

CD/PV.53
5 February 1980
ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FIFTY-THIRD MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 5 February 1980, at 10 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. D.S. McPHAIL

(Canada)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. A. SALLAH-BEY

Argentina: Mr. A. DUMONT
Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD

Australia: Sir James PLIMSOLL
Mr. A. BEHM
Ms. M. WICKES

Belgium: Mr. A. ONKELINX
Mr. J-M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil: Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA
Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. P. VOUTOV
Mr. S. STAIKOV
Mr. B. GRINBERG
Mr. I. SOTIROV
Mr. P. POPTCHEV

Burma: U SAW HLAING
U NGWE WIN

Canada: Mr. D.S. McPHAIL
Mr. G.A.H. PEARSON
Mr. J.T. SIMARD

China:

Mr. ZHANG WEN-JIN
Mr. YU PEI-WEN
Mr. LIANG YU-PAN
Mr. YANG HU-SHAN
Mr. LUO REN-SHI
Mr. YU MENG-JIA
Mr. LIANG DE-FEN
Mr. YANG MING-LIANG
Mr. PAN ZHEN-QIANG
Mr. JU XIAN-JIE
Mr. PAN JU-SHEN
Mr. CHOU HSEIN-CHUEH
Mrs. GE YU-YUN
Mr. LI ZHANG-HE
Mr. XU LIU-GEN

Cuba:

Mr. L. SOLA VILA
Mrs. V. BOROWDOSKY JACKIEWICH
Mr. L.A. BARRERAS CAÑIZO
Mr. A. JIMENEZ GONZÁLEZ

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. RŮŽEK
Mr. P. LUKEŠ
Mr. E. ZÁPOTOCKÝ
Mr. J. JIRŮSEK

Egypt:

Mr. O. EL-SHAFEI
Mr. M. EL-BARADEI
Mr. N. FAHMY

Ethiopia:

Mr. T. TERREFE
Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

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

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. J. ZENKER
Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI

Germany, Federal Republic of:

. Mr. G. PFEIFFER

Mr. N. KLINGLER

Mr. H. MÜLLER

Hungary:

Mr. I. KÖMIVES

Mr. C. GYÖRFFY

Mr. A. LAKATOS

India:

Mr. C.R. GHAREKHAN

Mr. S. SARAN

Mr. B. SHETTY

Indonesia:

Mr. S. DARUSMAN

Mr. M. SIDIK

Mr. I. DAMANIK

Iran:

Mr. D. AMERI

Italy:

Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO

Mr. M. MORENO

Mr. C. FRATESCHI

Mr. F. DE LUCA

Japan:

Mr. Y. OKAWA

Mr. T. NONOYAMA

Mr. T. IWANAMI

Mr. R. ISHII

Mr. K. MIYATA

Kenya:

Mr. S. SHITEMI

Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES

Mr. M.A. CÁCERES

Miss L.M. GARCÍA

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG

Mr. L. BAYART

Morocco:

Mr. M. CHRAÏBI

Netherlands:

Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS

Nigeria:

Mr. O. ADENIJI
Mr. T.O. OLUMOKO
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AKRAM

Peru:

Mr. F. VALDIVIESO BELAÚNDE
Mr. A. DE SOTO
Mr. J. AURICH MONTERO

Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. B. RUSSIN
Mr. H. PAĆ
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. S. KONIK

Romania:

Mr. C. ENE
Mr. O. IONESCU
Mr. V. TUDOR
Mr. T. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. I.B. FONSEKA
Miss M.L. NAGANATHAN

Sweden:

Mr. O. ULLSTEN
Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. B. SKALA
Mr. H. LILJEGREN
Mr. L. NORBERG
Mr. S. STRÖMBÄCK
Mr. H. GULLERS
Mr. S. ERICSSON
Mr. U. ERICSSON

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V. L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. V. K. NAZARKIN
Mr. V. I. USTINOV
Mr. M. P. SHELEPIN
Mr. A. I. TIOURENKOV
Mr. Y. P. KLIUKIN
Mr. E. D. ZAITSEV
Mr. B. I. KORNEYENKO
Mr. E. K. POTYARKIN

United Kingdom:

Mr. D. H. SUMMERHAYES
Mr. N. H. MARSHALL
Mr. P. M. W. FRANCIS

United States of America:

Mr. A. S. FISHER
Mr. A. AKALOVSKY
Mr. M. DALEY
Mr. M. SANCHEZ
Mr. P. SALGADO

Venezuela:

Mr. A. R. TAYLHARDAT

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. VRHUNEC
Mr. M. DJOKIĆ
Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. KALONJI TSHIKALA KAKWAKA

Secretary to the Committee on
Disarmament and Personal Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Assistant Secretary-General for
Disarmament:

Mr. J. MARTENSON

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the fifty-third plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament, the first of its 1980 session.

As the new representative of Canada, it is a privilege and an honour to join, for the first time, in the common endeavour of the members of the Committee as it seeks to discharge its important responsibilities. I am keenly aware of the distinguished nature of this body and of the high regard in which are held the representatives who participate in it. I know that I shall be able to count fully on your co-operation and assistance as I attempt to guide the work of the Committee during the month of February with, of course, the invaluable assistance of our distinguished Secretary and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General and his able secretariat.

At the outset, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to rule 37 of the rules of procedure, which states that "simultaneous interpretation, verbatim records of public plenary meetings and documents shall be provided in the languages used within the United Nations system by member States of the Committee participating in its work". When the rules were adopted last year, the Committee reached an understanding to use, for the time being, Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

I wish to state that China informed the Secretary-General on 10 December 1979 that it would participate in the Committee on Disarmament in February 1980. In conformity with General Assembly resolution 34/83L, which was adopted by consensus, the secretariat has made arrangements to provide the necessary services to the Committee.

After informal consultations, it is my understanding that Chinese may henceforth be used in the Committee on Disarmament under the provisions of rule 37.

May I now, on behalf of all representatives, express to the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador U Saw Hlaing of Burma, our congratulations and thanks for the very courteous and conscientious manner in which he performed his duties as Chairman last August and during the recess of the Committee.

I extend a most cordial welcome to representatives who have come to Geneva to participate in this opening meeting. China takes its seat in this Committee today for the first time; and I wish to note the presence among us of the leader of China's delegation, Mr. Zhang Wen-Jin, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. I also wish to take particular note of the presence today of Mr. Ola Ullsten, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. I thank these representatives for their interest in the work of the Committee and wish them a successful and pleasant stay in Geneva.

(The Chairman)

Since our last meeting in August, new representatives have joined the Committee. I extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Sallah-Bey of Algeria, Ambassador Onkelinx of Belgium, Ambassador Kőmives of Hungary -- who has already served with distinction as representative of his country to the CCD -- Ambassador Okawa of Japan and Ambassador Kalonji Tshikala Kakwaka of Zaïre. To all of them, I wish success in their new assignments.

May I also welcome amongst us Mr. Ian Martenson, Assistant Secretary-General, Centre for Disarmament, who is here for the first time since assuming his present functions.

The following documents are before the Committee today:

(a) Document CD/55, entitled "Letter dated 25 January 1980 from the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament transmitting the resolutions on disarmament adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session".

(b) Document CD/56, entitled "Control and limitation of international arms transfers", submitted by Italy.

(c) A document entitled "Provisional list of members of delegations to the Committee on Disarmament".

(d) Document CD/Inf.L/Rev.2, entitled "Basic information for delegations on Conference arrangements and documentation".

I have also requested the secretariat to circulate an unofficial draft decision on the dates for the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. I intend to return to this matter later today, and I hope that by then the Committee would be in a position to take a formal decision on the question.

In accordance with section VIII of the rules of procedure of the Committee, our first task is to adopt an agenda for this session and to agree on a programme of work. Rule 29 of the rules of procedure states that "the provisional agenda and the programme of work shall be drawn up by the Chairman of the Committee with the assistance of the Secretary and presented to the Committee for consideration and adoption". Accordingly, I shall shortly be making recommendations to you for an agenda, after taking into account the recommendations of the General Assembly and the proposals made by distinguished representatives through informal

(The Chairman)

consultations which have taken place and which are continuing. We would then go on to consider a programme of work, including the various dates for concluding the first part and the opening of the second part, as called for by the rules of procedure.

For the moment, I wish to state simply that, on the basis of consultations thus far, I am assuming that the 10 areas of negotiation which were enumerated last year and reproduced in paragraph 2 of our report to the General Assembly will remain the framework for our efforts, and that our agenda should be established within that framework. It is my hope, since this has been the general view expressed to me by representatives with whom I have been in contact, that particularly in the light of the experience gained last year, the Committee will be able to dispose quickly of these organizational matters and concentrate on substance early in this session.

Since I judge that this is the wish of many representatives, and if there is no objection, I intend to convene an informal meeting tomorrow, Wednesday, 6 February, at 11 a.m., the principal purpose of which will be to consider our agenda. We might also touch upon the organization of our work. I am sure that not only the Chair, but all other members as well would benefit from such an exchange of views.

