

FINAL RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 16 April 1985, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. K. Vidas

(Yugoslavia)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. B. OULD-ROUIS Mr. A. BELAID
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. J. CARASALES Mr. R. GARCIA MORITAN
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. R. ROWE Ms. S. FREEMAN Ms. J. COURTNEY
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. M. DEPASSE Mr. Ph. NIEUWENHUYS
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. K. TELLALOV Mr. V. BOJILOV Mr. H. HALATCHEV Mr. R. DEYANOV Mr. P. POPTCHEV Mr. N. MIKHAILOV
<u>Burma:</u>	U MAUNG MAUNG GYI U HLA MYINT
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. J.A. BEESLEY Mr. R. ROCHON
<u>China:</u>	Ms. WANG ZHIYUN Mr. SHI JICHENG Mr. LIN CHENG Mr. PAN JUSHENG Mr. YE RUAN Mr. SHI JINKUN
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mr. P. NUNEZ MOSQUERA
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. M. VEJVODA Mr. J. BAJGAR

Egypt:

Mr. M. BADR
Mr. F. MONIB
Mr. A. ABBAS

Ethiopia:

Mr. K. KEBEDE
Mr. F. YOHANNES
Mr. N. KEBRET

France:

Mr. F. de la GORCE
Mr. H. RENIE

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. H. ROSE
Mr. W. KRUTZSCH
Mr. L. MUELLER
Mr. F. SAYATZ

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. F. ELBE
Mr. M. GERDTS
Mr. W-N. GERMANN

Hungary:

Mr. D. MEISZTER
Mr. F. GAJDA
Mr. T. TOTTH

India:

Mr. S. KANT SHARMA

Indonesia:

Mr. S. SUTOWARDOYO
Mr. I. DAMANIK
Mr. R.I. JENIE
Mr. HARYO MATARAM
Ms. R. TANZIL

Islamic Republic of Iran:

Dr. ALI AKBAR VALAYATI
Mr. N. KAZEMI KAMYAB
Mr. F.S. SIRJANI
Mr. M.J. MAHALLATI
Mr. S. RADJAI
Mr. M. TALE

Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI
Mr. F. PIAGGESI
Mr. M. PAVESE
Mr. R. DI CARLO

Japan:

Mr. R. IMAI
Mr. M. KONISHI
Mr. T. KAWAKITA
Mr. M. SATO
Mr. T. ISHIGURI

Kenya:

Mr. P.N. MWAURA

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO
Mr. P. MACEDO RIBA

Mongolia:

Mr. L. BAYART
Mr. S-O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. O. HILALE
Mr. M. SBIHI

Netherlands:

Mr. R.W. VAN SCHAIK
Mr. R.J. AKKERMAN
Mr. J. RAMAKER

Nigeria:

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Pakistan:

Mr. M. AHMAD

Peru:

Mr. J. GONZALEZ TERRONES
Mr. J. MUNOZ DEACON

Poland:

Mr. S. TURBANSKI
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. J. RYCHLAK

Romania:

Mr. I. DATCU
Mr. P. BALOIU
Mr. A. POPESCU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. J. DHANAPALA
Mr. P. KARIYAWASAM

Sweden:

Mr. R. EKEUS
Mr. L-E. WINGREN
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Mrs. E. BONNIER
Mrs. A.M. LAU

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. V.I. USTINOV
Mr. G.V. ANTISFEROV
Mr. E.N. GOLOVKO
Mr. G.V. BERDENNIKOV
Mr. A. SHMATOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE
Mr. R.J.S. EDIS
Mr. D.A. SLINN
Mr. J.F. GORDON
Mr. I.P. CHALMERS

United States of America:

Mr. T. BARTHELEMY
Mr. H.W. DAVIDSON
Mr. D. DORN
Mr. B. MORTON
Ms. K. WHITE
Mr. P. CORDEN
Mr. J. COLLINS
Ms. K. CRITTENBERGER

Venezuela:

Mr. O. GARCIA

Mr. D. ROCHE

Yugoslavia:

Mr. K. VIDAS

Mr. N. MIHAJLOVIC

Ms. D. STEPANOVIC

Mr. D. MINTE

Zaire:

Mr. O. MONSHEMVULA

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

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Deputy Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 308th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished delegates, at the beginning, I wish warmly to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, who is speaking in the Conference today. Dr. Velayati addressed the Conference last year on 16 February. I wish to thank him for the interest that he has shown in our work and I am sure that members will listen to his statement with particular interest.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Brazil.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati.

Dr. ALI AKBAR VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to be here today in the Conference on Disarmament, and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on presiding over the Conference during the current month. I also wish this forum success in dealing with its weighty responsibilities.

The agenda of the Conference as before includes items for which progress in any one of them, although minor, deserves much attention due to the importance attached to it.

The international community feels more than ever defenceless against the threats of a nuclear confrontation. Production, progress and diversity of conventional weapons have reached a frightening level. The use of inhuman chemical weapons is becoming a normal act at the international level for the trampling of the rights of peoples, due to the consecutive deployment of this weapon by the Iraqi régime. A large part of the wealth and resources of this universe are being spent on the arms race. The creation of tension, war and crisis is now part of the daily goals pursued by the satanic forces since they provide favourable markets for arms dealers. Tension and crisis absorb armaments which in turn escalate tension and drag many parts of the world into this vicious circle.

It is unfortunate that this trend is proceeding much faster than the disarmament talks. But this fact should not disappoint those who are sincerely making efforts in this Conference or elsewhere to curb this madness. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a member of this forum, stands ready to make whatever contribution it can towards achieving the lofty goals of this Conference.

The purpose of my attendance here today is to serve this end. By raising some of the misfortunes the Islamic Republic of Iran has borne during these years of the imposed war due to the structural weaknesses of the relevant international organizations, I hope that positive steps can be taken to identify these weak points and then rectify them.

(Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

It is safe to assert that the Iraqi régime is one of the record-holders in violating international laws and conventions in the post-World-War-Two period. The following are only some of these violations:

Outright and full-fledged military aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran instead of recourse to international organizations and arbitration to settle claimed differences through peaceful means;

Deliberate demolition of cities and population centres with bulldozers (Security Council document S/15834);

Total violation of the Geneva Protocol of 1949 concerning the treatment of POWs and civilian citizens of the occupied territories (Security Council document S/16962);

Use of chemical weapons in contravention of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (Security Council document S/16433);

Attacking merchant shipping in the Persian Gulf (Security Council document S/16877);

Attacking civilian aircraft and threatening the safety of civil aviation;

Violation of the 12 June 1984 undertaking given to the United Nations Secretary-General as to the cessation of military attacks on civilian and population centres (Security Council document S/16897 and message of the Secretary-General to the Presidents of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, dated 6 March 1985);

Attack on the atomic reactor in Bushihr;

Attacks on historical sites which have been registered as the cultural heritage of the world community in contravention of the Hague Convention of 1954, especially the recent attacks against the monuments of historical value in Isfahan.

