

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 13 March 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. YU Pei-Wen (China)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

<u>Algeria:</u>	Mr. A. BENYAMINA
<u>Argentina:</u>	Mr. A. DUMONT Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD Mr. R.C. FERNANDEZ
<u>Australia:</u>	Mr. A. BEHM
<u>Belgium:</u>	Mr. A. OUKELINX Mr. J-M. NOIRFALISSE
<u>Brazil:</u>	Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE Mr. P. BORIO
<u>Bulgaria:</u>	Mr. I. SOTIROV Mr. P. POPTCHEV
<u>Burma:</u>	U NGWE WIN
<u>Canada:</u>	Mr. D.S. McPHAIL Mr. J.T. SIMARD
<u>China:</u>	Mr. YU Pei-Wen Mr. LIANG Yu-Fan Mr. YANG Hu-Shan Mr. PAN Zhen-Qiang Mr. YANG Ming-Liang Mr. XU Liu-Gen
<u>Cuba:</u>	Mrs. V. BORODOWSKY JACKIEWICH
<u>Czechoslovakia:</u>	Mr. P. LUKES <sup>V</sup> Mr. V. ROHÁL-ILKIV
<u>Egypt:</u>	Mr. M. EL-BARADEI Mr. N. FAHMY

<u>Ethiopia:</u>	Mr. F. YOHANNES
<u>France:</u>	Mr. F. DE LA GORCE Mr. J. De BEAUSSE Mr. M. COUTHURES
<u>German Democratic Republic:</u>	Mr. M. GRACZYNSKI Mr. KAULFUSS
<u>Germany, Federal Republic of:</u>	Mr. N. KLINGER Mr. H. MÜLLER
<u>Hungary:</u>	Mr. I. KÓMIVES Mr. C. GYÖRFFY
<u>India:</u>	Mr. C.R. GHAREKHAN Mr. S. SARAN
<u>Indonesia:</u>	Mr. S. DARUSMAN Mr. D.B. SULTMAN Mr. HARYOMATARAM
<u>Iran:</u>	
<u>Italy:</u>	Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZMOLO Mr. C. FRATESCHI Mr. F. DE LUCA
<u>Japan:</u>	Mr. Y. OKAWA Mr. T. NONOYAMA Mr. R. ISHII
<u>Kenya:</u>	Mr. S. SHITEMI
<u>Mexico:</u>	Mr. A. GARCÍA ROBLES Miss L.M. GARCÍA
<u>Mongolia:</u>	Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG Mr. L. BAYART

<u>Morocco:</u>	Mr. M. CHRAIBI
<u>Netherlands:</u>	Mr. R.H. FEIN Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS
<u>Nigeria:</u>	Mr. T.O. OLUMOKO
<u>Pakistan:</u>	Mr. J.K.A. MARKER Mr. M. AKRAM
<u>Peru:</u>	
<u>Poland:</u>	Mr. B. SUJKA Mr. H. PAĆ
<u>Romania:</u>	Mr. C. ENE Mr. T. MELESCANU
<u>Sri Lanka:</u>	Mr. I.B. FONSEKA
<u>Sweden:</u>	Mr. L. NORBERG Mr. S. STROMBÄCK Mr. J. LUNDIN Mr. J. PRAWITZ
<u>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:</u>	Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYN Mr. Y.K. NAZARKIN Mr. V.I. USTINOV Mr. V.H. GANJA Mr. A.I. TIOURENKOV Mr. Y.P. KLIUKIN Mr. B.I. KORNEYENKO Mr. E.K. POTYARKIN
<u>United Kingdom:</u>	Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES Mr. N.H. MARSHALL Mr. N.A. SIMS

United States of America:

Mr. C. FLOWERREE

Mr. A. AKALOVSKY

Mr. J. CALVERT

Mr. M. DALEY

Mr. P. SALGADO

Mr. M. SANCHES

Venezuela:

Mrs. R. MUGICA DE ADAMES

Yugoslavia:

Mr. D. DJOKIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. KALONJI TSHIKALA KAKWAKA

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with our programme of work, the Committee will today consider item 4 of its agenda entitled "Chemical weapons" and the question of radiological weapons, included in item 5 of the agenda. As I indicated at our last plenary meeting, any delegation wishing to make a statement on item 3 of the agenda entitled "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" may do so at this plenary meeting.

Mr. GARCÍA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): It became China's turn to assume the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament barely one month after it took its seat at this table; one month and not six years, as might have well been the case had its arrival occurred a mere 30 days later.

Perhaps this was Fate's way of drawing attention to the importance of the fact that its presence among us has brought the membership of the Committee up to full strength and also -- for the first time since 1961 when a multilateral body of tripartite composition was set up to engage in disarmament negotiations -- ensured the participation of all the nuclear-weapon States.

My delegation would also like to regard this coincidence as a good omen for an increasingly effective contribution on China's part to the accomplishment of the important tasks for which the Committee is responsible.

In this context, it is gratifying for us to be able to extend our sincerest congratulations to China.

It would be an unforgivable omission not to use this occasion to express to Ambassador McPhail, his predecessor, our gratitude and deep appreciation for having demonstrated to us during the month of February that dynamism is not incompatible with perseverance or with patience and, at the same time, for displaying very uncommon competence which, combined with his unfailing and scrupulous impartiality, enables us unhesitatingly to describe his chairmanship as exemplary.

It seemed to us that it would be useful, at this meeting -- which, in accordance with the timetable we have adopted, is to be devoted to a consideration of the question of the elimination of chemical weapons, a question which, under the succinct title "Chemical weapons", appears as item 4 of the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament for 1980, as it did on the agenda for 1979 -- to give a brief review of the history of the item so as to bring it into the right perspective, and this I shall now do.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

While it would not be true to say that this question has received priority attention by the United Nations since the organization was set up some 35 years ago, it can certainly be argued that the idea of eliminating chemical weapons is implicit both in the first resolution ever adopted by the General Assembly -- resolution 1 (I) of 24 January 1946 -- and in resolution 41 (I) of 14 December 1946, for the former refers to the elimination not only of "atomic weapons" but also of "all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction", and the second recommends the elimination of atomic weapons "and all other major weapons adaptable now or in the future to mass destruction". Reference could also be made to many United Nations documents showing that, during the 20 years following its establishment, the elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons was frequently mentioned and appeared in numerous proposals, among which mention may be made in particular of those submitted in 1962 to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament by the Soviet Union and the United States for the drafting of a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

It is also undeniable, however, that it is only since 1968 that the elimination of chemical -- and of biological -- weapons has come to occupy an important place in disarmament negotiations. The point of departure may be identified as, on the one hand, the recommendation made by the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, in its report to the General Assembly for that year, that the latter should ask the Secretary-General to appoint a group of experts to study the effects of the possible use of chemical and bacteriological weapons and, on the other hand, the following profound observations made by the then Secretary-General, U Thant, in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the United Nations for the year 1967-1968:

"The question of chemical and biological weapons has been overshadowed by the question of nuclear weapons, which have a destructive power several orders of magnitude greater than that of chemical and biological weapons. Nevertheless, these too are weapons of mass destruction regarded with universal horror. In some respects they may be even more dangerous than nuclear weapons because they do not require the enormous expenditure of financial and scientific resources that are required for nuclear weapons ...