In the meantime, a number of speakers have been inscribed who, in accordance with the rules of procedure, wish to make interventions before the Committee proceeds with the adoption of the agenda. However, in accordance with our practice, I should like, as Chairman, to offer some introductory observations regarding our work, and we are to receive a message addressed to the Committee by the Secretary-General before we proceed with our list of speakers for today.

The Committee resumes its work at this time in circumstances which are different from those a year ago in a number of respects. I have already welcomed the representatives of China which, for the first time, takes its place among the members of the Committee on Disarmament. This is indeed a historic occasion, the first on which all permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are participating in multilateral negotiations on disarmament. I view this as a positive element, for the success of such negotiations surely remains in doubt unless all permanent members are present.

(The Chairman)

By comparison with a year ago, the Committee is now undertaking its work in an international context characterized by increased tension. There was at best cautious optimism when the Committee began its work in January 1979. The results of the first year's session were admittedly limited. Today, while there can be no disposition on the part of any representative here to say that we are on the verge of a breakthrough in the field of disarmament, equally none of us has yet found an alternative to propose. The goal of each of us, therefore, remains, presumably, to utilize this Committee to strengthen international security. The Committee is a mechanism, indeed an essential mechanism, for multilateral negotiations in the field of disarmament. Our individual and common concern, I suggest, must be the maintenance of the necessary conditions of confidence and good faith which together will permit this Committee to fulfil its mandate.

We have before us, as I have already noted, a framework for our activities at this session. This includes the decisions and recommendations in the Committee's report to the General Assembly for 1979. In addition, there are new elements and new circumstances to be taken into account. Resolution 34/83B, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, contains two provisions directly relevant to our work. Paragraph 1 urges the Committee to proceed "without any further delay to substantive negotiations on the priority questions of disarmament on its agenda". Paragraph 3 requests the Committee to initiate negotiations, "at its next session, on the comprehensive programme of disarmament, with a view to completing its elaboration before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and, in doing so, to take as a basis the recommendations adopted by the Disarmament Commission".

In regard to "the priority questions of disarmament" on our agenda, I would simply remind the Committee, without attempting to interpret the resolutions, that the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session referred a certain amount of work to the Committee. Four resolutions urged us to consider "at the beginning" of this session items relating to a ban on the production of chemical weapons, to a cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, and to the question of concluding effective international arrangements to ensure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; another resolution assigned "the highest priority" to negotiation of a

(The Chairman)

comprehensive test ban; we were also asked to "proceed as soon as possible to achieve agreement, through negotiation", on the text of a convention to ban the production of radiological weapons.

In addition to these items, the United Nations General Assembly requested the Committee to "continue negotiations" on the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; we were also requested to pursue consideration, at an appropriate stage of our work on the item "Nuclear weapons in all aspects", of a ban on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. Resolution 34/83G asks the Committee on Disarmament to take into "appropriate consideration" the views expressed by States on the non-use of nuclear weapons, avoidance of nuclear war and related matters.

Finally, resolution 33/91G, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, requests the Committee "to consider the modalities of the review of the membership of the Committee and to report on this subject to the General Assembly during its thirty-fifth session". Resolution 33/71L, also adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, requests our Committee as well as the Disarmament Commission, "to report on the state of the consideration" of the proposals and suggestions listed in paragraph 125 of the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament at its thirty-fifth session.

I wish also to refer to paragraph 2 of resolution 34/83B relating to the Committee on Disarmament. This paragraph "invites the members of the Committee on Disarmament involved in separate negotiations on specific priority questions of disarmament to make every effort to achieve a positive conclusion of these negotiations without further delay for submission to the Committee and, failing this, to submit to the Committee a full report on the status of their separate negotiations and results achieved so far in order to contribute most directly to the negotiations in the Committee in accordance with paragraph 1 above". I am aware that the wording of this invitation is not acceptable to all those concerned. On the other hand, I am sure I speak for most members of the Committee in welcoming the resumption of the separate negotiations on a nuclear test ban and on a ban on chemical weapons, and in expressing the hope that these negotiations will soon be concluded, and at the least that full reports on them will be made to the Committee at the appropriate time by those participating.

(The Chairman)

Since we last met, procedures for the ratification of the Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms have been deferred. Let us hope that before long the SALT process can be resumed. The dangers of nuclear war are a permanent condition of our times. They affect all nations, and it is surely in the common interest therefore not to let these dangers increase. Relations between the nuclear-weapon Powers are clearly of paramount importance in this respect. The United Nations General Assembly has often drawn attention to the special responsibilities of these Powers, which indeed they acknowledge. At times of international tension and crisis, these responsibilities have even greater meaning.

I conclude these opening remarks by an appeal to all members of the Committee to show a spirit of goodwill and flexibility in establishing our agenda and getting down to work. I remain convinced that, if this spirit is strong enough, we shall succeed in overcoming the difficulties confronting this session so that the Committee can achieve concrete results for presentation to the next General Assembly. We have much to do. That we all agree upon, but we must not let disagreement about how to proceed interfere with such a common determination. Our procedures allow us to work on subjects simultaneously. I hope that the rule of consensus, which we all accept, will be interpreted with realism and good sense. Negotiations cannot succeed without compromise. I have been assured that there is a degree of flexibility upon which to build. I shall listen to your views with the greatest interest, keeping in mind that we are called upon to act, as well as to speak, in the interests of peace and security among nations. The General Assembly has just completed an arduous six weeks deliberating the whole gambit of disarmament and arms control issues. The Committee, on the other hand, has been designated as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, and we must now attempt to fill that role as best we can.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal, the Secretary of the Committee and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, who will read a message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Mr. JAIPAL (Secretary of the Committee and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General): The following is the message from the Secretary-General to the Committee on Disarmament:

"The 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament marks the beginning of the Second Disarmament Decade. We are entering this new stage facing most disturbing developments in the international situation. These developments emphasize the importance and urgency of the disarmament process. New energies should be generated in our search for urgent measures leading to a more secure world, free from the most serious threat to mankind: the arms race.

"The Committee is now called upon to initiate constructive negotiations on a number of important questions. The participation for the first time of the five nuclear-weapon States in the negotiating body should open new opportunities for concrete progress in its work.

"A comprehensive nuclear test ban with its direct bearing on the halting of the arms race and the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime, nuclear disarmament, the prohibition of all chemical and radiological weapons, effective arrangements for assuring non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons -- all these are subjects which need to be dealt with urgently for reducing the appalling threat to the human community inherent in the continual growth and diversification of weapons of mass destruction.

"I have always considered a comprehensive programme of disarmament an essential component of the disarmament strategy. If the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament is able to adopt such a programme on the basis of the work done by your Committee and other relevant bodies, we will have made a significant step towards achieving our disarmament objectives.

"We should make full use of possible bilateral, regional or multilateral arrangements as part of a continuing and sustained process, especially at times when new tensions arise. While we deal with the challenges of an incessantly changing international situation, we need to keep in mind that opportunities open today may not be available tomorrow.

"As disarmament involves nothing less than the survival of humanity, it is the common concern and the collective responsibility of all. As I said recently: in the nuclear age there can be no winners, only losers. It is

(Mr. Jaipal, Secretary of the Committee and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General)

therefore imperative that we halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament. The international community is looking with great expectation to your work and I extend to you my best wishes for a productive session.'

That is the end of the message, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Secretary of the Committee and the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for his statement. May I ask him to convey to the Secretary-General our thanks for the important message addressed to the Committee.

Since we cannot possibly listen to all the statements during our morning meeting, I suggest that we meet again this afternoon at 3.30 p.m. We would therefore listen to five statements during the morning and the rest at the afternoon meeting. We would proceed in the same manner on Thursday, meeting at both 10.30 and 3.30 p.m., in view of the large number of delegations that have expressed interest to speak on that occasion. As I noted previously, and, if there are no objections, we would hold an informal meeting tomorrow at 11.00 a.m. in connexion with the adoption of the agenda, and possibly the programme of work.

It was so decided.

Mr. GARCÍA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): My delegation is pleased, Mr. Chairman, that it is the turn of Canada, the country which you so ably represent, to assume the chairmanship of the Committee during the first month of our deliberations in 1980. Indeed, your country's untiring efforts and objectivity have earned it well-deserved prestige in the field of disarmament. Although it forms part of one of the two major military alliances, its balanced position has, for all that, been similar, on a number of occasions, to that of the members of what was known, in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, as the "Group of 15" and is now, in this Committee, known as the "Group of 21".

I should also like to say how pleased we are that China has come to take its rightful place in the Committee, in which all the nuclear-weapon States are now represented.