I tend to presume that the mere reference to these violations, which represent only part of the Iraqi aggression and crimes, would suffice to expose the real nature of this régime as well as to appreciate the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Such violations make clear our duty as well as that of any other neighbours of Iraq that believe in the necessity of attaining durable peace, security and tranquillity in the region. The past record of the Iraqi régime vis-à-vis international and in bilateral commitments clearly point to the degree of its trustworthiness in the eyes of the peoples and countries of the region. As far as the work of this Conference is concerned, due attention to the sources of support and survival of the Iraqi régime is in order. Even a simple-minded optimistic appraisal of the motives of some of the countries supporting Iraq would lead to the logical conclusion that they have secured their arms markets at the cost of creating and sustaining tensions of the worst kind in the region. In our opinion, striving against the merchants of death should be one of the important items in the agenda of this Conference. Although it is quite predictable that the very same countries pursuing their interests in creating tension, war and crisis, would, through deviationist tactics and raising illogical excuses, impede any meaningful progress in this respect.

(Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

A year has already passed since the publication of the report by the United Nations fact-finding mission regarding the use of chemical weapons by Iraq. I do not think that the time has been insufficient for a full international investigation into a critical question which has been the focus of concern of the international community. Could you, as the most informed individuals conducting the multilateral disarmament negotiations in this Conference, come to terms with your conscience to justify the catastrophic and conspiratorial indifference of international bodies vis-à-vis this crime of genocide through lack of appropriate international means to prevent the use of chemical weapons? A fortnight ago, exactly at a time when the United Nations Secretary-General was in Baghdad to pursue his efforts to persuade the Iraqi régime to abide by international conventions and regulations, the Islamic Republic of Iran was once again the victim of an extensive chemical attack. The report concerning this attack and its human toll has already been circulated as a document of the United Nations. Without delay, we invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to fly from Baghdad to Tehran immediately to witness at close quarters the catastrophic effects of the deployment of chemical weapons. By choosing this particular time to launch another chemical attack, the Iraqi régime has, in fact, declared to the United Nations Secretary-General personally that it is determined not only to continue the deployment of chemical weapons, but absolutely to disregard world public opinion and all international conventions and regulations. Does this tragic state of affairs not persuade all fair-minded people to suspect that the Iraqi régime dares ridicule all universal values of humanity on the strength of certain behind-the-scenes backings, and escape any punitive action by the Security Council and other practical international measures?

Only during the six previous weeks from 3 March to 9 April 1985, according to the figures, the list of which will be submitted with photographs to the Conference for the information of the distinguished delegates, 4,600 people were wounded and martyred by 33 instances of use of chemical weapons. I repeat, 4,600 people were wounded and martyred by 33 instances of use of chemical weapons. Iraq has not only perpetrated the crime of repeatedly resorting to chemical warfare, but has also conducted extensive research and experiments for the deployment of new chemical weapons. In its earlier deployment as reported by the United Nations team, Iraq used Mustard Gas and Tabun, which is a nerve gas.

Here it is worth mentioning that although Tabun was developed during World War Two, it was never used, and the Baathist régime of Iraq is the first to have used this deadly weapon, shunned by mankind. In its later development, the Iraqi régime used a new chemical weapon composed of Tabun and an asphyxiating agent, and finally in its most recent deployments, this régime has utilized a newer agent comprising of Tabun, Cyanide compounds as well as Mustard Gas. This new chemical agent was deployed through aerial bombardment and was sprayed by crop-spraying aircraft. The Conference is asked to take effective measures to halt the development and test of new chemical weapons by the Iraqi régime.

Who do you think still respects the 1925 Geneva Protocol? Should not an answer to this question precede the resumption of efforts by this Conference to ban the deployment of chemical weapons? Does not the shockingly repeated use of chemical agents by Iraq and the extensive research and experiment for the development of new ones not have anything to do with international peace and security? If it has, could the Security Council offer the least justification for its irresponsible attitude to the international community? Could the Security Council deny that its silence has not persuaded and encouraged Iraq to continue to deploy these weapons?

(Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Of course, the attitude taken by this Council was not unexpected to us. Small wonder that the Security Council, which once adopted the Resolution 552 concerning the attacks on commercial ships and tankers, now refrains from issuing a resolution condemning Iraq for the use in war of chemical weapons.

What is surprising under such circumstances is the continuous efforts, long talks, and holding of several sessions aimed at adopting new conventions as regards disarmament.

It is against common sense to waste time and money on agreements which can only be used in libraries and referred to in conferences. If 60 years after the adoption of the 1925 Protocol, and so many years of painstaking efforts of our fathers to work out common values of humankind leading to the preparation of a protocol in which the use of chemical weapons is considered inhuman and immoral, 33 cases of violations of this agreement during only six weeks create no proper sensitivity in international fora, especially the ones directly concerned with this matter, must not the world community sadly mourn for the moral collapse of international organizations?

It is not necessary during the short opportunity given to me to deal with the deficiencies and weaknesses of the existing international organizations that are responsible for maintaining peace and security, and safeguarding international agreements and regulations. All of you, by and large are aware of these weaknesses. Undoubtedly the delegates representing various countries in international fora have paid attention to these weak points in proportion to their independence, and efforts were made to eliminate the current shortcomings. Here my main concern is not the above-mentioned shortcomings; rather I would like to draw attention to those elements which manipulate international regulations and executive bodies for the achievement of sublime human goals. In my letter dated 29 January 1985, to the United Nations Secretary-General, I said

"Certainly there are more effective ways to prevent Iraq from using chemical weapons, and still the Islamic Republic of Iran is not willing to think of the last option. Is there any other internationally accepted legal instrument to meet this goal, which, in fact, is an international objective? It is hoped that Your Excellency will seriously consider this question and give an answer accordingly. It is self-evident that if the answer does not include a practical solution independent of the Imposed war, it will be considered a negative answer, and implies that the Islamic Republic of Iran and all members of international community are absolutely defenceless against the violation of the Geneva Protocol, thus forcing all countries to independently adopt necessary preventive measures in order to confront this action."

Now, do you not think that refraining from giving an answer to this question would have no other result than to strengthen the theory of deterrence.

We even suggested a practical solution. On 16 February 1985, in a letter to the United Nations, we requested sending a permanent mission to Tehran in order to investigate and give reports on the deployment of chemical weapons. The same elements that prevented the Security Council from taking a proper position as regards this

(Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Islamic Republic of Iran)

problem created obstacles in the acceptance of this request by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization. We received no explanation indicating according to what legal principle the despatch of a mission aimed at realizing such a goal contravenes the duties of the United Nations.