"During the twenty-three years of the existence of the United Nations, there has never been a thorough discussion in any United Nations organ of the problems posed by chemical and biological weapons, nor has there been a detailed study of them. Recently, the matter has been receiving more attention and it is felt that the time has come to deal with it more fully. I therefore welcome the recommendation of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

to the General Assembly that the Secretary-General appoint a group of experts to study the effects of the possible use of chemical and bacteriological means of warfare. I believe that such a study, which would explore and weigh the dangers of chemical and biological weapons, would prove to be a most useful undertaking at the present time."

Pursuant to resolution 2454 A (XXIII) of 20 December 1968 adopted by the General Assembly on this question, the group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General submitted to him on 30 June 1969 a report entitled "Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use" which U Thant, after giving it his "earnest consideration", decided to accept "in its entirety" and to transmit to the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the Governments of States Members of the United Nations. Among the main conclusions of this report were the following:

"The fact that certain chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents are potentially unconfined in their effects, both in space and time, and that their large-scale use could conceivably have deleterious and irreversible effects on the balance of nature adds to the sense of insecurity and tension which the existence of this class of weapons engenders ...

"Were these weapons ever to be used on a large scale in war, no one could predict how enduring the effects would be and how they would affect the structure of society and the environment in which we live. This overriding danger would apply as much to the country which initiated the use of these weapons as to the one which had been attacked, regardless of what protective measures it might have taken in parallel with its development of an offensive capability ...

"The momentum of the arms race would clearly decrease if the production of these weapons were effectively and unconditionally banned. Their use, which could cause an enormous loss of human life, has already been condemned and prohibited by international agreements, in particular the Geneva Protocol of 1925, and, more recently, in resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The prospects for general and complete disarmament under effective international control, and hence for peace throughout the world, would brighten significantly if the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents intended for purposes of war were to end and if they were eliminated from all military arsenals."

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

The comments made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the conclusions reached in the report of the group of experts to which I have just referred were decisive in ensuring that, from then on, the importance that undoubtedly attached to the question of the elimination of chemical and biological weapons as an urgent measure of disarmament was accorded to it. Starting in 1969, the General Assembly began adopting one or more resolutions on this subject every year, and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament began giving considerable attention to the drafting of an international convention on it. That same year the United Kingdom submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament a draft convention on the prohibition of biological weapons and the General Assembly transmitted to it another draft convention of broader scope on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on their destruction.

For two years these two proposals remained in opposition to one another -- the broader one supported by the socialist countries and by the members of the Group of 12 not belonging to either of the two main military alliances, and the narrower one endorsed principally by the United Kingdom, the United States and certain other countries -- until, thanks to the conciliatory spirit displayed by the advocates of the first of these proposals, it was possible in 1971 to achieve a consensus on the inclusion, as an annex to the report of the CCD to the General Assembly, of a draft convention confined to the prohibition of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons.

In spite of its restricted scope, the draft in question (which was commended by the General Assembly in its resolution 2826 (XXVI) and opened for signature on 10 April 1972, and which came into force on 26 March 1975) included, both in its preamble and in its article IX, provisions urging the continuation of negotiations with a view to reaching "early agreement" on the prohibition of chemical weapons. The provisions in question, which constituted the element that made possible the acquiescence of those in favour of the broader proposal, were as follows:

In the preamble, the States parties to the convention declared themselves "convinced of the importance and urgency of eliminating from the arsenals of States, through effective measures, such dangerous weapons of mass destruction as those using chemical or bacteriological (biological) agents", and recognized "that an agreement on the prohibition of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons represents a first possible step towards the achievement of agreement on effective measures also for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and determined to continue negotiations to that end".

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

In article IX, as you know, the compromise sought was formulated in the following terms:

"Each State Party to this Convention affirms the recognized objective of effective prohibition of chemical weapons, and, to this end, undertakes to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of their development; production and stockpiling and for their destruction, and on appropriate measures concerning equipment and means of delivery specifically designed for the production or use of chemical agents for weapons purposes."

Provisions relating to biological weapons having thus been incorporated into a binding multilateral instrument, the General Assembly, from 1972 to 1977, concentrated on the adoption of annual resolutions reaffirming the goal of achieving the elimination of chemical weapons or, to use the language of the resolution adopted in 1977, "the effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons", and their destruction.

In each of those resolutions the General Assembly requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to continue negotiations and, "as a matter of high priority", to endeavour to reach "an agreement on effective measures" for the attainment of that objective, by which it undoubtedly meant the formulation of a draft convention on chemical weapons similar to that adopted on biological weapons.

By virtue of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Committee on Disarmament remained in existence and the General Assembly included in that Document the following statement:

"The complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction represent one of the most urgent measures of disarmament. Consequently, the conclusion of a convention to this end, on which negotiations have been going on for several years, is one of the most urgent tasks of multilateral negotiations. After its conclusion, all States should contribute to ensuring the broadest possible application of the convention through its early signature and ratification."

This unequivocal provision was repeated particularly forcefully in two resolutions, 33/59 A and 33/71 H, both of 14 December 1978.

In the first of those two resolutions, the General Assembly requested the Committee on Disarmament "as a matter of high priority, to undertake, at the beginning of its 1979 session, negotiations with a view to elaborating" a draft convention on that subject.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

In the second of those resolutions, the General Assembly requested the Committee to undertake on a priority basis, at its first session to be held in January 1979, negotiations concerning both a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests and "a treaty or convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all types of chemical weapons and on their destruction".

