the deterioration in relations between the Superpowers. Quite the contrary, my delegation considers that it is also necessary to bear in mind the case of countries such as South Africa which have acquired the capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons and which refuse to renounce in a clear and verifiable manner the acquisition of nuclear weapons.

The risk of the use of nuclear weapons in southern Africa is all the more probable since the Pretoria regime is pursuing a policy of enslaving non-whites which can only meet with resistance and stir up violence. The policy of apartheid is a form of violence and can only give rise to violence. So long as a minority of people of European origin deprives the African majority of its fundamental human rights, there can be no hope of a stabilization of the situation, whatever the efforts made by the apartheid regime to conceal its hideous face.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

It is because the situation in southern Africa remains one of conflict and because one of the parties is trying to acquire nuclear weapons that we believe that this question should be considered in the event that a working group on the prevention of nuclear war was established. We believe that among other measures all efforts should be made to bring South Africa to submit all its nuclear facilities to the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

My delegation wishes to join its voice to those which have expressed concern at the tendency to extend the arms race to outer space.

Until quite recently, space had been relatively spared by the arms race. There had been reason to be optimistic in that regard, since a set of agreements and treaties, both multilateral and bilateral, had made it possible to curb its militarization or the introduction of weapons of mass destruction. For example, the Outer Space Treaty, the partial nuclear-test ban treaty and the 1979 Treaty relating to the Moon are the most prominent examples in that regard. Similarly, the agreements concluded by the United States and the Soviet Union within the framework of the limitation of strategic weapons and the prevention of a nuclear war have played a positive and stabilizing role in that sphere.

Those agreements augur well for the possibility of space activities for the good and in the interest of all countries, whatever their stage of economic and social development.

Unfortunately, those positive factors are now threatened by certain advances in military space technology, particularly by the development and deployment of anti-satellite weapons and particle-beam weapons.

Outer space is thus becoming an area of military preparations with every passing day. Plans and programmes and considerable resources are being devoted to the development and deployment of weapons systems in outer space and from space against the Earth.

The immediate effect of anti-satellite weapons and other particle-beam weapons is to spur on the arms race, to increase international tension and to threaten the security of all countries in the world. As if land and sea were not sufficiently encumbered by dangerous weapons, the threat from outer space is now to be held over the heads of the peoples of the Earth.

They can only watch, in impotent anxiety, the ineluctable process of the deployment of anti-satellite and anti-missile weapons, soon followed by anti-anti-satellites and anti-anti-missile weapons, until the day when this dangerous escalation escapes the control of its creators and ends in the dreaded catastrophe.

The new space weapons are undermining the policy of deterrence of the Superpowers, since by making possible the destruction of their advanced warning systems, they thereby make possible a first strike. Who can say what temptations can arise in such a situation.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

However, the new weapons are not confined to undermining the system of mutual deterrence so carefully developed by the Superpowers. Those weapons circumvent some weapons control agreements, in particular the 1972 anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty.

Once again the dynamics of the quantitative arms race and technical progress has overcome policies aimed at the limitation of weapons. It is because these developments promise nothing positive that many delegations both at the Conference on Disarmament and in the General Assembly have expressed their concern and requested that measures should be taken to halt this danger.

In this regard, it must be noted that the General Assembly adopted by a very large majority a resolution whereby it expressed its conviction of the need to take further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. It therefore requested the Committee on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc working group on the question at the beginning of its 1984 session with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

Such a recommendation, which my delegation entirely endorses, should be implemented as rapidly as possible by the Conference on Disarmament.

Unfortunately, it seems that in spite of the proposals submitted with a view to undertaking negotiations on the prevention of the arms race in outer space, the Conference has not yet reached a satisfactory solution. Nevertheless, in view of the urgency of the question, prompt action is necessary.

As the history of the talks on nuclear weapons limitation has shown, it is easier to prevent the introduction of new weapons than to eliminate those already existing. Time is pressing, and my delegation hopes that the Conference will not let slip this opportunity, an opportunity which might not recur.

Turning now to the question of the prohibition of the development, manufacture, stockpiling and utilization of all chemical weapons, my delegation wishes to recall that the General Assembly stated in 1978, at its first special session devoted to disarmament, that the matter concerned one of the most urgent tasks of the multilateral negotiations.

That position is all the more justified since vast stocks of chemical weapons exist throughout the world. Moreover, no one has forgotten that chemical weapons were used during the First World War and caused about 1,300,000 victims. At present, owing to scientific and technological advances, chemical agents have become so toxic that they would cause many more victims.