Is there any better way to encourage the arms race? Unfortunately, it was not long before the incident we had given prior warnings of happened again. Chemical weapons were once again used in a very extensive manner.

The Islamic Republic of Iran once again asked the Secretary-General to station a permanent mission in Tehran to monitor such violations and report accordingly.

Naturally we insist on this stand because we still believe that the presence of such a team in Tehran can, to some extent, play a deterring role. We still have no intention to resort to other deterrent means to stop the Iraqi régime's crimes. At the same time, we evidently cannot remain defenceless for a long time. We are no more prepared unilaterally to sustain the damages resulting from this crime.

I am sure the Security Council has inevitably felt the special sensitivity of the present juncture. But I do not think that the Security Council has yet become bold enough to overcome political barriers of its members' influence. The Security Council is certainly aware of the grave consequences that a chemical retaliation may bring about for the human community and for the credibility of the Security Council and the whole United Nations if quick measures are not taken to stop it. But such measures require sincerity and determination, both of which the Security Council unfortunately lacks.

Considering the incentives and the philosophy behind the formation of this Conference, we believe it should be, more than any other United Nations organ, prepared to react to the prevailing sensitive state of affairs. The principled reaction of this Conference would certainly pave the way for other United Nations organs.

If for any political reason the Security Council cannot adopt an open stance on this matter, why should not this Conference call on the concerned United Nations to condemn the repeated and extensive Iraqi use of chemical weapons, and send the team the Islamic Republic of Iran has requested.

In order to prevent such crimes from being repeated in other parts of the world, we are ready to provide this Conference with the results of this bitter experience our people have undergone. The wounded of the recent chemical attacks of Iran have been sent to several European countries for treatment and studying their medical files will help the Conference to achieve its objective, and will make them understand the depth of the catastrophe.

Furthermore, it is advised that a glance be made at the book on biological and chemical warfare published by Gent University of Belgium. It is advisable that the distinguished representative of the Secretary-General should work out a method for compiling these findings and distribute them among Member States accordingly.

The Islamic Republic of Iran once again openly declares that in spite of its ability to retaliate in all such cases, it would not like to violate international laws and regulations, and would do so only when there is no other option. As regards chemical weapons, the reservations to the 1925 Protocol were changed into the non-first-use document. What is more, the Iraqi régime is one of the signatories to the non-first-use document. The Islamic Republic of Iran could indisputably embark on a retaliatory act through a legal interpretation of the document. But last year

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here in this Conference it undertook not to retaliate, because it believes that such acts would discredit one of the most important international documents that has been violated less than any other convention, due to the fact that public opinion abhors the use of chemical weapons. Besides, it has had the hope that **the international** community would be able to stop its violation by the Iraqi régime.

Numerous issues can be raised with regard to the other items on the agenda, the most important of which is the problem of nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, the results of the last year's efforts made in this regard are not in proportion to the great volume of such efforts and the intentions and objectives of the international community. The fact is that the menace of nuclear weapons is threatening humanity. Therefore, it is the natural right of all countries to participate in the promotion of the negotiations relating to nuclear disarmament and defend their existence. The prevention of wars must become the main purpose and compulsory basis of the behaviour of all the nuclear Powers, regardless of the size and dimensions of their nuclear arsenals. Although the proposal of a commitment not to initiate the first strike does not meet the objective of the international community, it is regarded as a positive step towards such an objective and commands support.

The space arms race has certainly created a global concern. The international community can accept no excuse for the nuclearization of outer space.

Those who are bent on the prevention of any type of effective negotiations in this regard by basing their argumentation in advance upon the "impossibility" of the control of the agreements concerning the limitation of the space arms race, are purposely directing the affairs in a manner in which they will have a free hand to pursue the space militarization policy and thus gain military advantages.

As regards radiological weapons, we have already drawn the attention of this Conference to the Iraqi attack upon the nuclear power installations of Bushihr. Regrettably, the Iraqi régime has not received a concrete international reaction in this regard either, and therefore the danger of another attack upon this power station continues to exist.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons must definitely concentrate on this matter in the course of its discussions.

There are many issues and points which can be mentioned within the framework of the mandate of the Conference. Nevertheless, unfortunately, the repeated violations of international law by the Iraqi régime have led us to this conclusion that under the present circumstances, priority must be accorded to the discussions, negotiations and efforts which have to be made in order to establish a practical guarantee system for the international regulations. Such discussions must take place before all others. Otherwise, in view of the precedent that Iraq has set, it is to be feared that the major international laws and regulations, which are the fruit of the great pains of mankind and the universal human values, may be subjected to total elimination.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his important statement and for the kind words addressed to the President.

I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Dhanapala.

Mr. DHANAPALA (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka are both founder-members and former Chairmen of the Non-aligned Movement which has provided a significant global impetus for the cause of general and complete disarmament. Your delegation's tireless efforts and constructive contributions to our work in this forum are well known. Your own reputation as a diplomat of great experience and deep sincerity for the objective of multilateral co-operation for peace and development is well established. My delegation felicitates you on your assumption of the chair for the month of April and pledges you our full co-operation.

We would also like to record our appreciation for the efforts of Ambassador Taylhardat of Venezuela for his dedicated endeavours as President last month. These endeavours were crowned by the success of establishing an Ad Hoc Committee under item 5 of our agenda which we have now to build upon.

We are honoured today by the presence in our midst of the distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It may appear strangely belated for my delegation to address the Conference on item 1 of our agenda at this late stage of the spring part of our session. I do so for two reasons. Firstly, to record my delegation's deep sense of disappointment at not only the absence of agreement on this item but also the seeming lack of urgency in getting ourselves out of the stalemate we have been in for some time. We have admittedly a number of priority nuclear issues to deal with here. Unquestionably one of the most important of them is a nuclear test ban although we note with regret that this view is qualified by one delegation which regards a CTB as a long-term goal. At this stage therefore we would like to see a concerted diplomatic effort comparable to that which went into the establishing of an ad hoc committee on item 5 at the end of last month to take place around item 1 of our agenda. It is not too late for that same combination of magnanimous compromise in the larger interest, bold imagination and a commitment to work in the Conference to be put together again. It is an alchemy that came about not through chance or the operation of some deus ex machina. The elements of that alchemy are here with us. All it requires is a common awareness that the international community has a right to expect us to work seriously in the field of a nuclear test ban. Are we going to be derelict in our duty and miss yet another opportunity of making progress on this issue?