The provisions contained in these two resolutions, which complemented those in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, formed the basis for the work done on that question in 1979 by the Group of 21, which likewise used the abundant documentation in existence that included no less than three draft conventions submitted to the CCD respectively by a group of socialist countries (CCD/361, of 28 March 1972), Japan (CCD/420, of 30 April 1974) and the United Kingdom (CCD/512, of 6 August 1976). Some idea of the volume of this documentation can be obtained from the fact that the Committee's Secretariat prepared a "Compilation of material on chemical weapons" (CD/26 of 1 July 1979) which contains a list of approximately 700 references covering the main aspects of the subject, to working papers of the CCD and the Committee on Disarmament and statements made in those two bodies during the period 1972-1979. Foremost among those aspects are those of the scope of the obligations which would be contracted under the future convention and the procedures which should be laid down in the convention for the verification of compliance with those obligations.

Early in its 1979 session the Group of 21 prepared a working paper in which, after recalling that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibited the use of chemical and biological weapons and reviewing some of the background which I have mentioned, ending with the two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in 1978, it set forth, inter alia, the following conclusions and suggestions:

"From the wording of both resolutions it is clear that negotiations in the Committee do not have to be preceded by the conclusion of the bilateral talks. In other words the negotiations in the Committee may proceed parallel with the bilateral talks. It is the firm belief of the Group of 21 that the negotiations in the Committee would not hamper or hinder the bilateral talks. Quite the contrary, the parallel negotiations would be of assistance to each other.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

"In view of the above and taking into account that multilateral negotiations have not yet started the Group of 21 is convinced of the urgent need to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group, open to the participation of all Member States of the Committee, with a view to elaborating a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and their destruction ...

"In order to enable the Ad Hoc Working Group to accomplish its task the Committee would request the States participating in the bilateral negotiations on chemical weapons fully to inform the Ad Hoc Working Group on the State of negotiations indicating areas in which agreement has been reached as well as issues which still are outstanding."

It was not possible to secure the agreement of the two States participating in the bilateral negotiations to the establishment of the ad hoc working group proposed in the working paper of the Group of 21 which I have just quoted, in spite of the fact that the proposal won the support of many members of the other two groups. The United States and the Soviet Union did, however, as they had been requested, submit a joint report on progress in the bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons (CD/PV.46, pp.25-30). That report, which was much more detailed and specific than anything previously submitted to the CCD by those two Powers, contained 30 paragraphs the last of which read as follows:

"The United States and the Soviet Union note the great importance attached to the elaboration of a convention by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Committee on Disarmament which was revealed, in particular, in the identification of the question of the prohibition of chemical weapons as one of the priority items on the agenda adopted for the current session of the Committee on Disarmament. Both sides will exert their best efforts to complete the bilateral negotiations and present a joint initiative to the Committee on Disarmament on this most important and extremely complex problem as soon as possible."

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

The Committee noted that report with satisfaction, describing it as a "substantial joint statement" and added: "The Committee, taking into account the fact that the prohibition of chemical weapons is one of the most urgent and vital problems in the area of disarmament, will proceed with negotiations at its 1980 session".

The Group of 21 was less generous in its judgement and, after regretting that "despite near unanimous support in the Committee it was not possible to reach an agreement to set up the Ad Hoc Working Group in order to begin concrete negotiations on a CW convention without further delay", concluded by reiterating its conviction that the Ad Hoc Working Group in question should be established "at the beginning of the next session".

The General Assembly for its part, at its thirty-fourth session, adopted two new resolutions bearing on the subject under discussion: one of them, resolution 34/72 of 11 December 1979, is devoted entirely to the subject, as its title indicates. In that resolution the General Assembly expressed its "regret that the agreement on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction has not yet been elaborated", and urged the Committee on Disarmament "to undertake, at the beginning of its 1980 session, negotiations on an agreement on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons and on their destruction, as a matter of high priority, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives."

In the second of those resolutions, resolution 34/83 B, entitled "Report of the Committee on Disarmament", adopted on the same date, the General Assembly, in addition to addressing to the Committee an appeal similar to the one in the other resolution, invited "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".

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

From the brief survey I have just given of the most important points in the more than 12 years' uninterrupted efforts both by the General Assembly and by the multilateral disarmament negotiating body to secure the prohibition of chemical weapons, a number of conclusions may be drawn of which to end my statement, I should like to mention the three following:

It will only be possible to speak of a successful conclusion to the efforts to which I have just referred after the entry into force, with respect to chemical weapons, of a solemn international instrument similar to the one already in existence for biological and toxin weapons, that is, a multilateral convention which ensures the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, as well as the destruction of any such weapons that exist in the arsenals of States.

The foregoing should not, however, make us lose sight of the particular importance of the forthcoming decision by the Committee on Disarmament on the establishment of an ad hoc working group which, acting as a subsidiary body of the Committee, will be responsible for negotiating and drafting that multilateral convention as a matter of high priority.

The execution of the arduous task which will thus be entrusted to the working group obviously involves the responsibility of all members of the Committee. However, as was clearly recognized in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly with respect to nuclear weapons, a particular responsibility also rests with the two Superpowers in the matter of chemical weapons. This responsibility calls for those two Powers, on the one hand, to do what they said they would do in the joint report of 31 July 1979 which I quoted a few moments ago, namely, "to complete the bilateral negotiations and present a joint initiative to the Committee on Disarmament on this most important and extremely complex problem as soon as possible" and, on the other hand, to co-operate frankly and unreservedly in the work which it is to be hoped the ad hoc working group will embark on without delay.

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

Mr. MARKER (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, my statement will be addressed to item 3 of the agenda.

The Pakistan delegation is gratified that the Committee on Disarmament has once again placed on its agenda the item on "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". My delegation believes that the successful conclusion of the Committee's work on this subject can contribute to defusing international tensions and reversing the growing possibility of the use of nuclear weapons. It would also contribute to the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Many of the complex issues which surround the question of security assurances can be resolved if the problem is approached in its correct perspective. The need for extending assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has arisen because of the claim of the nuclear-weapon States to possess and deploy nuclear weapons for their own security. The non-nuclear-weapon States did not play any part in the decision of the nuclear-weapon Powers to acquire or retain nuclear weapons. Yet their security is seriously threatened by the presence of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon Powers. They have no effective means to deter a nuclear threat. The escalation of the arms race increasingly jeopardizes their security.