Today, we are beginning the work of the second session of this body, which is perhaps not the only, but certainly the main multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. In so doing, we must be very much aware of the overriding need to achieve concrete results, if not on all, at least on some, of the main substantive items on

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

our agenda. This goal is so obvious that it need hardly be stressed. In 1979, we were able to offer as an explanation of the lack of real progress on matters of substance the fact that we had to devote a good part of the first session to the formulation of the rules of procedure and the establishment of a permanent framework for the adoption of the Committee's annual agenda. This year, we will have no such obligation, and it would therefore be totally inexcusable if we again turned up empty handed in the General Assembly, particularly if account is taken of the fact that, despite the unfavourable circumstances of the past year, we were able to carry out very useful exploratory work through informal consultations and exchanges of points of view on several of the substantive items -- and as a result of which we should now be able to reach the required consensus on those items.

My delegation will endeavour to explain, in as much detail as necessary, its position on the items on the Committee's agenda that are submitted specifically to us for consideration in accordance with the programme of work. The statement I will make today will, however, be brief and synoptic. I shall limit myself to a few general remarks on how we think our functions should be carried out.

At first glance, it would seem that we are meeting in an international atmosphere that is hardly favourable to the accomplishment of the task entrusted to us. But perhaps quite the contrary is true.

Mexico has already clearly explained, and proved by the way it voted in the competent United Nations bodies that met recently in New York, its unequivocal position on the deplorable events in Iran and Afghanistan. Far be it from me to repeat the definition of the position we have adopted. This is neither the right time nor the right place. We fully share the opinion expressed by the Secretary-General in the message he has just sent to the Committee.

We would, however, like to point out that, in our opinion, the origins of the events in question are not as easy to explain as many of the so-called mass media tend to make out. It is obvious that those events did not happen overnight, but that they are deeply rooted and have broad and varied ramifications. Their direct or indirect causes doubtless include some which are usually called inponderable, but are sometimes really crucial. To cite only one example, which we consider to be the most appropriate in this Committee on Disarmament, we should ask ourselves whether situations such as the ones we are now deploring would have occurred had the two nuclear Superpowers and their allies, from the very beginning, taken seriously the solemn commitment embodied 10 years ago in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

(Hr. García Robles, Mexico)

It would, of course, have been wishful thinking to believe that the "treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control" referred to therein would have come into existence by now. But we do think that we were entitled to hope that, more than 10 years after the Treaty was signed, the "cessation of the nuclear arms race" -- which, as expressly stated in article VI, was to take place "at an early date" -- would already have been achieved and that considerable progress would have been made with the "nuclear disarmament", also referred to in that article.

We would like to think that all the countries represented in the Committee on Disarmament are aware of the responsibilities they assumed when they voluntarily subscribed to the consensus which led to the adoption on 30 June 1978 -- a little more than one year and a half ago -- of the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We would find it quite natural if that were the case, since that document was far from being the result of improvisation, and the basis for the General Assembly's decisions was nothing less than five meetings of its Preparatory Committee and five weeks of hard work by its Ad Hoc Committee.

It is for these reasons and because of what we consider to be the inescapable demands of the present moment seen in the light of the situation in the Middle East that we believe that the States concerned and, in particular, the nuclear Superpowers should accept and put into practice the peremptory rules of conduct embodied in the following provisions of the Final Document:

"2. Unless its avenues are closed, the continued arms race means a growing threat to international peace and security and even to the very survival of mankind."

"11. Mankind today is confronted with an unprecedented threat of self-extinction arising from the massive and competitive accumulation of the most destructive weapons ever produced. Existing arsenals of nuclear weapons alone are more than sufficient to destroy all life on earth."

"13. Enduring international peace and security cannot be built on the accumulation of weaponry by military alliances nor be sustained by a precarious balance of deterrence or doctrines of strategic superiority."

"18. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation."

"8. While the final objective of the efforts of all States should continue to be general and complete disarmament under effective international

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

control, the immediate goal is that of the elimination of the danger of a nuclear war and the implementation of measures to halt and reverse the arms race and clear the path towards lasting peace. Negotiations on the entire range of those issues should be based on the strict observance of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, with full recognition of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and reflecting the vital interest of all the peoples of the world in this sphere."

"12. The arms race, particularly in its nuclear aspect, runs counter to efforts to achieve further relaxation of international tension, to establish international relations based on peaceful coexistence and trust between all States, and to develop broad international co-operation and understanding. The arms race impedes the realization of the purposes, and is incompatible with the principles, of the Charter of the United Nations, especially respect for sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, the peaceful settlement of disputes and non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States."

It is on the basis of the premise that the Final Document of the special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was formulated and adopted only because there was a firm resolve to observe and apply its provisions that I have dared say that the current serious situation in the Middle East may, paradoxically, prove favourable to the success of the negotiations we shall hold during the session of the Committee on Disarmament that is starting today.

In this connexion, I should like to recall what Mr. Jorge Castañeda, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, stated last month in the United Nations Security Council when he referred to the "very deep concern caused by the international situation":

"We are in danger of slipping back into the cold war. The conflict between the great Powers has re-emerged to such an extent that we are faced with a continual escalation of measures and counter-measures of pressure and reprisals ...

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

"The great Powers have a new, enormous responsibility. The specific problems between them are such as to call for talks. An arrangement should be made to ensure that the conflicts are not exacerbated. Reflection is called for. We ... call upon them to fulfil their responsibility to make further progress on the road towards disarmament."

Because my delegation is convinced that the ideas I have outlined in this statement are correct, it will, as it has done ever since the birth of the United Nations, redouble its efforts this year to contribute to the adoption of generally-acceptable measures of genuine disarmament. To this end, it will continue to urge faithful observance of the commitments found in so many United Nations documents on disarmament and, in particular, in those, such as the Final Document to which I referred a few minutes ago, which were adopted by consensus. Our position will continue to be the same as the one which was so well defined by President López Portillo in his statement during his recent visit to the United Nations in connexion with the general debate in the Assembly, when he expressed the following ideas, with which I close this statement:

"Until the great Powers understand that their own security depends on the reduction and subsequent elimination of their nuclear arsenals, we must repeat our appeal for prudence and mutual trust ...

"The peoples of the world do not want a truce for the development and stockpiling of new weapons. They want peace based on collective security and social justice, peace that affords an opportunity for their own development and for the joint development of the international community."

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement and the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. ZHANG Wen-Jin (China): This is the first time that China is taking part in the work of the Committee on Disarmament. Allow me to express, in the name of the Chinese delegation, our thanks to our colleagues and friends from various countries for their concern and support. I also wish to congratulate Mr. McPhail, Head of the Canadian delegation, on his assumption of the chairmanship for the first month of the 1980 annual session of this Committee. We are confident that, under your guidance, a good beginning will be made for the work of this session.

The Committee on Disarmament, established by decision of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, represents a significant step towards democratization with a larger membership than that of the original negotiating body and a change in the system of chairmanship. China has now decided to take part in its work as from this year, and we are ready to join all of you in the deliberations actively and do our share for progress in genuine disarmament and for the cause of peace.

The advent of the 1980s marks the conclusion of the First Disarmament Decade proclaimed by the United Nations. In the last decade, many countries concerned with peace advanced a number of valuable propositions and suggestions with regard to disarmament and made positive efforts in opposing wars of aggression and for the cause of defending world peace. Positive results have been achieved in breaking superpower monopoly of the disarmament negotiations. All this is encouraging.

On the other hand, we must admit frankly that the first Disarmament Decade has failed to produce for the people of all countries any gratifying results. On the contrary, the expansion of armaments and the production and development of weapons on the part of the Superpowers have continued to escalate. In particular,

(Mr. ZHANG Wen-Jin, China)

that Superpower, which is making propaganda about the danger of arms expansion, is unmatched in its blind faith in the use of military force and in its enthusiasm for arms expansion. Each year in the past decade, it has come up with at least one novel disarmament proposal, but at the same time has made a giant step in arms expansion. It has been expanding its armaments at a speed and on a scale greater than ever, seeking by every means to attain military superiority over the other Superpower in all fields. It has reached rough parity with the latter in strategic nuclear weapons and attained an obvious superiority in conventional arms and forces. It has considerably expanded its strategic air force and ocean-going fleets. It has made no scruples about its readiness to fight an all-out or a local nuclear war, as well as conventional wars of all kinds. In the light of these facts, no one can escape the conclusion that the Disarmament Decade was in fact a decade of accelerated arms expansion.

With the intensification in arms expansion and war preparations the rivalry for world hegemony has become more acute. The change in the balance of military force between the Superpowers has resulted in a change in their respective over-all strategic postures. One Superpower tries to preserve and stabilize its existing positions while the other, under the cover of such fine-sounding slogans as "détente", "equal security" and "non-use of force", is aggressively pursuing a strategy of outflanking Europe and, on the other hand, is stepping up its aggression, interference and subversion in many places in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is resorting to every possible means, from engineering wars by proxy and staging coups d'état to fostering puppet régimes and dispatching their own troops abroad. The armed intervention in Afghanistan shows that the practice of military aggression and occupation has now been extended from inside the "big community" to the third world and Islamic countries. This is a new danger signal that its hegemonist activities have escalated to a new stage.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to request the representative of China to cease for a moment as there is a request for the floor from the representative of the Soviet Union.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The Soviet delegation has requested the floor on a point of order because in our view, the present speaker is touching on matters unrelated to the work of the Committee on Disarmament. We would request you to draw the speaker's attention to this point, to ask him not to divert the Committee from the performance of the tasks before it, not to use wording against which we strongly protest, and not to initiate a contentious discussion on a broad range of questions which would only make the Committee's work more difficult.