My second reason for dealing with this issue today is the approach of the Third Review Conference of the Non Proliferation Treaty. Sri Lanka became a party to this Treaty in 1979 -- nine years after it came into operation. We did so after considerable reflection and careful thought. Our conclusion then was, and remains, that the Treaty has been beneficial and that the world would have been a more dangerous place had there been no restraints on proliferation. We are of course mindful of the criticisms made of the Treaty and have endeavoured ourselves in the course of the review of the Treaty to urge its strengthening by the implementation of all its articles so as to enhance its credibility and effectiveness. Among the steps that have been urged is the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty. In the view of my delegation a litmus test of the good faith of the nuclear weapon States in the implementation of article VI of the Treaty is their willingness at least to initiate steps towards a CTB. Significant statements have been made by those outside the Treaty linking a CTB to their readiness to accede to the Treaty. The positions adopted in this Conference during the spring part of the session fall far short of our expectations. This can scarcely help in creating an atmosphere conducive for the successful review of the NPT. Even the converted can have their crises of faith.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

Since the end of the trilateral discussions the focal point for multilateral discussions on NTB has been the Conference on Disarmament. Nuclear-weapon testing not covered by the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty undoubtedly fuels the nuclear-arms race, enhancing the prospects of nuclear proliferation both horizontally and vertically. As a first step in nuclear disarmament the achievement of a CTB has long been a widely accepted goal. Paragraph 51 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament states "The cessation of nuclear-weapon testing by all States within the framework of an effective nuclear disarmament process would be in the interest of mankind. It would make a significant contribution to the above aim of ending the qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons and of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons". Few are as qualified to trace the discussion of the NTB in international fora as the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico. His statement of 7 March is a comprehensive account of the landmarks in our work on a nuclear test ban. The predecessor body of the Conference on Disarmament negotiated on the discontinuance of nuclear weapon tests from 1958 when a moratorium was observed for some time. The Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, while being a significant step, is also an example of one of the lost opportunities in the history of disarmament negotiations. We are still 22 years later unable to come as close to a CTB as we did then. It is not my intention to analyse the causes for that diplomatic failure. The point of disagreement was over verification of underground tests and this remains so despite the major advances in the field of seismic technology.

My delegation would like, at this point, to compliment the professionally thorough and patient work undertaken by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. We have noted the latest progress report of the Ad Hoc Group in document CD/583 and welcome the conduct of the successful data-exchange experiment using the Global Telecommunication System of the World Meteorological Organization. It is an inspiring example of international co-operation, apart from being a serious demonstration of the existing and potential scope for a verification system to monitor the discontinuance of all test explosions for all time. We are also grateful to the kind invitation extended to all delegations in the Conference by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to participate in the International Workshop on Seismological Verification of a CTB to be held in Oslo on 5 and 6 June. We are sure this will be a useful experience in the present context of our discussion of this issue.

We would also like to welcome the statement of Ambassador Qian Jiadong of 19 February announcing the readiness of the delegation of China to participate in the work on NTB in this Conference if a subsidiary body is established for this purpose. These are encouraging signs. But the overwhelming mood surrounding this issue in the Conference has been regrettably negative. During the frustrating stalemate on a CTB which has existed since 1963 a number of measures have been adopted. The unratified Treaties on the Threshold Test Ban and the PNE, limiting explosions to a yield of 150 kilotons each, and more recent proposals to peg the threshold to what is perceived to be the available means of technical verification are among them. My delegation is concerned that these measures or "step-by-step" approaches however well-intentioned could in fact be repetitions of the lost opportunity of 1963. Expediency is not political realism. It is wrong-headed and premature to agree on measures that are less than what is desirable and possible. We must not seek to legitimize some testing when the all-important task is to ban all testing. Equally we must not allow the present technological capabilities exclusively to chart the course of disarmament. Despite

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

these reservations we agree that these proposals must be discussed fully. We cannot preclude any approach to solve the problem before us. Any ad hoc committee must consider all existing proposals and future initiatives relevant to the subject.

My delegation in its statement on 5 March had occasion to welcome the bilateral talks between the United States and the USSR expressing cautious optimism over this development. The subject of a CTB is clearly not on the agenda of these talks. The failure to resume the trilateral negotiations since it recessed in 1980 is another reason to question the good faith of the nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Non Proliferation Treaty in seeking an end to vertical proliferation. It is agreed that a CTB is the first and most urgent step towards the cessation of the nuclear arms race but we remain in a state of inaction in taking practical steps towards it. It has been repeated on many occasions that only a political decision is necessary to achieve agreement.

As I have stated earlier, verification has become one of the reasons advanced by those who are not prepared to negotiate on NTB. Scientific evidence is available to prove that current techniques for monitoring seismic waves can detect tests down to explosions of one kiloton. An array of verification methods are available to provide adequate and effective guarantees against violations. Writing in the "Scientific American" in October 1982, Lynn R. Sykes and Jack F. Evernden stated:

"We address this question as seismologists who have been concerned for many years with the detection of underground explosions by seismic methods and with means of distinguishing underground explosions from earthquakes. We are certain that the state of knowledge of seismology and the techniques for monitoring seismic waves are sufficient to ensure that a feasible seismic network could soon detect a clandestine underground testing programme involving explosions as small as one kiloton. In short, the technical capabilities needed to police a comprehensive test ban down to explosions of very small size unquestionably exist. The issues to be resolved are political".

We are therefore surprised to hear statements to the contrary from one delegation. In other areas where verification techniques are regarded as inadequate bold proposals have been made as a means of advancing our work. No such proposals have been forthcoming in the NTB area. The reason for this is not obviously a poverty of technological expertise. It reflects rather a political unwillingness to make progress in this field. There will inevitably be different approaches on verification techniques. The answer to that is to negotiate an acceptable method of verification. Why is there willingness to do this in one area and not in another? The national means of verification and the international exchange of seismic data have already been explored. My delegation is ready to discuss any other proposals that may be presented here.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 39/52 on the cessation of all test explosions of nuclear weapons clearly traces the evolution of this subject and I would venture to recall in this instance, the declaration by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1972 that the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have been fully explored and that only a political decision is now necessary in order to achieve final agreement on a test ban treaty. Therefore, it is ironic and disturbing that 13 years later we continue to ponder over the scientific and technical problems that are supposed to be insurmountable.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

Four years ago the Group of 21 made a statement on this subject which is reproduced in document CD/181. I refer in particular to the clarifications sought from the States engaged in trilateral negotiations on certain key issues. Satisfactory answers to these important questions are necessary especially in the context of the Review Conference of the NPT. There is no doubt that nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility for taking steps to conclude a nuclear test ban treaty. The interests of all States are of course involved in this. After we failed to reach consensus on the mandate presented in document CD/520, the Group of 21 indicated its willingness to discuss other proposals so as to commence work within an ad hoc committee. It is the hope of my delegation that all delegations will use this opportunity to seek a fresh approach to this issue. It is also our view that the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts will have greater relevance and direction if it is linked to a serious negotiating effort within the Conference on Disarmament towards a nuclear test ban treaty.