It has been generally recognized that the most effective assurance against the nuclear threat, for the non-nuclear-weapon States, and indeed all nations, is nuclear disarmament and complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We hope that progress will be made towards this goal within this Committee and other disarmament forums. Until this comes about, some effective interim steps must be taken credibly to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. If effective international assurances are not evolved, the alternative will be for non-nuclear-weapon nations to seek protection under the nuclear umbrella of one of the major Powers, or a world in which there are more than a score of nuclear-weapon States.

Pakistan considers the efforts to evolve what have been called "negative security guarantees" as a first step towards the building of effective security for the non-nuclear-weapon States in the nuclear era. We believe that the provision of such assurances is possible politically, legally and technically.

Some progress was made on this issue in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Working Group last year. The elements involved in a negative security guarantee have been identified. Two main issues must be addressed: firstly, the nature and the scope of the guarantees, and secondly, the form in which these are to be

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extended. Last year, our deliberations were focused mainly on the form of the guarantees. There was general support within the Committee and the Ad Hoc Working Group for the conclusion of an international convention, as proposed by my delegation and by the Soviet Union. As the Committee's report states, there was no objection in principle to such a convention, although the "difficulties" involved were pointed out. The concept of a convention was subsequently endorsed by the Havana Summit, representing the position of the overwhelming majority of the non-nuclear-weapon States. The Non-Aligned Conference requested the Committee on Disarmament to elaborate such an international convention at its 1980 session. Later, at the thirty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly, wide support for the conclusion of an international convention was again evident. The Pakistan delegation continues to believe that an international convention is the most effective form in which assurances of non-use of nuclear weapons can be extended to the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Some delegations have stated in this Committee and elsewhere that negative security guarantees constitute unilateral undertakings by nuclear-weapon States, and thus it would not be appropriate to embody these in an international convention. My delegation believes that the undertaking by the nuclear-weapon Powers not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States should be in the form of a legally binding compact between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. It is relevant to point out that the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty is also in substance a unilateral undertaking by certain non-nuclear-weapon States not to acquire nuclear weapons. Nor would participation in such international arrangements compromise the neutrality of any State. On the contrary, the international convention proposed by my delegation, by setting to one side the problem of military alliances, would reinforce rather than compromise the neutrality and non-aligned status of most non-nuclear-weapon States.

A more basic argument raised against the concept of the international convention, specifically by the United States delegation and some other countries, is that no common or uniform undertaking can be evolved on negative guarantees. Therefore, it has been proposed that we should be satisfied with either a Security Council resolution, noting the unilateral declarations made by the nuclear-weapon Powers or -- which is even less satisfactory -- with a General Assembly resolution which would similarly note these declarations. As we have pointed out in the past, such action would hardly constitute the "effective arrangements" called for by the special session devoted to disarmament or under the formulation of the present item on our agenda. The unilateral declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States are not of an internationally binding nature, and could be revoked

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

unilaterally at any time by the Governments concerned. More importantly, these declarations are different from each other in scope, conditions, and qualifications. Once these declarations are juxtaposed, the net effect is that the non-nuclear-weapon States remain as exposed as ever to the threat of nuclear weapons. This was clearly acknowledged by the General Assembly's special session devoted to disarmament, for paragraph 59 of the Final Document, after taking note of the unilateral declarations of the nuclear-weapon Powers, urges them to pursue efforts to conclude -- I repeat, conclude -- effective arrangements to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Thus, the unilateral declarations have already been "noted" by the General Assembly. The recommendation of the Final Document clearly implies that a common or uniform undertaking is to be negotiated on the subject.

This is the task to which the Committee on Disarmament must turn during its current session. My delegation is happy to note that many delegations in the Committee, including the Netherlands, believe that such a uniform obligation could be evolved through negotiations. Agreement on the substance of the assurances to be provided would facilitate an agreement on the form in which they would be embodied.

In this context, the key question is which countries are to be covered by the guarantees of non-use of nuclear weapons? In the unilateral declarations of the nuclear-weapon Powers, the coverage of the non-nuclear-weapon countries is quite different. The declaration made by People's Republic of China is the most far-reaching in scope, and provides assurances of non-use to all non-nuclear-weapon States. This is the formulation that is most preferable from our point of view. The Soviet declaration is next in the scope of its coverage of non-nuclear-weapon States. It would exclude those non-nuclear-weapon States which have nuclear weapons on their territory. Although my delegation has no difficulty with this formulation, it is construed by certain countries as contrary to the principle that a disarmament measure should not diminish the security of any State.

The almost identical declarations made by the United States and the United Kingdom are not only more restrictive but also more ambiguous in their scope and application. The assessment of whether a non-nuclear-weapon State is participating in an attack against the territory, forces or allies of the United States or the United Kingdom could perhaps be made objectively. It may also be clear whether that State is allied to a nuclear-weapon Power. But, the judgement whether a non-nuclear-weapon State is "associated" or not with a nuclear-weapon Power in such an attack is something that would be entirely subjective.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

Indeed, it could, under certain circumstances, be so construed as to justify the use of nuclear weapons against almost any non-nuclear-weapon State.

It is no secret that the qualifications and conditions attached to the non-use declarations made by the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union are related to their preoccupations with preserving security in Europe where nuclear weapons are considered an essential factor in maintaining a balance of forces. Whether huge nuclear arsenals are relevant to the security of Europe is something that we need not debate here. But, as is also well known, the non-nuclear-weapon States of the third world do not subscribe to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, in Europe or elsewhere. Thus, it would be difficult for them to subscribe to any formulation which, in catering to the nuclear-military strategies in Europe, seems further to justify the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons as a general doctrine.

The formulation contained in article I of the draft convention submitted by Pakistan in document CD/10 attempts to strike a compromise between the preoccupations of the major nuclear-weapon Powers with their alliance systems and the position and interests of the non-aligned non-nuclear-weapon States. What we have proposed in effect is that assurances of the non-use of nuclear weapons would be provided to all those non-nuclear weapon States which are "not parties to the nuclear security arrangements of some nuclear Powers". By this we mean that the only non-nuclear-weapon States which should be excluded from the non-use guarantee are those which are members of the NATO alliance or the Warsaw Treaty or other agreements involving the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, and which consider themselves as being covered by the nuclear umbrella of one or other of the major nuclear-weapon Powers. I would like to emphasize this last point. Those nuclear-weapon States which are members of the major alliance systems should, we believe, qualify for the non-use guarantee if they declare that they are not parties to the nuclear security arrangements under these alliances. Provision could be made in the draft convention for such declarations. Such a provision could, moreover, have the beneficial effect of extending the area where the threat of use of nuclear weapons would have been eliminated.