The CHAIRMAN: I have listened carefully to the point of order made by the representative of the USSR, and I am sure that all of the members of the Committee, including the distinguished Vice-Minister of China, have done so. I would say, in response, simply that rule 30 of the rules of procedure makes it clear that the Committee established its intention that the plenary meetings should be used normally for the discussion of topics then under discussion and in accordance with an agreed programme of work, but went on to say that it was the right of any member of the Committee to raise any subject relevant to the work of the Committee at a plenary meeting and to have full opportunity of presenting its views on any subject it may consider to merit attention. I recognize, of course, that the representative of the Soviet Union is much more familiar with these rules of procedure than I am. Nevertheless, it seems to me that, in accordance with the language of rule 30, we should continue with this discussion; he has expressed his opinion and the Committee has taken note of it and I have referred to rule 30 which, it seems to me is applicable in this case. May I ask the representative of China to continue.

Mr. ZHANG Wen-Jin (China): Mr. Chairman, I cannot agree with the statement made just now by the representative of the Soviet Union. My statement is in full conformity with the rules of procedure of this Committee. However, I do not wish to deviate from the subject, and I shall continue with my original statement.

(Mr. Zhang Wen-Jin, China)

More and more people have come to see that its routine slogans of "détente", "equal security" and "non-use of force" are merely fraudulent rhetoric. In seeking the so-called "equal security", it is actually trying to outstrip others and attain an absolute superiority.

The CHAIRMAN: My apologies to the representative of China, but a member of the Committee has asked for the floor again. I presume it is on a point of order. Could I perhaps ask the member to be as explicit as possible. As the Committee is holding its opening session, I think that we are anxious to hear the statements of all representatives. We are all aware of the rules of procedure, and I invite the representative to explain the point of order that he wishes to have clarified as precisely as possible, in order to help us speed up our business.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): I expressed my views clearly and, by the way, made no reference to the rules of procedure. For that reason I fail to understand why the rules of procedure have been referred to here. In my statement I requested you to draw the speaker's attention to the fact that he should not divert the Committee from the tasks before it. The Committee, as is known, is required to examine specific disarmament questions.

I repeated the idea contained in the message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who called upon the Committee to initiate a constructive discussion of disarmament questions. Your statement, as I understood it, also contained an appeal for business-like discussions on questions which we have gathered here to examine. A similar idea is contained in the statement of the distinguished representative of Mexico. If we allow anyone to speak about anything he pleases then, in my view, we will never be able to solve even one disarmament question or even embark upon the examination of our Committee's agenda.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Indeed I referred to rule 30 as being what I thought was the appropriate, relevant, rule in this case. However, I understand now that you were not directly raising a point of order but rather making an appeal. Therefore, I think that appeal has been heard, and that I should invite the representative of China to continue.

Mr. ZHANG Wen-Jin (China): Mr. Chairman, I only wish to say that my statement today is fully relevant to the subject of disarmament. I do not wish anyone to take me away onto any other problem. I shall now continue with my statement.

By "détente" and "non-use of force", it actually tries to lull other people so that it can trample at will on the norms of international relations and the Charter of the United Nations and wantonly resort to the use of military force and launch surprise attacks. It openly defies the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly supported by more than 100 Member States calling for the withdrawal of its troops, and obdurately continues with its armed occupation. In these circumstances, how can there be any guarantee for the independence and sovereignty of all States and for world peace and security? Do we have any choice other than heightening our vigilance and taking actions together to defend the dignity of the Charter of the United Nations.

It is natural that people have placed high hopes on the coming decade -- the Second Disarmament Decade declared by the United Nations. In the first days of this new Disarmament Decade, however, what people have heard are the roars of guns of armed invaders instead of the melody of peace. This is a bad omen. People cannot but have the foreboding that the 1980s will be a decade fraught with crises, turmoil and perils. The turbulent international situation and the growing danger of war have caused widespread concern and anxiety. The practice of arms expansion in deeds and disarmament in words has aroused increasingly strong indignation among the people of all countries. They demand a new start in the disarmament negotiations and that these negotiations should really contribute to the safeguarding of world peace. It is in these circumstances that the Committee on Disarmament is meeting here. The Chinese delegation has come to Geneva to take part in these negotiations with the sincere desire to defend world peace and will earnestly work for the realization of genuine disarmament. We would now state our views on some important questions in the field of disarmament.

We hold that, if real progress is to be made in disarmament, we must proceed from the characteristics of the present international situation in the field of armaments and establish for the disarmament negotiations principles to be followed that would be effective in solving existing problems, and set the objectives that we should work for. An important feature of the present state of armaments is that the two Superpowers possess armaments of the highest levels in the world. Their military strength far surpasses that of any other country. And they are the sources of the main threats to world peace. In order to prevent a world war, it is

(Mr. Zhang Wen-Jin, China)

necessary to call on the two Superpowers to be the first to reduce drastically their armaments in a balanced way. After progress has been made in this respect which is tangible and substantial, and not perfunctory and nominal, it will then be possible for the other nuclear-weapon States and militarily significant States to join them in a further reduction of armaments according to rational procedures and ratios. As for the peace-loving small and medium-sized countries, their defence capabilities are usually inadequate or even insignificant, and, generally speaking, they should not be the target countries of disarmament efforts. If no distinction is made among States with totally different conditions and characters, and if they are all indiscriminately asked to reduce their armaments in the same ratio and according to the same rules, this obviously would not be fair, nor would it help to preserve world peace and security and to attain the real goals of disarmament. Therefore we deem it a fundamental principle that the Superpowers should take the lead in reducing armaments and it will be a touchstone of genuine disarmament.

As long as general disarmament cannot be realized, it is understandable that people hope for some progress through partial disarmament. Under present historical conditions, it is indeed very difficult or even impossible to achieve general and complete disarmament. We therefore believe that it would be advisable to reach agreements through consultations on partial disarmament measures which are conducive to the maintenance of the independence and sovereignty of nations and of world peace and security. The partial disarmament measures may include the banning or reduction of certain types of weapons, such as nuclear, conventional, chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction. These measures may also include regional arrangements such as the establishment of zones of peace or nuclear-free-zones. They may also include other special measures, such as a guarantee for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States, the withdrawal of foreign troops, the dismantling of foreign military bases, and studies and disclosure of the true state of affairs in arms reduction and arms expansion. The non-aligned countries have demanded the formulation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, embracing principles and concrete measures for disarmament. We are in favour of having the matter discussed in this Committee. Such a programme should give full expression to the reasonable positions of all States and facilitate future efforts for the realization of genuine disarmament.

(Mr. Zheng Wen-Jin, China)

The non-nuclear-weapon States are opposed to the nuclear threat and demand that their security should be guaranteed as far as the use of nuclear weapons is concerned, and that all nuclear-weapon States should undertake not to use nuclear weapons against them. No doubt these are just and reasonable demands. It is our consistent view that complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons are essential for the elimination of nuclear war and nuclear threats. We are aware that its realization is no easy matter. This being the case, we hold that the nuclear-weapon States should at least undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-free-zones. On its own initiative and unilaterally, China long ago declared that at no time and in no circumstances would it be the first to use nuclear weapons. And China has signed the Additional Protocol II to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. We wish to reiterate this position of ours here. We support the conclusion of an international convention to guarantee the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States, and are prepared to work with all of you for the attainment of this goal.

Many countries have asked that priority should be given to the problem of nuclear disarmament. It is true, nuclear weapons are highly destructive, and a nuclear war would bring unprecedented disaster to the human race. But where should we begin in nuclear disarmament? This is a question that should be given careful consideration.

Some people suggest that the first step of nuclear disarmament is to "stop producing nuclear weapons". This suggestion sounds rather doubtful. It is an indisputable fact that at present there exist huge gaps among the nuclear arsenals of different nuclear-weapon States, not to mention the States which have no nuclear arsenals at all. Does not a mere cessation of all such production mean the recognition of the right of certain nuclear-weapon States to perpetuate their nuclear superiority and to use it to threaten and blackmail other countries? This proposition is unacceptable because it completely ignores the actual needs and is devoid of a just basis. We maintain that, as a correct first step to nuclear disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States with the largest nuclear arsenals should first reduce their nuclear armaments until the huge gap between them and the other nuclear-weapon States is reduced to the minimum. Only then should all other nuclear-weapon States be asked to join them in reducing and destroying the nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Zhang Wen-Jin, China)

Some people suggest that the question of nuclear disarmament should be discussed in a separate forum by the nuclear-weapon States and some other selected States. We hold that our Committee, which already includes all the nuclear-weapon States and is widely represented, is the right place for the deliberations on nuclear disarmament, and it is neither necessary nor appropriate to create another forum.