Nuclear tests continue to be carried out at an average rate of about 50 per year principally by the USSR and the United States. The number of nuclear weapons is estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000. A nuclear test ban treaty is no substitute for disarmament and we agree that deep reductions in existing arsenals are also necessary in our progress towards general and complete disarmament. At the same time the failure to make progress on a comprehensive test ban runs counter to pious professions regarding non-proliferation. This Conference has accepted the need to work towards a chemical weapon ban despite different perceptions among us on its priority vis-à-vis nuclear issues. Is it too much to expect those who regard a CTB as a long-term goal to show the same spirit of compromise? Paragraph 51 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament refers to a NTB "within the framework of an effective nuclear disarmament process". It underlines the essentially interrelated nature of disarmament issues. We cannot identify what is the cart and what is the horse. It is as meaningless and futile as debating which came first, the chicken or the egg. We must work on all issues and a NTB is one of them. The technical problems surrounding it are less than in many other areas qualifying it for early consideration here in our forum.

The sterile arguments on mandates have bedevilled the discussions of this Conference for too long. Experience has shown us that no formulation of words can obstruct the collective will of a group of States. We endorse the views expressed by Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of the delegation of Pakistan when he said in his statement on 26 February 1985, "After all a mandate, whatever its language, can only be as effective in achieving concrete results as members of this Conference would be willing to make it. There is no magic formulation that will automatically guarantee success. Thus, while on the one hand a comprehensive mandate need not be feared, on the other hand it should also not become an article of faith".

I have already referred to our recent experience in setting up an Ad Hoc Committee under item 5. Firmly entrenched positions tenaciously held for over a year were suddenly yielded in a spirit of compromise. The two subjects concerned --- NTB and the prevention of an arms race in outer space -- are of course different. We have had a subsidiary body on item 1 with an exploratory mandate for some time, whereas on item 5 we have created one for the first time, making a non-negotiating mandate in the latter case an understandable first step. A compromise bearing this difference

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

in mind should be possible given the crucial importance of a nuclear-test ban on which we all agree. My delegation is convinced that the possibilities of seeking a compromise among the various approaches have not been exhausted. We have but one week left in the spring part of our session. But that should be no cause for pessimism. The agreement on the President's mandate for the Ad Hoc Committee on item 5 was evolved in two days.

Where there is a will there is a way.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Cromartie.

Mr. CROMARTIE (United Kingdom): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I have spoken in Plenary this month I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chair for the month of April. I am very glad that the Conference is in your able hands for the final weeks of the spring part of the session. I should also like to express the thanks of my delegation to your predecessor, Ambassador Taylhardat of Venezuela, for the skilful way in which he guided our proceedings last month to a successful conclusion on the last day of his Presidency.

I am speaking today to introduce a further British Working Paper entitled "Chemical Weapons Convention: Organs and Constitution of the Organisation", which has already been circulated to all delegations as document CD/589. This paper is designed to complement the series of papers already tabled by the United Kingdom delegation on verification under a chemical weapons convention. The latest of these, CD/575, was tabled on 12 March by the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr. Richard Luce, who emphasized the great importance attached by my Government to the early conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons. The present paper on the constitution of the organization builds on a wide area of common ground that has already been identified in the course of the negotiations on this subject. In this particular area there is already broad agreement that there should be a Consultative Committee composed of representatives of all parties to the convention, with the primary task of ensuring compliance with its provisions. It is also common ground that there should be an Executive Council of limited membership, and an international Secretariat which would include an Inspectorate. Our paper contains detailed proposals for the constitution and functions of these three organs and for the division of responsibility between them. We believe that it would be important to define these responsibilities with care and precision if the Organization is to be fully effective in its vital task of ensuring compliance with the convention and thus providing the confidence needed for its conclusion and continual stability.

The Organization would be responsible for implementation of the various verification measures required under the Convention to give assurance of compliance with its provisions. It would be responsible for the verification of non-production of chemical weapons by routine inspection and data exchange for which we have made

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

detailed proposals in earlier papers. It would also be responsible during the first 10 years of the life of the convention for the verification of destruction of stocks of chemical weapons and of facilities for their production. Last but not least, it would become responsible for carrying out fact-finding procedures for verification on challenge, which could provide the safety-net to supplement routine inspection and thus represent the ultimate source of confidence in the convention. If this system of verification is to provide assurance to parties to the convention that its provisions are being complied with by other parties it would be essential that it should be, and be seen to be reliable and effective. For this purpose parties will need to have confidence in the Organization responsible for the operation of the verification system. With this aim in view my delegation proposes the creation of an independent international organization composed of parties to the convention, with a separate legal personality, on the lines of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which enjoys wide respect internationally for its effectiveness and impartiality. It would need a highly professional Secretariat which would command the confidence of all parties for its impartiality and integrity. The ability of the Secretariat to take effective action in a crisis in the event of suspicion of non-compliance would be fostered by its performance of the inspections on a routine basis of destruction of stockpiles and production facilities and of industry for the verification of non-production.

In addition to having an efficient and reliable Secretariat it would be essential for the Organization to have the capacity to make rapid and effective decisions to allay suspicions of non-compliance. It would not be practicable to convene the Consultative Committee composed of all parties within the timescale required to restore confidence in the convention. We have proposed therefore that the Executive Council should have delegated authority to carry out the day to day functions of the Organization and to be endowed with the necessary powers to enable it to carry out the objectives of the convention in a timely and efficient manner.

The Organization would need to start operating as soon as the convention enters into force. The demands on it would be particularly heavy for the first 10 years of its existence when it would be responsible for verifying the destruction of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons and of the facilities for their production. The Organization would not therefore be able to grow gradually into its responsibilities but would need to make a flying start. To ensure this we have proposed the establishment of a Preparatory Commission composed of signatories to the convention with the task of creating the necessary machinery for the Organization to be operationally effective as soon as the convention enters into force.

In his statement to the Conference on 12 March my Minister, Mr. Luce, suggested that the Organization might help to promote a positive climate for greater

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

international co-operation between States Parties in the civil chemical industry throughout the world. My delegation has in mind the possibility that the Organization might, in addition to its primary role in connection with the prohibition of chemical weapons, have also a separate role in the promotion of safety in the manufacture and handling of highly toxic substances. It would, of course, be important to keep any collaboration in this field on a voluntary basis and entirely separate from that of the mandatory inspections under the convention to provide assurances of compliance with its prohibitions. My delegation would be happy to join with other delegations in studying this aspect further, as Mr. Luce suggested.