It is pertinent to recall here that the formulation of negative security assurances that is contained in our draft convention has been sponsored and supported in the United Nations General Assembly by nearly 100 non-nuclear-weapon States and one nuclear-weapon Power, and was commended for consideration by the nuclear-weapon Powers in General Assembly resolution 31/189 C.

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

I would like to pay sincere tribute to the delegation of the Netherlands for the contribution it has made in analysing the issues involved in working out a common formula for negative security guarantees. In his very thoughtful statement to the 36th meeting of this Committee last year, Ambassador Fein drew attention to the basic similarities in the conditions contained in the formal declarations of the United States and the United Kingdom and in the authoritative statement made by the Heads of State of the Soviet Union and France. Ambassador Fein concluded that two conditions were common in the positions of these four nuclear-weapon Powers and could be reflected in a uniform obligation. These conditions were: first, to exclude any non-nuclear-weapon State which participated in an attack against a nuclear-weapon Power in alliance or association with another nuclear-weapon State, and second, that a non-nuclear-weapon State, to qualify for non-use assurances, should renounce nuclear weapons in one way or another. I would like to comment on these two points.

My delegation agreed in substance with the conclusion of the Netherlands delegation that, in substance, the preoccupations of the four nuclear-weapon Powers is quite similar, namely, to preserve the nuclear arrangements which they believe are necessary for their own security and the security of their allies. I have already indicated, however, the dangers involved in formulating this common preoccupation in a manner that leaves the door open to subjective interpretations by the nuclear-weapon Powers. Moreover, the formulation must take into account the position of principle of the non-aligned countries. Thus, some other and more objective way should be found of responding to the preoccupations of the nuclear-weapon Powers. I believe that the formulation presented by my delegation offer a more suitable basis for evolving a common obligation that responds to the interests of both the nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

As regards the second condition, I am afraid the non-nuclear-weapon States do not share the point of view that they must give formal undertakings of renunciation in order to qualify for non-use guarantees.

Many States believe that security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States are an obligation for the nuclear-weapon Powers, and should be extended irrespective of the formal accession by a non-nuclear-weapon State to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or some other such instrument. My delegation believes that the renunciation of nuclear weapons is implicit in the status of a non-nuclear-weapon

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

State. The negative guarantees to be given by the nuclear-weapon Powers to non-nuclear-weapon States under the proposed convention should not be seen as an exchange for a commitment from the latter not to acquire nuclear weapons, but as an incentive for them to refrain from doing so. Commitments against non-proliferation are desirable, but the most appropriate means of obtaining them is perhaps elsewhere than in the proposed convention on negative guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States.

The Pakistan delegation hopes that the working group on this item will be revived without further delay, and that it will address itself seriously to the task of evolving a uniform and common obligation to be undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States.

At the same time, as I stated here two weeks ago, recent developments have made it evident that guarantees of non-use will not be sufficient to give credible assurance of security to non-nuclear-weapon States. Today, several non-nuclear-weapon States are the object of threats from certain nuclear-weapon Powers including, implicitly, the threat of nuclear weapons. Moreover, in situations of crisis, a nuclear threat may emanate from countries which are not now formally recognized as nuclear-weapon States. For example, my delegation proceeds on the assumption that South Africa and Israel both have a nuclear weapons capability. Such a capability could be converted into a nuclear threat in times of conflict or crisis.

The international community must, therefore, give active consideration to erecting a structure of collective security which can respond to such a possibility of use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. It is quite evident that the statements made by three nuclear-weapon Powers under Security Council resolution 255 (1968) are insufficient for the purpose. At the Conference of the non-nuclear-weapon States in 1968, and on subsequent occasions, we have underlined the need to strengthen Security Council resolution 255 (1968) in a manner which would more adequately articulate the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations pertaining to the right of individual and collective self-defence. More specifically, my delegation considers it necessary to provide for the contingency of failure of the Security Council to act by stipulating the responsibility of a permanent member of the Security Council to act individually, should disagreement preclude the joint action envisaged in Security Council resolution 255 (1968).

In our view, the obligation under Article 51 of the Charter to assist a State in self-defence arises whether the armed attack occurs with conventional or nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, some studies on this subject have sought to qualify this

(Mr. Marker, Pakistan)

obligation in the context of a nuclear attack or threat. My delegation proposes that the Committee on Disarmament at this session should commission an independent and impartial study to examine the implications of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations in relation to individual or collective self-defence against an attack against a Member of the United Nations with nuclear weapons.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): Speaking for the first time during the month of March, I should like to congratulate you on the assumption of the office of Chairman of the month, and to express my delegation's appreciation for the excellent work done by your predecessor, Ambassador McPhail of Canada.

The Hungarian delegation would like to record its satisfaction that the Committee was at last able to tackle the task of working out the programme of work for the first part of its present session. We hope that, after having been forced into fruitless debates on problems irrelevant to its work and unnecessarily wasting much time on procedural aspects, the Committee will now be able to focus its attention, time and energy on matters of substance. This is all the more urgent because the Committee, during its present session, has been unable even to get close to its main task of starting concrete negotiations on any of the subjects included in its agenda.

I would like to confine my present statement to the problem of the convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons.

We may recall paragraph 76 of the Final Document of the special session, which calls for an international convention prohibiting this type of weapon. In view of this part of the Final Document and of the expectations generated by the Vienna summit as regards the increased effectiveness of the disarmament efforts made in different international fora last year, my delegation, together with several others, welcomed the presentation by the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United States of the agreed joint USSR-United States proposal on the major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. In its formal and informal meetings, the Committee gave preliminary consideration to this proposal. The Hungarian delegation was willing to go further, and in order to facilitate the work of the Committee submitted its working paper CD/40. However, the Committee did not find it possible to start the drafting of that convention.

The General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session paid due attention to the subject, and in its resolution 34/87A, adopted unanimously, requested the Committee to reach agreement on the text of such a convention as soon as possible. The

(Mr. Kömives, Hungary)

Hungarian delegation is of the opinion that the Committee should respond to this request and do its best to accomplish the elaboration of the draft convention and to present it to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

I was pleased to hear delegations state their readiness to enter into concrete negotiations, but I cannot hide my disappointment that, irrespective of this readiness, the Committee for one reason or another has not started the necessary negotiations.