Many countries ask for the cessation of all nuclear tests. We understand the honest desire of those who oppose the nuclear arms race and wish to prevent nuclear pollution. But it must also be pointed out that the cessation of nuclear tests alone will not curb the nuclear arms expansion of the Superpowers, let alone reduce their nuclear arsenals; therefore it will not by itself result in nuclear disarmament.

There is much concern about nuclear proliferation. China is against big-Power monopoly of nuclear weapons. We hold that, when the Superpowers are constantly expanding their nuclear arsenals and carrying out nuclear threats, it is clearly not fair to ask all non-nuclear-weapon States to give up their right to acquire nuclear weapons for self-defence; still less should there be restrictions and infringement on the sovereign right of any State to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Of course, this does not mean in any way that we advocate or encourage nuclear proliferation.

The prohibition of chemical weapons is an important issue before this Committee. The Superpowers possess enormous arsenals of chemical weapons which constitute a grave threat to the human race. A convention on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons should be concluded at an early date. China has always stood for the complete prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. China has long acceded to the 1925 Geneva Protocol on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. It is our position that a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons should prohibit all types of such weapons and that it should include in its scope the prohibition of their use, manufacture and stockpiling and the destruction of these weapons. In addition, there should be international supervision and inspection to ensure the effective implementation of these provisions. We agree that our Committee should start direct negotiations as soon as possible on the drafting of the convention. The practice of having an agreement reached first by a few big Powers and then submitted to the Committee is well out of date, and must no longer be followed.

(Mr. Zhang Wen-Jin, China)

The reduction of conventional weapons should not be overlooked because of the real threat of conventional wars, the growing destructive power of modern conventional weapons and the tremendous consumption of resources in the production of such weapons. The appropriate way is to give equal importance to conventional disarmament and nuclear disarmament, and carry out the two in conjunction. This is our position.

On the eve of the Second World War, when the people of some countries had already fallen victim to aggression, delegates had also gathered in Geneva, this "capital of disarmament", and engaged in heated discussions on disarmament and the defence of peace in this very building of the League of Nations. But fine words and clever formulas failed to prevent the outbreak of the Second World War, and the memory of the unprecedented holocaust and sufferings brought to the whole world is still fresh in people's minds. No one wishes to see history repeated. People have also learned from their bitter experience that hegemonism is indeed the hotbed of world war. The hegemonists always pour out a stream of honeyed words about "détente" and "disarmament" while they are feverishly expanding their armaments in preparation for war. We would not be so naive as to think that disarmament negotiations would make them abandon their arms or renounce their ambitions for expansion and aggression.

In order to preserve world peace, it is more urgent than ever that all peace-loving countries and peoples should unite and earnestly get down to work. We have to let the public know about the danger of war so that they will heighten their vigilance. It is necessary to take effective measures and practical steps constantly to upset the war-schemers' plan for aggression and expansion, and wage a tit-for-tat struggle against the forces of aggression without compromise or retreat. We are convinced that the outbreak of a world war can be delayed so long as the people of the whole world persevere in these efforts.

The prospect of a disquieting international situation in the 1980s poses a great challenge to all those working for the preservation of peace, and the Committee on Disarmament is thus faced with a historical test. Whether we want genuine disarmament, sham disarmament or no disarmament at all will decide the outcome of the disarmament negotiations. It is our sincere hope that the Committee on Disarmament, acting in line with the trend of history and giving expression to the aspirations of the people of the world, will pursue genuine disarmament and make progress in the interest of preserving world peace.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank His Excellency the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of China for his statement and the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. FEIJ (Netherlands): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is indeed a pleasure for me to welcome you personally to this Committee, and at the same time extend to you our congratulations on your assumption of the chair of this Committee for the month of February. We shall therefore be privileged to work with you in two ways -- as a new colleague and as our presiding officer. I should also like to extend to our outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Hlaing of Burma, our sincere gratitude for his most valuable work for this Committee during the last month of last year's session, a task he even pursued during the General Assembly at the United Nations. We are very thankful to Ambassador Hlaing.

On this first day of negotiations in Geneva, the Netherlands delegation to the Committee on Disarmament wishes to welcome warmly the participation of the People's Republic of China. The decision of China to join in our efforts to find the elusive formulas that are the key to controlling the arms race is one of the few encouraging events in an international scenario that has recently taken a turn for the worse. I shall have more to say about that in a moment.

First, however, I wish to emphasize that in the view of the Netherlands, China's presence here today completes and confirms the multilateral character of this negotiating body. This is a matter for great satisfaction. There are many areas of common concern between China and the Netherlands in the field of disarmament as well; we look forward to exploring those areas in the interest of furthering mutual and international security which is, after all, the main reason for our working together in this negotiating body.

To that end, as we have stressed on more than one occasion, in this Committee and in the General Assembly of the United Nations, it is essential that the negotiating character of this Committee on Disarmament in Geneva should be conserved and protected.

This places certain demands on all of us with regard to the frame of mind in which we approach the intricate technical problems that face us. It also places, more than usual in diplomatic intercourse, restrictions on the nature of our dialogue. Both these requirements, that of a positive frame of mind and restrained approaches are special requirements of a negotiating body, as distinct from a deliberative, political forum.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

Nevertheless, the Committee on Disarmament cannot and should not isolate itself from the harsh realities of world events. Certainly it cannot ignore those events if they involve the use of armed force by a Superpower against a small non-aligned neighbouring State.

I must therefore say clearly in this Committee, that the Netherlands rejects as utterly unacceptable the military intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

This attempt at military domination of a small neighbour entails not only a threat to the countries in that particular part of the world, it also implies a serious setback to the process of world-wide détente which we had hoped would soon bear fruit and lead to greater security for us all.

The CHAIRMAN: I regret that I must ask the representative of the Netherlands to stop for a moment. The representative of Mongolia has asked for the floor, may I ask, Sir, is this on a point of order?

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia): I am sorry to interrupt the statement of the distinguished representative of the Netherlands, but I should like the Committee to hear an appeal my delegation wishes to address to you, Mr. Chairman, as well as to our colleague Ambassador Fein. We appeal to the Committee not to listen in future to statements that divert it from its basic task of conducting negotiations on disarmament questions. Such statements will in no way contribute to the solution of the problems before this session of the Committee on Disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN: Would the representative of the Netherlands wish to continue?

Mr. FEIN (Netherlands): Yes, I shall continue my statement.

Now, while that unfortunate event does complicate our task in this diplomatic negotiating conference, on the other hand that same unfortunate event also underlines once again the need for us to pursue even more vigorously our search for results in the negotiations on disarmament that have been entrusted to us by the world community.

Are we then being unrealistic, ignoring the realities of present-day events? Could one accuse us of cynically pursuing a "business as usual" attitude, while Rome burns? The answer to those questions is: no, definitely not.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

For in our view, that is, the view of the Netherlands, arms control is not only in the interest of stable relations between East and West, but also an indispensable element, a sine qua non in any stable arrangement of the security and the peace of all States, in all parts of the world. Security and arms control are essentially linked.

It is in this spirit that the Netherlands strongly supported the package of arms control measures and proposals as laid down in the December 1979 NPTO communiqués. We express the hope that these proposals will bring about a curbing of the arms race, particularly in the field of long-range theatre nuclear forces.

The realization and the full acceptance of the fact that this Committee on Disarmament is a negotiating body, entrusted with achieving meaningful results, should also remain our central preoccupation in 1980.

This implies fuller participation and fuller engagement of all members of the Committee on Disarmament, in all items of the agenda, and not just in those that happen to suit particular national interests.

Such a positive attitude of all members is essential, because, as I have said just now, the security of all States is involved and not just that of a few major military Powers or power blocs.

As for the Netherlands, we are ready -- and even more so in these days of negative international trends -- to pursue actively our efforts to reach, together with you, agreements in the field of arms control. We are prepared to do so, not only here in the Committee on Disarmament, but in all other disarmament forums in which the Netherlands is involved.

Whenever our diplomatic explorations in any particular field seem to be promising, we stand ready to bring in from the Netherlands the technical expertise required to pursue those negotiations in more detail and to help in obtaining results.

This brings me to the second part of my statement, in which I shall try to put in specific terms, for your consideration, how in our view this Committee should proceed with its work this year, or at least during the Spring session.

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

In the first place, it would seem to us that the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference which will be held here in Geneva in August, will probably be the most important, even crucial, event in the field of arms control this year. We in the Committee on Disarmament should do all that is possible within the terms of our mandate to improve the circumstances in which that Conference will be held.

This means that multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test ban should be undertaken at the earliest possible opportunity. This, in turn, requires the three nuclear-weapon Powers presently engaged in trilateral talks to make a major effort to achieve the results that we have been waiting for so long.

As we have pointed out on previous occasions, both here in the Committee on Disarmament and in the United Nations General Assembly, the possibility that SALT II might not be ratified in the near future makes it all the more necessary that a comprehensive test ban should be concluded as soon as possible. It would thus be made clear that putting an end to the nuclear arms race is recognized to be in the interest of us all.