My delegation believes that this Working Paper tabled today offers a practical blue print for an effective and viable organization which would allow all States Parties to play a full part in the operation of the Convention while providing machinery for rapid decisions relating to its implementation and operation. We hope that other delegations will share this view and that the paper will stimulate discussion of this important aspect of the convention which has hitherto received relatively little attention.

I should like to take this opportunity to offer some comments on the statement on chemical weapons made by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union on 4 April. My delegation welcomes the readiness of the Soviet delegation which he expressed to continue serious and constructive negotiations with a view to the earliest conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons. With the same aim in view I should like to take up some points made by Ambassador Issraelyan, especially those related to proposals and ideas put forward earlier by the United Kingdom delegation.

The proposals for verification of non-production we made in document CD/575 are carefully limited, both in the proposed measures of inspection and data exchange, and in the list of compounds to which they would be applied. Inspection on a routine basis is proposed only for those toxic agents and precursors which would pose a high risk to the convention if manufactured industrially. This category is confined to super-toxic lethal compounds and possibly other named compounds which can be used directly in chemical weapons, and to a strictly limited number of key precursors. The high-risk key precursors comprise four classes of compounds plus three particular compounds. The total number of compounds in this category that are manufactured on a significant scale is not numbered in hundreds still less in thousands. In fact the number of plants making such compounds, according to the data given to my delegation in response to the appeal we made two years ago in our document, CD/353, is less

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

than 11, for all the high-risk compounds taken together. This figure is derived from the data given in the two Working Papers we have circulated at the end of the 1983 and 1984 sessions (CW/WP/57 and CW/WP/86) updated to include some additional data received since August 1984. We do not of course know with certainty how many such plants there are in other countries which have not yet provided us with the information requested. The onus is, however, on the countries which have not provided data to substantiate their claims that our proposals would not be feasible because of the large number of plants involved.

In the view of the United Kingdom delegation, verification of non-production needs to be based on an agreed list of compounds or chemically defined classes of compounds. It would be desirable to have an agreed mechanism under the aegis of the Consultative Committee to modify this list in the light of changing circumstances, especially the development of new technology. In our view, however, the initial list of key precursors needs to be agreed before the Convention is concluded. The analysis of risks given in the United Kingdom Working Paper, CD/514, of 10 July 1984, was designed to provide a basis on which the list or lists of compounds could be agreed by negotiation between the delegations represented round this table. We should need to reach a collective judgement on which compounds should be included and which should not. For this purpose agreed criteria would be useful but not in our view essential. In contrast to the toxicity criteria used to define classes of chemical weapons which depend on quantitative experimental determinations, the criteria under discussion for defining key precursors would not lead unambiguously to a list of precursor compounds even if there were complete agreement on criteria. It would not inspire confidence in the Convention if one party were uncertain whether another party was interpreting the criteria to include a particular compound. The criteria that have been discussed include the concept of minimal peaceful use which is likely to vary with the advance of technology. For example, it would have been said only a few years ago that no compound containing a carbon-phosphorus bond had significant peaceful uses; but this is no longer true, because compounds in this category are used as flame retardants and for other civil purposes. Nevertheless, my delegation attaches great importance to the inclusion of this class of compound in any list of key precursors for the purpose of verification of non-production.

The Soviet proposal to ban altogether the manufacture of compounds containing a methyl-phosphorus bond goes further in this direction than we would wish to and would require the abandonment of existing civil applications of some compounds. Moreover, it would not be logical to ban these compounds containing a methyl group and to leave undeclared and uncontrolled ethyl and other homologues which could be used to make chemical weapons of a similar toxicity. We believe that the verification measures proposed in CD/575 would give adequate assurance that chemical industry was not being misused for the clandestine production of chemical weapons, without impeding industrial operations or compromising their commercial confidentiality.

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

Like the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union my delegation looks forward to continuing the negotiations on chemical weapons in the autumn. We are grateful to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Turbanski, for the effort that he has put into finding an agreed basis for additional work on this subject between the end of the current session in August 1985 and the beginning of the 1986 session. We trust that the Conference will be able to take a decision on this point before adjourning for the spring recess, in accordance with its earlier decision, taken at the end of the 1984 session, in order to enable delegations and their governments to make plans.

We are honoured by the presence among us today of the distinguished Foreign Minister of Iran, and I have listened with interest to the statement he made. My Government has repeatedly expressed its concern about the use of chemical weapons in the Gulf conflict, most recently in the speech made by my Minister of State, Mr. Richard Luce, to the Middle East Association in London on 28 March. Mr. Luce then made it clear that the British Government vigorously condemned the use of such weapons, which is contrary both to the relevant international legal instruments and to the norms of international behaviour in armed conflict. My Government will continue to work strenuously in this Conference for a total ban on chemical weapons. Most delegations will agree that there is an increased risk of the use of chemical weapons in the future which makes even more urgent our task of negotiating a convention banning the manufacture and possession of chemical weapons as well as their use.

In conclusion I should like to emphasize that my delegation has no wish to impose its views on other delegations. The proposals that we have tabled today on the organs and constitution of the Organization to be set up under the convention are intended, like our previous papers, on the verification of non-production, and on the challenge aspect of verification, to be a stimulus for discussion in the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and its Working Groups, and to accelerate progress by agreement between all delegations towards the conclusion of a convention. I would echo what was said recently by the distinguished representative of Canada about the need to determine common ground and then to seek to expand it. We need to work together with a common sense of purpose and of urgency towards our common goal of concluding without delay a convention to which all our governments can subscribe.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom 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. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The Soviet delegation is taking the floor today in order to introduce document CD/587 which has been circulated in the Conference and contains the text of an interview given by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, to the Editor of the newspaper Pravda. In this interview the Soviet leader touched upon a number of international problems directly relating, inter alia, to the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Referring to the present international situation, Mr. Gorbachev said that the world today is full of complex problems -- political, economic and social. More than 150 States with their own history, traditions and interests are active in the international arena. Many of these States have only recently won the right to take an independent role in international relations. In order to develop international relations in the present-day world one must not ignore the interests of other States and still less to deny them the right to choose their own road of development for themselves. These roads of development differ in many respects, and the problems which the world's States are called upon to resolve are equally multi-faceted. For some countries, the main problems are those of putting an end to the centuries-old backwardness which is the legacy of the colonialist era; others are solving no less complex problems of intensifying the development of their national economy and raising their people's level of prosperity; others are occupied with modernizing their economy, while still others are seeking a way out from the economic crisis and trying to take steps against inflationary problems. It would not be an exaggeration, however, to say that all States and peoples are united by the necessity to resolve the number one problem of our time -- the problem of ensuring a future for mankind, of preventing nuclear war. It is this that explains the interest with which all peoples are watching developments of the international political situation and the steps their Governments are taking in the field of limitation of the arms race and disarmament.