In proposing that concrete work should be embarked upon, my delegation's point of departure is that the joint initiative submitted by the USSR and United States provides a reliable basis for the elaboration of a convention. It is the product of protracted bilateral efforts, a balanced, properly structured document, reflecting the political and technical expertise of its negotiators. The final aim of the convention is clearly defined: to prevent the misuse of radioactive materials which are in growing quantities in the possession of a steadily increasing number of States. The amount of radioactive materials is likely to expand further at an increasing pace in view of the growing number of nuclear reactors and plants. It is in the common interest of all States that these materials should not be used for military purposes.

This purpose of the treaty is strongly supported and advocated by my Government. It may be pertinent to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Parliament of the Hungarian People's Republic enacted a law on 6 March 1980 regulating various aspects of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In accordance with the efforts made by the Hungarian People's Republic in various international fora, the law declares that, in my country, atomic energy can be used only for peaceful purposes.

The document submitted by the delegations of the USSR and United States, in the view of my delegation, gives a clear definition of radiological weapons

(Mr. Kömives, Hungary)

as "any device, including any weapon or equipment, other than a nuclear explosive device, specifically designed to employ radioactive material by disseminating it to cause destruction, damage or injury by means of radiation produced by the decay of such material". It contains adequate provisions to prevent the development, production, stockpiling and use of such weapons. The document pays due attention to the generally-recognized need of the peaceful uses of radioactive materials as well.

My delegation is of the view that the procedure of verification and complaint is adequate, commensurate with the nature and scope of the treaty.

The document contains -- as indicated in its title -- only the major elements of a future convention. The task of the Committee therefore is to transplant its contents into a treaty framework and to provide its missing elements. It was in this very spirit that my delegation submitted its proposal for the preambular part of the convention, trying to concentrate on the main guidelines and principles involved. My delegation is giving careful consideration to the proposal made by the Swedish delegation that a reference should be made in the preamble to nuclear disarmament.

Concerning procedural aspects, my delegation is of the view that a working group with an appropriate mandate is the proper framework for accomplishing this task. It should start its work as soon as possible, taking also into account the fact that delegations will need some time to place their experts at the disposal of the group, as their presence will be indispensable in the drafting process.

In concluding, I would like to assure the Committee once again that the Hungarian delegation stands ready to make its contribution to the efforts of the Committee so that an agreed draft convention can be presented to the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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

Mr. McPHAIL (Canada): The elimination of the possibility of chemical warfare has been, for a long period of time, and remains, very important to Canada. Canadian troops were victims of the first massive gas attack in the First World War, and revulsion over the use of such weapons and their effects has therefore been very real, not only to that immediate generation of Canadians, but also to succeeding generations. Canada was one of the original signatories of the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning the use of these weapons in war, and Canadians have remained sensitive to the need for an effective and universally-accepted extension of that ban: that is, to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and to destroy existing stocks. In 1969, as a member of the eighteen-nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC), Canada took part in developing the draft General Assembly resolution on chemical and bacteriological warfare, and in recent years has had the honour of initiating, with Poland, an annual resolution on chemical warfare.

In 1970 Canadian Government policy regarding chemical warfare was outlined in detail to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD/PV.460). This declaration served as a basis of a more formal statement in the General Assembly the following year. In 1970 and succeeding years, a series of working papers developed by the Canadian Defence Research Board was submitted to the CCD dealing for the most part with aspects of the verification problem, and Canadian experts participated in a number of ad hoc working groups. We welcomed the joint initiative of the United States and the Soviet Union in 1977 in beginning negotiations on the chemical weapons issue. The joint report on the progress of those negotiations which was tabled in this Committee on 7 August of last year (CD/48) has served to clarify in the minds of members of this Committee the status of the talks and the broad areas of agreement and disagreement. We look forward to a further report on progress during the current session.

A year ago my delegation supported the concept of providing some opportunity for other Committee members to become involved in the general problem area of chemical warfare in a constructive manner. We therefore welcome the prospective formation of a working group with a mandate to define, through substantive examination, the issues to be dealt with in a future convention.

As an initial step there is an area of work for such a working group which we consider to be of particular utility. It stems directly from the initiative by

(Mr. McPhail, Canada)

the Netherlands delegation last year in developing the working paper containing questions relevant to a convention prohibiting chemical weapons (CD/41). In our view, the replies to this questionnaire to date raise a number of issues of substance, and we believe that experts could usefully focus on various aspects of them. In this connexion it will be important that all members of the Committee on Disarmament respond to the questionnaire. In this way, this activity would be a continuation of the process which we were able to describe in our 1979 report to the General Assembly as "different aspects of the problem of the prohibition of chemical weapons have been further clarified". This clarification could be furthered by a systematic examination of the responses to the questionnaire.

There is, it is true, a wealth of information in the field of chemical weapons, as 107 working papers on aspects of the chemical weapons issue have been submitted to this Committee and its predecessors. Seventeen member nations have participated largely in the process, and others have contributed to multinational working papers. This information, suitably employed, in concert with the answers to the Netherlands questionnaire, can be of considerable value in defining issues to be dealt with in the negotiation of a convention and in suggesting avenues for further work.

We urge Committee members to go beyond the simple statement of positions in the various issues to be included in a chemical weapons convention. As we see it, efforts should be made to reach a certain degree of convergence in the definition of these issues. For our part, we intend to participate actively in the proposed working group. We shall of course state our positions and we will be prepared to examine other members' views and proceed to what we hope will be a fruitful consideration of the various points of divergence. The end result of that work of "definition" being undertaken by the working group should constitute an important step in the development of a convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons.

Mr. ISSRAELIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): At the previous session of the Committee on Disarmament in July 1979, the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United States submitted an agreed joint USSR-United States proposal on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons. The purpose of this joint initiative was to prevent the emergence of one of the new types of

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

weapons of mass destruction which, if developed and used, would result in massive loss of human life and would have exceptionally dangerous consequences for mankind. The importance of preventing the emergence of this kind of weapon of mass destruction also bound up with the fact that the rapid development of nuclear energy and technology in many countries of the world creates the possibility of the wide dissemination of radioactive materials suitable for use in radiological weapons. In present conditions, the use of radioactive materials for this purpose may become technically possible for quite a large number of States.