Equally with the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in mind, we believe that the Committee on Disarmament should start at an early stage to explore the possibilities in the field of negative security assurances. It would be useful to have a better insight in what can and what cannot be expected in this field, before the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference is held in August. We believe we should concentrate on the substantive aspects of the five unilateral formulas, and leave the nature of the legal instrument in which the possible results of our negotiations might eventually be presented to a later stage. Our discussions on negative security assurances could take place in an ad hoc working group, as was the case last year.

But our efforts in the field of a comprehensive test ban and negative security assurances need not interfere with the high priority we must also accord to progress on a chemical weapons ban. On the basis of what has

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

already been achieved in the bilateral negotiations and what is known of those areas of agreement, the Committee on Disarmament could start work on the outlines of a chemical weapons convention. It must, however, also be possible to go further than that. We could explore certain problems that have not been resolved as yet in the bilateral talks, such as the mandate for the "Consultative Committee", and different modes of verification. We could also make some detailed technical studies, for example on scope. We feel that it would be best to deal with these technical matters in a working group of experts or some such more appropriate subsidiary body.

On radiological weapons, the Netherlands is in favour of finalizing the draft convention this year, but only after it has been examined thoroughly, preferably also in a working group. This item should, however, not stand in the way of the more urgent issues to which I referred earlier.

One of our first tasks, in the coming few weeks, will be to decide on how to organize our work. Last year an unnecessary amount of time was spent on procedural and organizational matters. We feel the work programme should be flexible; the rules of procedure provide for this. Where I have indicated that we favour the setting up of a working group, this is also an indication of the character we feel the discussions should have. We are not particularly concerned what these working groups are called -- ad hoc, informal, etc. -- as long as the consultations held in them are effective and lead to results.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement and the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO (Italy): I join the congratulations of my delegation to those already expressed to you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Committee for the month and the new permanent representative of Canada in Geneva. At the same time, I would like to extend my warm greetings to Mr. Ullsten of Sweden and to the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, who leads the first delegation of his country to the Committee on Disarmament. I am pleased to welcome the new distinguished representatives of Algeria, Belgium, Hungary, Japan and Zaire. Finally, I should like to welcome the Assistant Secretary-General and the Secretary of the Committee and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Jaipal.

The Committee on Disarmament is meeting today at a time of severe strain -- indeed of crisis -- in international relations.

Peace and security are challenged by recent initiatives and behaviour which constitute a flagrant violation of the rules and principles of international relations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The reaction of world public opinion has been unequivocal, and all over the world there is concern and disapproval, and a refusal to accept an act -- such as the military intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan -- which represents manifest interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign State having destabilizing effects.

The Italian Government has expressed its anxiety clearly in every appropriate forum, giving full support to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The nine countries of the European Community -- of which Italy is at the present time filling the presidency -- have also unanimously expressed their profound concern, stressing the severe threat to détente.

In recent weeks the sinister echo of gunfire has again been heard in particularly sensitive areas of our planet, and the events which have taken place have once again reminded us all too sharply that the arms race is the practical expression of feelings of insecurity and distrust.

If progress is to be made in the process of détente, an essential precondition is that all countries should comply rigorously with the rules of international law governing relations between States.

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

Flagrant and repeated violations of principles which were solemnly endorsed -- in a specific manner for the European area -- in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, and which, by their very nature, cannot suffer derogations or selective interpretation, constitute a serious obstacle to the harmonious development of international relations and to efforts aimed at the establishment of a peaceful world, freed from the threat of arms. When I speak of the principles set out in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference, I am thinking of respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, of the obligation to refrain from the use of force, of the inviolability of frontiers and of non-intervention in internal affairs, but I am also thinking of the effective enjoyment of human rights and of fundamental freedoms, respect for which is an essential factor for peace.

Men and women throughout the world long for peace. But well-turned speeches and the best of intentions publicly proclaimed are useless if in practice they are contradicted by the menacing display of force and the open flouting of international law.

The maintenance of a given level of armaments over the last 30 years has proved a harsh necessity, imposed by world political realities.

Developments in recent weeks have jeopardized international security and cannot be treated as matters simply beyond our purview. There is an urgent need to act, firm in our words and co-ordinated in our deeds, to ensure that the causes of the present deterioration in the international political climate are removed and that the present downward tendency is reversed.

The Italian Government has always endeavoured -- and intends, in the present situation, to spare no effort -- to ensure the elimination of all obstacles and all threats to peace.

Peace in a context of security is a fundamental cornerstone of our foreign policy, and we are committed to working towards this goal. This is the purpose of our loyal and active participation in the Atlantic Alliance, a defensive community which has made such a valuable contribution to the difficult task of preserving peace and security in the world in recent years. In this connexion, I should recall that the need for preserving the attainments of détente has been coherently kept in mind in recent decisions aimed at rectoring the balance of long-range theatre nuclear forces (LRTNF), against the challenge posed by the continuing momentum of the Warsaw Treaty military build-up. Atlantic countries have concurrently proposed to the Soviet Union to begin negotiations, along precise lines, for the control and limitation of such forces. Unfortunately such a proposal has met with a refusal.

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

The same pacific approach underlies our membership of the European Community, an association of free peoples sharing a common heritage of traditions and cultures; the Community has become a major contributor to the maintenance of peace and the development of relations based on trust, security and international co-operation within our old continent and between Europe and the rest of the world.

One of the major goals of Italian foreign policy has always been the gradual implementation of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

By signing and ratifying the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Italian Government solemnly renounced the right to develop atomic weapons. Italy is currently taking an active part in the Vienna negotiations for the mutual and balanced reduction of forces, the objective of which is to strengthen stability and security in central Europe through substantial reductions in the area.

As a member of the Geneva negotiating body on disarmament since it was set up, Italy has consistently given tangible evidence of its desire to make a contribution to all efforts genuinely designed to promote the control, reduction and progressive elimination of arms.

In the world today, about a million dollars is being spent on military equipment every minute. In 1965 the arms race accounted for \$200 billion; by 1970 the figure was \$250 billion; and in 1977 it had risen to \$350 billion. Present spending on armaments is rapidly nearing the threshold of \$450 billion.

Formidable sums -- which could be devoted to economic and social progress, and in particular to the battle against hunger, disease, unemployment and illiteracy -- are being swallowed up in a tremendous war machine; a machine geared to death and destruction, nourished every year with more sophisticated, more expensive and more lethal devices, which, if used, could well bring about the elimination of all trace of life on our planet.

In a recent solemn message, the Pope reminded the world of the tragedy and horror of a conflict waged with modern weapons and of the need to press forward an effective process of disarmament. All of us -- ordinary citizens and members of Governments alike -- have a duty to think over and take to heart the Holy Father's timely warning.

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

As the recent special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament recalled: "All the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of the disarmament negotiations. Consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament".

The Committee on Disarmament -- reorganized last year on the basis of the special session's recommendations -- constitutes, by reason of its composition, its experience and its status, the most appropriate forum in which to press forward with negotiations both on disarmament and on collateral measures for arms control and confidence-building.

For the first time, all five of the nuclear-weapon Powers are now members of this body. China's decision to take, from this year on, the place to which it is entitled as a nuclear-weapon State is a move of high significance which -- we hope -- will encourage further progress in our work.

The representatives of 35 other States, which have by now acquired valuable experience in negotiations requiring continuity and perseverance, are also attending the meetings once again.

Furthermore, the rules of procedure adopted last year now enable the Committee to avail itself of contributions from non-member countries having a special interest in the progress of disarmament negotiations. While respecting the present practices and procedures of the Committee, the Italian delegation believes that more use should be made of this facility for outside contributions and co-operation, if only for the purpose of clarifying specific technical problems of which individual countries have gained specific and useful experience.

Of the resolutions connected with disarmament adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations at its thirty-fourth session, 13 are addressed specifically to the Committee on Disarmament and call for specific action by this multilateral negotiating forum.

One of these questions -- the conclusion of a treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban -- represents a first indispensable step in the gradual process which is to lead to nuclear disarmament, and requires urgent attention on a priority basis. The Italian delegation is well aware of the difficulties which have still to be overcome, especially in regard to the complex and vital problem of verification. We also wish to renew our appeal to the three Powers taking part in the tripartite consultations to make every possible effort to bring these to a positive conclusion,

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

notifying the results to the Committee as soon as possible: we believe that the Committee itself should start concrete negotiations without further delay, and that all its members should be in a position to contribute directly and constructively to the drafting of a treaty to which as many countries as possible could accede.

Particular attention must also be given to the elaboration of a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

It should not be forgotten that chemical weapons are already stockpiled by several States. Such weapons have been dangerously tested in more than one conflict and can be easily developed by any country possessing even only modest technical know-how.

During the last session, we noted with satisfaction the report presented by the United States and by the Soviet Union on the progress made in the bilateral negotiations now under way.

Looking forward to a very successful conclusion to these negotiations, we believe that the Committee on Disarmament has now enough material to begin serious multilateral consultations on the outline of the convention.