The Soviet Union is well aware of the acute need existing today for international co-operation, for establishing a dialogue, for seeking realistic solutions which would relax tensions in the world and help to bar the way to the arms race. We are deeply convinced that all States, large and small, must participate in this great and important effort. "We understand", Mr. Gorbachev said, "the weight of other countries in international affairs and take this into consideration when evaluating the general situation in the world".

Although the Soviet Union is far from looking at the world only through the prism of Soviet-United States relations, it is obvious that relations between the USSR and the United States of America are an exceptionally important factor in international politics. The USSR proceeds from the belief that confrontation is not an inherent defect in those relations. That is why, as Mr. Gorbachev pointed out, the Soviet Union proposes to the Government of the United States to conduct matters in such a way that it would be clear to all, to our peoples and to other countries, that the political forces of the USSR and the United States are oriented not at hostility and confrontation but at the search for mutual understanding and peaceful development.

The USSR, for its part, is prepared once again to demonstrate its goodwill. In that connection, I should like to draw attention to the following statement by Mr. Gorbachev: "The Soviet Union is introducing a moratorium on the deployment of its intermediate-range missiles and suspending the implementation of other counter-measures in Europe. The duration of the moratorium is until November of this year. The decision we make after that depends on whether the United States follows our example: whether or not it stops the deployment of its intermediate-range missiles in Europe". This gesture of goodwill serves the noble purposes of strengthening the security of the world's peoples, ending the arms race on the Earth and not permitting it to take place in outer space. The Soviet Union proceeds from the principle that if a serious approach is taken to the question of stopping the

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

arms race, then it is logical first to halt this race and to proceed immediately to limitations. The USSR proposals for a nuclear arms freeze which are on the negotiating table of the Conference on Disarmament continue to remain in force. In order to achieve a limitation of nuclear arms it is necessary to pass through a freeze stage, since otherwise such a limitation will prove in practice to be only a cover-up for transferring the arms race into the qualitative sphere, for deploying and building-up new types of arms.

At the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU held on 11 April it was emphasized that the Soviet leadership is highly appreciative of the approval with which this peace-loving constructive step of the USSR's has been met in many countries of the world and expresses perplexity at the negative reaction to it on the part of the United States Administration. We should like to hope that this negative attitude of the United States Government, expressed with such wholly incomprehensible speed, is not its last word on the subject.

The Soviet Union, as Mr. Gorbachev said, is convinced that there are possibilities of improving Soviet-United States relations, of improving the general international situation. These possibilities should not be missed. They should be carried over into concrete policies and practical decisions. Constructive work by the Conference on Disarmament, on whose agenda there are matters at the centre of the attention of peoples, could, we are sure, play an important role in this process.

We express the hope that all delegations will acquaint themselves carefully with Mr. Gorbachev's interview with the Editor of the newspaper Pravda contained in document CD/587.

Mr. President, I should like to take advantage of the fact that I have the floor in order to raise a question which is outwardly organizational but, from our point of view, extremely important. Cases have become more frequent within the Conference of late when the work of its subsidiary bodies is slowed down because of lack of agreement within particular groups of States concerning candidatures to the chairmanship of ad hoc committees of the Conference on whose establishment a decision of principle has been achieved. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Prohibition of Radiological Weapons has been out of operation for over a month because the group of Western countries has put off the decision of the question of a candidate for the Committee's chairmanship. Now we are confronted with a similar situation with regard to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. This practice, which is becoming customary, cannot but give rise to anxiety.

Bearing in mind that we have only a few days at our disposal until the end of the spring session, it would be most important, if only in a very preliminary manner, to exchange views concerning the nature, content and programme of work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space in the summer of this year. This will help us to prepare ourselves better for the forthcoming work of the Committee. We therefore think it extremely necessary to hold at least one meeting of the Committee before the end of the spring session. We propose that such a meeting should be held on Friday 19 April at 10.30 a.m. If by that time the Group of 21 succeeds in solving

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

the question of its candidate for the office of chairman, the meeting will be held under his chairmanship. If that is not the case, we suggest that, as an exceptional measure and without creating a precedent for the future, the President of the Conference for the current month should be requested to chair this meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space. We request you, Comrade President, to take a decision on this proposal of the USSR delegation as soon as possible.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you for your statement. I am sure that all members of the Conference have noted your suggestion. I myself intend to consult with the members of the Conference in the coming days.

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

Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): Mr. President, as consultations are being held on the possibility of an extraordinary session of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons between the 1985 and the 1986 regular sessions of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to put on record the views of my delegation on this matter.

In August last year, the Conference took a number of procedural decisions on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. In order to fulfill the general desire for an earlier resumption of its work in February 1985, we chose its Chairman and agreed on the format and purpose of its activities last January. The 1984 Report also contains a mention of the possibility that the Ad Hoc Committee might meet during the Fall of 1985.

Consultations by its distinguished Chairman have been under-way since then in order to ascertain how best to utilize a possible intersessional period. Differences of opinion on procedure have arisen. My delegation, for one, believes that the setting of specific dates is a matter of detail that can be arranged at the appropriate time. For some, the extraordinary session should not overlap with the First Committee of the General Assembly, in October, while others are concerned with international meetings scheduled for next September. There are those who would like the extraordinary session to take place in Geneva, and a few might also consider New York. None of such concerns address the substance of the question, however. At this stage, we must first ascertain the possibilities of progress in the negotiations, which would be the only justification for holding an extraordinary session of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The representatives of the two countries which possess the largest arsenals of chemical weapons, therefore key participants in the negotiations, have both stated in this plenary how they view the prospects and conditions for progress. We might benefit from recalling their opinions on the matter.

On 28 March last, the distinguished representative of the United States, Ambassador Lowitz, urged the acceleration of the current negotiations and reiterated his country's readiness to step up the work on the convention. He stated further

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

that "unfortunately, the actions of the Soviet Union give us the impression that the Soviet Union is not yet prepared to negotiate with the United States or others in this Conference". I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the representative of the United States.

One week later, on 4 April, the leader of the Soviet delegation also addressed the question of progress in the negotiations on chemical weapons. In Ambassador Issraelyan's words, the "main obstacle" to progress in these negotiations "are the continuing efforts by some of the parties to impose their own approaches, their own selfish perceptions, to others". He then commented on certain proposals of the United States and concluded that they "will only waste our time which we need to work on the convention. To such proposals we react in an unambiguously negative manner". Similarly, I have no reason to doubt the words of the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union.

It would seem from those indications that at this point any decision on convening a special meeting on chemical weapons is at least premature, and it will probably remain so as long as one super-Power charges that the actions of the other "can hardly be called negotiation", and while the latter contends that the proposals of the former are "deliberately unacceptable and extremist".