It was in order to prevent the frightful devastation caused by the use of chemical weapons that, in 1925, nations adopted the Geneva Protocol, which prohibits the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. However, because that Protocol left aside the development, production and stockpiling of such weapons, it does not constitute an adequate barrier to halt the arms race in this field.

Chemical weapons have the particular characteristic, unlike nuclear weapons, of being relatively inexpensive and technologically less sophisticated. As a result, any country can acquire such weapons, a fact which considerably increases the opportunity for their use.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

Recent reports on the utilization of chemical weapons in some parts of the world shed light on this danger and should persuade this Conference to conclude without delay its negotiations relating to a convention on the prohibition and elimination of all chemical weapons.

In this regard, at its thirty-eighth session, the General Assembly expressed its regret that an agreement on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction had not yet been elaborated and urged the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to intensify during its session in 1984 the negotiations on such a convention.

In that connection, my delegation has noted with pleasure the decision of the Conference to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

My delegation has also welcomed with satisfaction the announcement that the United States will submit a draft treaty on chemical weapons during the 1984 session of the Conference. Similarly, my delegation has taken note with pleasure of the announcement made on 21 January 1983 by the Head of the Soviet delegation that his country is now prepared to authorize on-site inspections to verify the destruction of chemical weapons within its territory.

Such proposals, together with those made by the United Kingdom, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, China and France, constitute valuable contributions to the elaboration of the convention.

Moreover, as Mr. Ekéus, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, has stressed, some progress has been made, particularly with regard to the destruction of chemical weapons and its verification.

Of course, difficulties remain, but my delegation considers that with sufficient political will, they can be overcome.

The adoption of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction would constitute an important disarmament measure, the first since the 1972 Convention relating to bacteriological weapons. This can have only positive effects on the current international atmosphere of tension, confrontation and deadlock in the disarmament negotiations.

It would also help to safeguard the lives of many people, particularly those in the Third World. There is no need to stress that since 1945, the Third World seems to have become the preferred area for the use of chemical weapons.

The negotiations carried out within this body on the prohibition of chemical weapons have given rise to great hopes. Their success would contribute considerably to accelerating the disarmament process and to increasing the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament. It is to be hoped that they will achieve the results expected by all peace-loving peoples.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Senegal for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador García Robles.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. My delegation is pleased to see you guiding our deliberations. As I said last month in the Group of 21, where you were acting as co-ordinator, you demonstrated truly extraordinary skill and exemplary equanimity and objectivity.

My congratulations are also addressed to Ambassador Datcu, who preceded you as President of our Conference and did his utmost to advance our work during the month of March.

I did not intend to take the floor today. However, the statements which were made this morning, particularly two of them, showed that this session, even though it has dealt with many questions, will enter the annals of the Conference as a session devoted mainly to the question of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. This is a question to which my delegation attaches special importance. Moreover, time is passing inexorably and quite soon the Conference will, I believe, have to take a decision concerning the establishment and mandate of an ad hoc committee. At that time, Mr. President, as has already happened in the case of the proposal for an ad hoc committee on the prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests, it would be appropriate if, unfortunately, it was not possible to set up an ad hoc committee this year and to give it a suitable mandate, it would be appropriate, I repeat, for the records of the Conference to indicate clearly who bears the responsibility. It is for that reason that since I have to date referred to this matter on only one occasion, in the statement I made at the opening meeting this year on 7 February, and I did so then only in a small part of my statement since I had to deal with various subjects, I thought it appropriate to begin to correct this lack of relevant or pertinent information in formal plenary meetings. I say this because it is clear that in informal meetings consisting of four or five or even more participants my delegation has already taken the opportunity to state its position more fully. However, I repeat, I believe that, as I have frequently said, spoken words fly away and it is the written word that remains, according to an old Latin proverb. That is why, at today's meeting, I should like to stress what I said in passing at the opening meeting, namely, that we are not going to deal with this matter as if nothing had happened during the last Assembly. Something very significant occurred at the last Assembly: there was a resolution which obtained the greatest number of votes of all resolutions concerned with disarmament: 147 votes in favour and only 1 against. That resolution was not the result of improvisation, as I also said at the opening meeting and I shall repeat now; it was the outcome of laborious and patient negotiations in which two delegations had to play a primary role: yours, Mr. President, and the delegation of Egypt. There were on that occasion three draft resolutions, one submitted by Mongolia, another by a group of Western European States, and the third was the draft of the Group of 21. Following those laborious negotiations, the co-sponsors of the first two draft resolutions did not press their texts and withdrew them. Then the Assembly adopted, by that truly extraordinary vote, the resolution bearing the number 38/70.