These consultations could be started within an ad hoc working group, including experts, in line with the proposal submitted by Italy and supported by a number of countries last year.

A further question which the Committee on Disarmament must continue to examine is that of the strengthening of the negative security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States. The problem is a complex one and must be tackled with due regard to the diversity of political, military and strategic situations. All existing proposals should be carefully considered on their merits.

At the last session, the United States and the Soviet Union presented a joint draft convention prohibiting radiological weapons.

This draft deserves careful consideration. It is a good example of the right negotiating approach to the problem of the prohibition of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction which may be identified. The Italian delegation reserves the right to submit at the appropriate time its own detailed comments, and to request the clarifications and explanations which some clauses of the draft seem to require.

Another item still outstanding is the draft additional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty, presented by Italy at the last session, the aim being to

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

supplement and amplify existing legal rules with a view to avoiding the emplacement in space of any type of weapon. The Italian delegation hopes that the draft itself can be examined in detail at an appropriate stage of our work.

The Italian delegation is submitting officially to the attention of this Committee today a working document concerning the delicate problem of the control and limitation of transfers of conventional weapons, a problem which has assumed alarming proportions and which is a source of growing concern for public opinion.

Italy believes that the special features, the complexity and the scale of the phenomenon justify the early establishment, within the United Nations, of an ad hoc body to tackle the question on a regional level, without losing sight of global aspects.

We had thought, when we began to think about this problem, of a subsidiary body of the Security Council. A proposal along these lines had been submitted by the Italian delegation to the special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament, and is mentioned in the Final Document of that session.

We also mentioned in the Disarmament Commission and at the last session of the General Assembly the possibility of even considering the establishment of a specialized agency of the United Nations. However, we are prepared to examine all possibilities and all ideas, and are very willing to compare and discuss our ideas and our proposals with all the countries concerned with this question, without prejudices of any kind.

The body which Italy has in mind -- the main features of which are described in our working document -- should be an ad hoc body, working within the United Nations system and organized in a series of regional Committees on which all the major suppliers and importers of weapons in a given region would be represented.

A general conference of this body would have the task of working out fundamental principles and guidelines for the control and limitation of transfers, whilst it would be for the regional committees to draw up specific measures designed to keep trade in arms in the relevant region to the lowest possible level, having due regard for all appropriate requirements related to security, stability and regional balance.

I do not need, speaking here, to recall or emphasize the political, economic and social implications of the steady build-up and spread of conventional weapons -- many of them very dangerous weapons -- in recent years. This is a process which is contributing nothing at all to the maintenance of peace and security.

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

In the working document submitted today, we have tried to offer a proposal which can be gone into more thoroughly in consultations between the Italian delegation and the delegations concerned, bearing in mind other experiences as well, as, for example, recent initiatives sponsored by Mexico and other Latin American and Caribbean countries, the development of which deserves full attention.

When embarking upon its own negotiations on the various items on its agenda, it is of vital importance that our Committee should never forget the ultimate objective of the multilateral disarmament negotiations, that is, general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

In this connexion, it has been a source of special satisfaction for us to note the approval by the United Nations Disarmament Commission of the elements of a comprehensive disarmament programme. These elements are submitted to us by the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly with a view to the presentation, at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to be held in 1982, of a comprehensive and detailed programme of measures in the field of the control, reduction and progressive elimination of arms. For many years Italy has stressed the need to ensure that all disarmament measures and efforts should be dovetailed into a global programme. In this connexion, we have presented in the past, as well as more recently, detailed working papers taking this need into account. We therefore express the hope that our Committee will begin, as soon as possible, a careful examination of the elements of this programme. An ad hoc working group could be specifically entrusted with the matter, in order not to delay the negotiations on other substantive matters.

In our opinion, the definition of a comprehensive disarmament programme constitutes, both from the point of view of logic and from the practical point of view, the necessary framework within which the negotiations on specific questions, some of which this Committee has already started, will assume proper relevance and significance: only in the light of a well-defined comprehensive programme will the individual measures -- apart from constituting, of course, significant factors in their own sectors -- make a consistent and, I would say, more deliberate contribution as stages in that process whose final objective is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Italy for his statement and the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. ULLSTEEN (Sweden): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to start by thanking you for your kind words of welcome to me. I also want to thank the distinguished representative of Italy for his welcoming words. May I furthermore take this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the first part of this very important session. I am certain that it will be very valuable for our negotiations that the chairmanship is in your able hands. I wish you all success in your important task. May I also, on behalf of my Government, welcome the decision of the People's Republic of China to join the Committee on Disarmament.

The voice of a large part of the world's population has been added to our negotiations. It is thereby the first time that all the permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations are present here. It is, also, the first time that all the nuclear-weapon States are taking part in our work. This is a significant event in the history of disarmament efforts.

We look forward to an active and constructive Chinese contribution.

We assemble here in a rather sombre mood. It is long since a similar feeling of anxiety prevailed in the world. The policy of détente is in a state of crisis. Nobody dares predict what turn events might take in the decade that has just started. We must remember what is at stake for all of us.

During the last decade, great efforts were made to improve East-West relations and promote the policy of détente. These efforts brought about a series of agreements between the Federal Republic of Germany and other European States that stabilized the situation in Central Europe.

They gave us the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the Superpowers and negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty on the reduction of troops in Central Europe.

They also paved the way for the Helsinki Agreements on security and co-operation in Europe.

Détente has opened up a new dialogue between Governments of different economic and political systems. It has widened the areas of co-operation between the peoples and Governments of East and West. Guidelines for further progress on the road of peace have been drawn up in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

Compared to the situation existing during the cold war, these achievements represent remarkable progress in East-West relations.

During the latter half of the 1970s, détente suffered setbacks and stagnated. Suspicion and distrust again moved into the foreground.

Last year SALT II, the most crucial of all disarmament issues, fell victim to the growing political tension between East and West.

In fact, the year 1979 was a year of armament, not disarmament. It was marked by swelling military budgets, decisions on new nuclear weapons, growing social, political and religious unrest in many parts of the world, as well as direct military aggression within States and between States.

The year 1979 ended with the open military intervention by the Soviet Union in a small non-aligned neighbouring country. This is an act which threatens the stability of a strategically sensitive area of the world, and above all, it has eroded the basis for peaceful co-operation with the other Superpower.

Other great Powers are now considering a series of countermeasures. Such reactions are to be expected. They are understandable as expressions of concern over perceived changes in the global balance of power. Nevertheless, there is a risk that might lead to an action-reaction process, which in the end becomes uncontrollable.

Miscalculation and mistakes may start a vicious circle leading to a confrontation between the Superpowers which may be neither wanted nor intended by either of them.

If distrust and suspicion are allowed to dominate relations between the Superpowers, the risks that incidents may escalate to war increase. In the nuclear age, any local conflict may ultimately lead to a world conflagration.

Many people, political leaders included, may now well ask themselves to what avail do we gather here to talk about disarmament. Is it not obvious to everyone that the world is going in the opposite direction?

This question is born out of a natural feeling of frustration and disillusionment. However, we must not let ourselves be carried away by emotions. Our answer must be firm and clear; a continued dialogue is vital in times of tension.

We have no reason to conceal that the situation is serious. But it is important that we should avoid exaggerations. Prophecies of doomsday may become self-fulfilling. It is essential that cold war rhetoric is not revived. Channels of communication between East and West must be kept open. Propaganda must not replace a serious dialogue.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

All Governments and peoples stand to gain from a continuation of the policy of détente; we all stand to lose if the trends are reversed.

No nation could hope to escape the consequences of a nuclear war. In the nuclear age there is simply no alternative to peaceful co-operation.

Sweden has always given the policy of détente its wholehearted support. This has never meant that we have accepted attacks on freedom and justice carried out in the name of peace and friendship. We have always reacted sharply against the tendencies of the Superpowers to divide the world into spheres of interest and to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations in order to further their strategic and economic interests.

When we urge the Superpowers to keep up their dialogue, it does not mean that we have forgotten or condoned the fact that one of them is at this very moment bringing a small non-aligned country under its control. It simply means that we propose the only realistic alternative available in the nuclear age.

The decision to start the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks 10 years ago constituted a victory of common sense and realism. It took courage and statesmanship to surmount the strong distrust which had so far dominated East-West relations.

The year 1979, we had hoped, would bring the final acceptance of SALT II. Today its fate seems uncertain. Instead of initiating a new era of disarmament the Treaty has become the object of criticism and doubt. It is being used as a vehicle to raise military spending to new heights.

My Government appeals to the Governments of the United States and the Soviet Union to undertake to abide by the SALT II agreements pending its ratification. We appeal to them as the two nations with the largest nuclear arsenals in the world. We appeal to them as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to consider their responsibility for the maintenance of peace and international security.

If SALT is abandoned, great damage will be done to all the other disarmament and armament control efforts.

If SALT is abandoned by the United States, the Soviet Union will follow suit. Another round of nuclear arms procurement and deployment will inevitably ensue.