Despite the level and emotion of the current rhetoric, both representatives have stressed their Governments' interest in continuing the process of elaboration of the convention. I believe, therefore, that it is advisable to keep the door open to the possibility of calling a special meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, in case there are concrete signs that serious multilateral work can be achieved. Extraordinary meetings require extraordinary reasons. I am sure that, in such circumstances, even the smaller delegations, like my own, would be willing to make extraordinary efforts to meet the opportunities for achieving results in the negotiations.

May I recall, in this connection, that since the inception of this Conference, in 1979, the Group of 21 started calling for the establishment of a subsidiary body with a negotiating mandate on chemical weapons, an objective to which others agreed only as late as 1982. Among the seven substantive items of its agenda, chemical weapons is the only subject where this Conference is currently conducting any negotiations. Should the two main protagonists of the confrontation that has so far slowed down progress decide to start making better use of the time already available during the regular session of the Conference on Disarmament, and thus enhance prospects to speed up our work, I am confident that there would be agreement on suitable arrangements during the second part of our current session.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement.

The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ambassador Issraelyan, has asked for the floor.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, I apologize for taking the floor once again, but I am obliged to do so. In my first statement I tried to bring to the attention of my distinguished colleagues the Soviet Union's fundamental approach to international political issues, which, in particular, leads it to consider that all States without any exception whatsoever have the right and the duty to take part in disarmament negotiations. This was once again emphasized in the interview given by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, M.S. Gorbachev, to the Editor of Pravda, which I had the honour today to introduce in the Conference. There are not just the Soviet Union and the United States of America in the world — all States must take part in the negotiations, particularly on weapons such as those of mass annihilation of people. For us, the participation of Brazil, Belgium and Bulgaria (to name only those seated closest to my Brazilian colleague) and of other States in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons is very valuable. My friend the Ambassador of Brazil quoted from my statement. I confirm what I said: it seems to us that the position of the United States on many questions relating to the prohibition of chemical weapons is unrealistic and therefore unacceptable. For sure, the representative of the United States of America says the same about the position of others. But is this a reason to refuse negotiations? I think that would be wrong. Despite the very serious divergences, including between the positions of the Soviet Union and the United States of America (and by the way, between the positions of the United States and of other States), and the positions of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, this does not give us the right to consider that we should not undertake negotiations. It does not give us such a right.

Needless to say, in circumstances where some States declare that they do not intend to prohibit a particular type of weapon or, let us say, to prohibit nuclear-weapon tests, in such circumstances we do indeed consider that there is no possibility of conducting negotiations. But when all the Governments represented here confirm that they are at least interested in the prohibition of chemical weapons, that this is an urgent matter, as was reaffirmed once again today, do we really have a moral right to say that we refuse to hold negotiations in view of the existence of such differences, even the most significant of them? We propose a freeze on nuclear weapons, but not a freeze on negotiations. We therefore consider that despite the existence of differences between the positions of different States (and I do not agree that there are differences of opinion only between, so to speak, two "select" States) we must step up our negotiations, and make use of every possibility, including the holding of an additional session. We do not impose our aspiration to hold negotiations. This is a matter which must be decided by our Conference as a whole. But I think that it is a question of our moral responsibility to mankind, to universal co-operation, tirelessly to pursue our search for mutually acceptable solutions for the prohibition of chemical weapons. That is what I wished to say in connection with the statement of my friend the Ambassador of Brazil.

Mr. BARTHELEMY (United States of America): My delegation will return to the subject of chemical weapons at our next meeting, but I do not want to miss the opportunity to speak for a moment today. My delegation is always looking for opportunities to find common ground with the delegation of the Soviet Union; we do not find them as often as we would like, but we work tirelessly for those possibilities and it is a pleasure for me today to say that we are on common ground with the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union on this question.

We believe that it is indeed the responsibility and right of all nations of the world to work toward international security, arms control and disarmament, and it is the moral responsibility in particular, in our view, of every delegation in

(Mr. Barthelemy, United States)

this body, which after all does not include all the Members of the United Nations. Not all Members of the United Nations are invited to participate in this negotiating body. Therefore it is the special responsibility for all of us in this body to work tirelessly for success.

Some nations clearly have special responsibilities in the area of arms control and disarmament, but all nations have an important responsibility, and in view of the statement that we heard here by the first speaker today it is clear that this matter is deeply pressing. And, in the process of the negotiations, my delegation believes that all participants must not simply urge others to make progress but they must each make judgements and each make a contribution. For there are differences of opinion, in our view, to which we must all seek solutions, and it is not sufficient to ask others to make judgements. We must all make judgements in pursuit of the security of our own nations and of all the nations of the world.

Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): I am very happy that my delegation has now been provided with an opportunity to listen to a statement from the United States delegation to the effect that finally they have found common ground with the Soviet Union. I welcome that. In any case, an extraordinary session, requires extraordinary efforts from smaller delegations, which would be prepared to make them, I am sure, if extraordinary reasons were presented to us; I have not found this to be the case yet. All we have are general statements. For routine work we have our routine schedule to which we shall stick until we have those extraordinary reasons presented in our regular sessions.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): I wish only to refer to the suggestion made by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan, at the end of his statement to the effect that if by next Friday there is still no consensus on who can be elected chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, we should hold an informal meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on that day, which, as he suggested, without in any way establishing a precedent, would be chaired by you, Mr. President. I think that would allow us to have an idea of which aspects of this very important issue we should all reflect upon and prepare our positions for the beginning of the summer part of our session. Since I shall probably not have an opportunity to speak at the remaining two plenary meetings, I should like to take this opportunity to place on record the profound satisfaction which the delegation of Mexico derives from your presiding over our work for this month of April, the last in the spring part of our session. At the same time, I should like to reiterate my congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Taylhardat, on the highly constructive and fruitful manner in which he presided over the Conference on Disarmament during the month of March.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico 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? That not being the case, before concluding our meeting today I would like to inform you that we have a long list of speakers for our plenary meeting on Thursday and we will also have to take a decision on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee under item 2 on the agenda, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". In that connection, the Co-ordinators of a group of socialist countries and the Group of 21 have requested me to put the texts contained in documents CD/523 and CD/526, paragraph 7, for decision at that plenary meeting. Accordingly, we should use all the time available to us on Thursday morning in order to conclude our business as we normally do, in order

(The President)

not to interfere with the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which meets on Thursday afternoon. I suggest that we advance the plenary meeting to 10 a.m. sharp, and I invite members to take their seats at that time so that we can dispose of our business without delay. As the Group of 21 will meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, I do hope that the Group will start punctually in order to allow the plenary to begin at 10 a.m. If there is no objection, to my proposal I shall then convene the next plenary meeting at 10 a.m. I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 18 April, at 10 a.m. The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.