All those who are interested in the question will be able to consult the full text of this resolution in the document which the Secretary-General transmits to us every year and which contains, in an annex to his letter, all the texts of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on disarmament matters. This document is CD/428. Nevertheless, in order that those who may not wish to take the trouble to consult this document can find in the record of today's meeting the main provisions of resolution 38/70, I shall take the liberty of reading them out now.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

In the second preambular paragraph, the Assembly recognized "the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes".

In the fourth preambular paragraph, it reaffirmed the will of all States "that the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be exclusively for peaceful purposes".

In the sixth preambular paragraph, the Assembly reaffirmed, in particular, article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which stipulated that "States parties to the Treaty undertake not to place in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner".

In the following, seventh preambular paragraph, the General Assembly reaffirmed also paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly in which it is stated, as all will recall, that "in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty" on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

A little later, in the twelfth preambular paragraph, and this should follow from the seventh, the Assembly expressed its conviction that "further measures are needed for the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Further, in the sixteenth paragraph, the Assembly stated that it was "Aware of the various proposals submitted by Member States to the Committee on Disarmament, particularly concerning the establishment of a working group on outer space and its draft mandate which had been considered extensively by a contact group".

There is a foot-note here in which it is noted that from the date of commencement of the current session the working groups are to be known by another name. Of course, we know that we have already decided that they will be called ad hoc committees.

Lastly, the purpose of the eighteenth paragraph -- the last in the preamble -- is to express the Assembly's deep concern and disappointment that "although there was no objection, in principle, to the establishment without delay of such a working group, the Committee on Disarmament" -- now the Conference -- "has not thus far been enabled to reach agreement on an acceptable mandate for the working group during its 1983 session". The 10 operative paragraphs then follow. All of them are clearly important, but I shall confine myself at this point to quoting only four.

First of all, operative paragraph 2, in which the Assembly emphasized that "further effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space should be adopted by the international community".

Operative paragraph 3 in which the Assembly called upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to "contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and to take immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space".

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Paragraph 5, in which the Assembly "Requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space".

Lastly, Mr. President, paragraph 7, which is perhaps the most pertinent for us, in which the Assembly, "Further requests the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its session in 1984, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

If what I have just recalled is examined and compared with the draft mandate which was submitted by the Group of 21 on 29 February 1984 and which is reproduced in document CD/329/Rev.1, it will be seen that this draft faithfully reflects that resolution, adopted, let us not forget, by 147 votes in favour, and not 10 years ago but on 15 December 1983.

I should like, in concluding this statement, and in order to facilitate the comparison to which I referred, to read out this draft in its entirety. It is very brief and says the following:

"Reaffirming the principle that outer space - the common heritage of mankind - should be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, and in order to prevent the extension of an arms race to outer space, and prohibit its use for hostile purposes; the Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc [subsidiary body]" - there it said a subsidiary body, but we know now that it is to be an ad hoc committee - "with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement, or various agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. The Ad Hoc Committee will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives and report on the progress of its work to the Conference on Disarmament."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? This does not seem to be the case.

As announced earlier, I intend now to suspend the plenary meeting and convene an informal meeting to consider organizational questions. Immediately afterwards, we will resume the plenary meeting of the Conference.

The plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05 p.m. and resumed at 4.25 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The Plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

The secretariat has circulated today an informal paper containing the time-table for meetings to be held by the Conference on Disarmament during the coming week. As usual, the time-table is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. If there is no objection, I will take it that the Conference adopts the time-table.

It was so decided.

(The President)

I understand that there is general agreement that the second part of the 1984 session of the Conference should begin on 12 June. If there is no objection, I will consider that the Conference agrees to that date.

It was so decided.

I am informed that the Third Report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, contained in document CD/448, is now available in all languages. Therefore, I will invite the Conference to take note of it at our next plenary meeting.

For administrative reasons it is necessary to make the following statement for the record:

The Committee on Disarmament, having been redesignated as the Conference on Disarmament from 7 February 1984, the following consequential changes of designation have taken place with effect from the same date:

- (a) The Chairman has been redesignated as the President,
- (b) The Secretary has been redesignated as the Secretary-General,
- (c) The Deputy Secretary has been redesignated as the Deputy Secretary-General.

These are changes in designation and have no financial or structural implications. The rules of procedure have been re-issued in document CD/8/Rev.2, containing consequential changes in designation.

As there is no other business I intend now to adjourn the plenary meeting.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday 17 April at 10.30 a.m. The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.