If SALT is abandoned, new fruitless attempts at achieving nuclear superiority will follow. The dangerous notion that a nuclear war could be fought and won would gain even more support among military thinkers and planners.

We also urge both parties to initiate negotiations on European theatre nuclear weapons immediately, without awaiting the SALT II ratification procedure.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

Both NATO and the Warsaw Treaty countries have declared that they are prepared to start negotiations on these weapons.

Recently the Soviet Union raised objections to such talks. We hope that the Soviet Union will not persist in this attitude. The nuclear arms race in Europe must be stopped.

For a long time a paradox of détente in Europe has been that it has allowed improvement of the political relations and discussion of disarmament at the same time as the arms race has continued and even accelerated. This inherent contradiction is now putting too great a strain on détente. Both Superpowers are to blame in this case.

Following on the deployment of new generations of Soviet missiles and bombers, NATO is now choosing the same route of what is called the "modernization" of nuclear arms, an expression which tends to hide the fact that the destructive character of these weapons is taking another great leap forward.

To a European country like my own, situated between East and West, outside the military alliances, the arms race of the Superpowers in Europe has often seemed irrational. It has continued as if the policy of détente did not exist, as if the Helsinki Conference had never taken place.

Decisions to increase nuclear arsenals in Europe have been taken during the very heyday of détente, at the time of summit meetings and solemn declarations of friendship and peaceful co-existence. Measures to improve the nuclear arsenals in Europe have been taken in spite of the fact that the political situation of Europe is more stable than ever before during the post-war era.

It is tempting to conclude that certain agreements of détente were aimed at creating a false sense of security, while rising armaments were, in fact, undermining that very security, although I hope that this is not true.

Military dispositions have been pursued in isolation. Considerations relating to the development of military technology have been allowed to govern decisions to improve or replace weapons. These decisions have had little or no regard for the political damage inflicted.

The present build-up results from a thinking which rests on a number of fallacies.

One is that, in spite of the tremendous nuclear arsenals already available, it is still meaningful to increase the quantity and quality of such weapons. The notion of a usable first strike nuclear capability -- of nuclear supremacy -- must be considered entirely unrealistic.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

Another fallacy seems to be that every type of nuclear weapon in the adversary's arsenal must be matched by a similar kind of weapon for one's own forces. Although the nuclear weapons available may, in fact, be fully sufficient to respond to an attack by a particular nuclear weapon, a perception of a nuclear threat develops. It thus becomes a political and public opinion factor, which cannot easily be disregarded by political leaders, even if it is unwarranted from a purely military point of view.

A third debatable element is that it will be possible to use a particular set of nuclear arms in a particular battle situation, and that the use of nuclear weapons can and will be contained at that level. This obviously in turn presupposes that the adversary would respond only at the same limited level or not at all. The danger of escalation is discounted.

The end result of this kind of thinking is that people are led to believe that nuclear wars can be fought. This makes nuclear war more likely.

The objective for the negotiations on eurostrategic nuclear weapons must be a Europe free from nuclear weapons. This goal might today seem Utopian and could obviously not be reached overnight. But it is essential that negotiations should be conducted with this ultimate goal in mind. Only then can one judge what adjustments must be made in arsenals and perhaps even in doctrines in order gradually to reduce the number of nuclear arms without diminishing the security of the parties to the negotiations.

The security of Europe is dealt with in the MBFR negotiations and the European Security Conference. The security of Europe will also be influenced by continued strategic arms limitation talks as well as negotiations on theatre nuclear weapons.

In order to obtain an overview of all these negotiations, a comprehensive approach is needed. The Finnish Government referred to this problem in a recent initiative. We agree that it would be of value to formulate an outline containing the long-term objectives of a disarmament programme for Europe.

The European perspective must now be given much greater attention than before.

Two world wars have had their origin in Europe. Europe is today the centre of the arms race. Never before in history has the destructive power of the weapons in Europe been as great as today. While attention has been focussed on the limitation of the strategic arms, competition between the Superpowers has simply intensified in Europe.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

If the build-up of nuclear arms in Europe continues, we will one day reach a point when we adjust to the thought that nuclear wars can be fought on this continent.

To negotiate nuclear arms reductions in Europe is therefore a matter of war or peace. It is a matter of our survival.

There is an urgent need for substantial progress in all the ongoing negotiations. Even if modest, a breakthrough in the long stalemated MBFR negotiations would be of great symbolic value. It would show the world that the parties remain committed to the objective of détente in Europe based on a balance of forces and mutuality of interest.

European security could also be enhanced by further agreements on confidence-building measures within the framework of the CSCE. The coming CSCE follow-up meeting in Madrid will provide an occasion for agreeing on further such measures. It may also lay the ground for more far-reaching future CBM decisions. Such decisions might in turn eventually create the prerequisites for a comprehensive European disarmament conference.

Sweden does not take part in the MBFR negotiations nor does it expect to be directly involved in future TNF negotiations. We take it for granted, however, that it can be in nobody's interest to take measures which would affect the present stability of Northern Europe. This could happen by introducing new types of weapons, be they offensive or defensive, Backfires, cruise missiles or other, or by increasing military activities in that area.

Sweden is part of Europe. Our security may therefore be affected by the military dispositions taken by NATO and the Warsaw Treaty. We reserve our right to react and make our views known, whenever our interests are involved.

I do not intend today to take up all the issues in front of this Committee. Let me just briefly address two central items:

It had been generally assumed that a comprehensive test ban could be achieved shortly after the ratification of SALT II. This whole process has now been delayed.

The importance of a CTB is, however, so great that we would urge the early conclusion thereof without awaiting the ratification of SALT II. Failing any progress in the nuclear disarmament field we see grave dangers.

I wish particularly to mention difficulties that the Non-Proliferation Treaty might face in the absence of progress on either SALT or CTB. We might even see its present authority eroded. Concrete progress on a CTB by the three nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty prior to the NPT Review Conference in August of this year is therefore vital.

(Mr. Ullsten, Sweden)

Chemical weapons are among the most abhorrent of weapons. Negotiations on a chemical weapons convention should be initiated in the CD without further delay. The ability of the CD to deal with this matter in a constructive way will be a test case for the Committee's possibilities to play a role in the multilateral disarmament process.

Détente is in a state of crisis. The exaggerated expectations of the beginning of the last decade are gone for the foreseeable future. Nobody knows what turn events will take during the 1980s, if we allow developments to slip out of control.

All our political will must now be mobilized to stop the trend towards confrontation and crisis.

The arms race between the two largest military blocs in the world is not only a matter for them. The arms race represents a tremendous waste of resources at a time when the gap between rich and poor peoples is growing.

The policy of peaceful co-operation is not only a matter for East and West. It is a vital necessity for all nations. In times of tension it is more important than ever that negotiations on disarmament and confidence-building are continued. We must be firm in our rejection of gross violations of the Charter of the United Nations. Our quest for peaceful co-operation does not mean that we condone such acts. It simply means that we are committed to the only realistic course available in the nuclear age.

The world cannot afford a further deterioration of confidence among nations. Nor can it accept that the progress made during the last decade should be lost through Superpower adventurism and power politics.

The nuclear age is not suited for brinkmanship. The drift towards confrontation and conflict must be stopped. All nations, Governments and peoples, must now join forces to turn this dangerous tide.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the chair. The next plenary meeting of the Committee will be held today at 3.30 p.m., when we shall continue with the list of speakers.

Before we adjourn does any representative wish to take the floor? -- The representative of Belgium.

Mr. ONKELINK (Belgium) (translated from French): I should like to take the floor in order to thank you, very briefly, for the words of welcome you addressed to me at the beginning of the meeting.

This is the very first time it has fallen to my lot to attend a meeting of the Committee on Disarmament, but I would like to say that -- although my country was not a member at the time -- I followed the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament with a great deal of interest during the five years when I was a member of our Permanent Mission at Geneva.

Thanks to the kindness of all representatives, I was able to establish friendships and make numerous acquaintances in the CCD. That marked the beginning of a lively and never-failing interest on my part in international efforts to achieve disarmament and to work out disarmament regulations.

Today, I recognize more than one friendly face around this table, and that for me is at once a source of pleasure and great comfort. In other words, let me say how happy and proud I am to represent my country today in your Committee.

On Thursday I will have the opportunity to express my views on the subject of the international climate in which the 1980 session of the Committee on Disarmament is opening. Even though, as the Secretary-General of the United Nations stressed in his message, that climate is the source of utmost concern, it will be for us to do everything in our power to enable the current session to achieve the results that the international community expects from its work. The contribution that our Committee can make to the improvement of international relations and to the maintenance of peace and security is more evident than ever before.

I should like to welcome the participation, in our work, of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, who have enhanced our discussions with their presence.

May I assure you, Mr. Chairman, as well as Ambassador Jaipal, all members of the Committee, and representatives of the Secretariat, of my desire to establish very cordial personal relations with one and all, and of my country's wish to co-operate, within the limits of its resources, in creating that climate of work and confidence without which our activities cannot be brought to a successful conclusion.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.