The Soviet Union has always regarded the prohibition of radiological weapons as part of the problem of the comprehensive prohibition of new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that an international agreement on the prohibition of radiological weapons will represent an important contribution to the cause of détente, curbing the arms race and ridding mankind of the danger of the development of new lethal weapons.

There is broad international agreement on the question of the need to prevent the possible emergence of radiological weapons.

This is demonstrated by the resolution adopted at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in which the Committee on Disarmament is requested to continue negotiations at the earliest possible date with a view to reaching agreement on the text of such a convention and to submit a report on the results achieved to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-fifth session.

At its last session, the Committee on Disarmament began considering the joint USSR-United States proposal on the prohibition of radiological weapons. In the course of the discussions, which were preliminary in nature, certain delegations made a number of comments on the substance and form of the future convention. In particular, proposals were made by the delegation of Hungary concerning the draft preamble (CD/40) and by the delegation of the German Democratic Republic concerning paragraphs XI and XII (CD/42).

In statements made in the course of the work begun this year in the Committee on Disarmament, a number of delegations reaffirmed the need for the urgent consideration of the question of the prohibition of radiological weapons at the Committee's current session and made a number of comments on the substance of the problem.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In the view of the Soviet delegation, there is at present a real basis on which to conclude work on a draft convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons in the course of the Committee's current session. The ad hoc working group which should be set up for this purpose could base its work on General Assembly resolutions 34/79, entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons", and 34/87, entitled "Conclusion of an international convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons". It would have at its disposal the "Agreed joint USSR-United States proposal on major elements of a treaty prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons" (CD/31 and CD/32), as well as a number of proposals made by delegations of countries members of the Committee on Disarmament.

The joint USSR-United States proposal submitted to the Committee was the result of many years' work by the delegations of the USSR and the United States in bilateral talks involving qualified government experts. The proposal was formulated in the light of compromises concerning specific aspects of the problem of the prohibition of radiological weapons and a number of delicate questions relating to that problem.

In the course of the negotiations, both sides proceeded on the basis of a clear understanding that the activities to be prohibited by the treaty are very closely and extensively linked with the various multi-level activities of States concerning the use of radioactive materials for purposes bearing no relation to radiological weapons. The joint proposal also contains a provision concerning the peaceful use of radioactive materials.

The Soviet delegation considers that the working group could begin its work immediately, where necessary calling upon special government experts, with a view to submitting an agreed draft convention on radiological weapons by the end of the Committee's current session. The formulation of such a convention would represent an important practical step towards resolving the problem of prohibiting new types and systems of weapons of mass destruction and ridding mankind of the danger of the development of new destructive means of warfare.

Mr. FLOWERFEE (United States of America): In introducing the United States proposal on major elements of a treaty on the prohibition of radiological weapons on 10 July 1979, my predecessor, Ambassador Fisher, described the background of that initiative as well as the substance of the proposal. Since then, the need to undertake negotiations on a multilateral convention banning radiological weapons was expressed in our Committee's report to the United Nations General Assembly and also in General Assembly resolution 34/87A, which was adopted without a vote.

The United States continues to attach considerable importance to the early conclusion of such a convention. Although radiological weapons may not exist at the present time, their feasibility clearly does. Moreover, the potential for the development and production of these weapons of mass destruction is constantly spreading, given the increasing accumulation of radioactive materials throughout the world.

Although a ban on radiological weapons would be a relatively modest step, it is a necessary one. The United States believes, moreover, that in our work here we should also take into account what is most readily achievable. In striving patiently for more ambitious -- and consequently more distant -- objectives, we should not neglect what can be done now. Any realistic and effective arms control measure we develop can only help us in making progress towards our ultimate disarmament goal.

It is in this spirit that the United States delegation will participate in the working group on radiological weapons which we hope will be established shortly. We also hope that the working group will find the major elements, which are the result of careful examination and prolonged negotiation, a good basis for launching its work on a draft convention.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): Even though no formal decision has yet been taken, a consensus has rapidly been reached in our Committee on the extension of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group on negative security guarantees, established in 1979.

The work of the Group, if it makes favourable progress, could contribute to the success of the present session of the Committee on Disarmament.

At the opening of this session, I had the opportunity of emphasizing the importance which the Belgian Government attached to this question since the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

My Government has always regarded the NPT as the point of departure for a policy and defended the view that it should be extended by more ambitious, precise and substantive decisions on the way to security and disarmament. As our Romanian colleague rightly observed, these decisions should make it possible to achieve a better balance of the obligations contained in the Treaty.

It is in this perspective, which is also that of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference in August 1980, that our efforts to reach agreement on security guarantees could best be placed.

In expressing this desire, I am in no way minimizing the complexity of the task assumed by our Committee in response to the appeal contained in paragraph 59 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The results, disappointing in this respect, of the last session of the General Assembly have amply illustrated the difficulty of unifying our ideas on this matter.

Although Belgium is open to a search for any formula that would meet with general assent, it appears to me that our efforts should be aimed at achieving an agreement which would represent progress in relation to the present situation, taking into account the positions adopted by various countries.

The present situation is characterized by geopolitical differences and differing interests both for the nuclear-weapon States and for the non-nuclear-weapon States. It is also determined by the specific character of various regions in which nuclear weapons enter into assessments of the balance of forces -- as in Europe -- and those in which they do not do so. This balance is one of the premises for security and disarmament. To disturb it -- to the extent, of course, to which this balance exists -- would lead to effects contrary to those being sought.

The diversity to which I have just referred has been observed in an area related to the one with which we have been concerned: the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In 1975, Belgium participated in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of government experts set up to study the question. One of the lessons that my country drew from this study was that the conditions for the viability of such zones inevitably varied according to region, and that it was consequently impossible to devise a model that could be imposed at the international level.

In this context, I would draw attention to my country's keen interest in the regional approach to disarmament.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The international community has taken note of the unilateral declarations made in the past by the nuclear-weapon Powers. As my predecessor pointed out last year in this same forum, these declarations constitute highly significant political acts. They also reflect the diverse situations to which I have already drawn attention.

In the present framework of international relations, it would undoubtedly be pointless to hope that these situations, and consequently the terms of these unilateral declarations, will rapidly be harmonized.

Meanwhile, should we not consider that the progress we all seek might lie in giving practical effect to these statements by the nuclear-weapon Powers? As the Belgian delegation has already had occasion to propose in our general statement to the Committee, the procedure which led to the adoption of Security Council resolution 255 of 19 June 1968 on the assurances given to non-nuclear-weapon States in the event of aggression or threat of aggression in which nuclear weapons are used could help to attain this first objective.

The Security Council could thus be led to take solemn note of these unilateral declarations, as it did in 1968.

This suggestion is not an alternative to the arrangements that we are seeking to define. It would, if implemented, have the merit of strengthening confidence among States. It could thus have a favourable influence on the course of the Committee's subsequent work on this subject.

The Ad Hoc Working Group is already benefiting from the not insignificant achievements of the previous session.

It should develop the topics it tackled on that occasion.

It should also, perhaps, assess more systematically than in the past the possibilities that the regional approach might offer in this field.

We might in this way discover unifying elements that would facilitate the search for a joint approach acceptable to all our States.

The Working Group could also assume the task of formulating a draft resolution for submission to the Security Council from the viewpoint I have already described.

These various suggestions demonstrate the open-mindedness of my delegation. I can assure you that it will spare no effort to ensure that we achieve the objectives assigned to us by the international community on this important subject in the most favourable conditions and in the shortest possible time.

Mr. SUJKI (Poland): I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament for the current month. We hope that, under your leadership, the Committee will be able to accomplish its tasks, in accordance with its programme of work.

I should also like to take this occasion to address to Ambassador McPhail, the distinguished representative of Canada, our appreciation for the able and courteous manner in which he discharged his duties as our Chairman in February. The leadership which he provided to the Committee in the difficult, opening phase of its work this year was marked by rare dedication, reflecting -- as it were -- the important role which Canada plays in multilateral efforts in the field of arms limitation and disarmament.

The Polish delegation regrets that it has not proved possible as yet to find generally acceptable language for the terms of reference of a CW ad hoc working group. It is fair to say, however, that considerable progress has been made and, given goodwill and a spirit of accommodation, we may very soon find a positive solution which all parties will find acceptable. As far as my delegation is concerned, we feel that it is worth trying to eliminate from the text of the terms of reference all potential or perceived ambiguities and equivocation in order to assure the best conditions of work for such a group. It would be neither farsighted nor wise to adopt terms of reference which would lend themselves to differing interpretations.

While we fully agree with those delegations which argue that the Committee has devoted an undue amount of time to matters of procedure at the expense of substance, we feel, nevertheless, that we have achieved a great deal of progress since the beginning of our session this year. Indeed, it is a significant departure from the familiar position of the past when the Committee can agree that, for the effective performance of its functions, it is advisable to establish a subsidiary body to deal with the question of the elimination of chemical weapons.

Assuming that a CW working group is established soon and that it proceeds with the tasks we decide to entrust to it, it will obviously not be starting from scratch. There is an important body of information and proposals which the group will have to sort out, interpret and analyse. Apart from the three formal drafts of a CW convention, among the most recent documents on the table are the following: CD/26, which contains a fairly complete compilation of material on CW extracted from CCD documents and working papers tabled between 1972 and 1979; CD/41 and CD/49, which contain questions and answers, respectively, that the Netherlands

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

delegation formulated with regard to a CW convention; CD/44, containing a Polish proposal for an outline of a CW convention; CD/48, containing the USSR-United States joint report on progress in the bilateral negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons; and CD/52, in which France, Italy and the Netherlands presented their evaluation of the Committee's work with respect to CW during 1979.

Notwithstanding the prolonged deliberations, discussions and negotiations on CW, these documents are far from clarifying all doubts or providing all answers to questions which may legitimately arise when it comes to a genuine measure of disarmament, such as a CW convention should be.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the working group might usefully apply itself to examining and defining such involved problems as are raised in the working paper which my delegation tabled on the concept of an outline, or in the two Netherlands papers. Let us take such a seemingly simple issue as the scope of the contemplated prohibition. It is generally assumed that the scope of a CW convention should be comprehensive. But if so, then the delegation of the Netherlands asks no fewer than ten supplementary and legitimate questions: would such a ban cover single-purpose agents only, or would it also cover single-purpose precursors? Then how about dual-purpose agents and precursors? Should such a ban cover only lethal agents, or should it also include incapacitants? Should existing CW production facilities be dismantled, mothballed or diverted to peaceful uses; if so -- which, when, in what way?

These are only some of the questions which must be answered or clarified by the working group at some stage in its work; we think this should be dealt with in the initial stage, immediately after the necessary definitions and interpretations of terms are agreed upon. This first stage of the work undertaken by the ad hoc group should also, in our view, address the question of CW agent classification criteria: should it be the single-purpose criterion combined with a toxicity criterion, or would some other classification basis be more comprehensive and practicable?

Moreover, in this initial stage of its work, the working group could usefully seek to define and analyse, through substantive examination, the question of the classification of lethal agents and their precursors. Should an attempt be made to match dual purpose agents and precursors with a differing scale of prohibition? How should the group classify such dual-purpose agents as phosgen, hydrogen cyanide or herbicides?

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

In the view of my delegation, the working group should also go into the question of binary weapons, and determine the approach to their precursors and reactants. This is an extremely important issue and almost as involved. As the distinguished representative of Australia, Ambassador Sir James Plimsoll, observed in his statement of 5 February "... certain chemicals only become weapons when they are mixed together, and yet each of them individually might have civilian uses and sometimes, indeed, when mixed together they might still have civilian uses".

In this connexion, it might be advisable for the working group to consider the desirability and practicability of drawing up, as an annex to a future CW convention, a comprehensive list of banned lethal agents and their precursors, including those involved in binary weapons.

In the view of the Polish delegation, it is only after the working group has completed the first stage of its work, after definitions and interpretations of terms are agreed upon, after basic elements or topics or a general outline, if you will, are defined through substantive examination, that the ad hoc working group could contemplate, later this session or in 1981, going over to the set of problems which could be profitably addressed in the second stage of the negotiating process leading to our ultimate objective -- an effective international convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. It is only at this stage, when we would be clear about the substance and the scope of envisaged prohibitions, that we could proceed to questions of verification. This would obviously embrace a host of problems connected with the declaration of production facilities, the declaration and destruction of CW stockpiles and the most judicious combination of national and international control arrangements and procedures.

This stage would most likely offer the best opportunity to examine and deal with what used to be called final provisions concerned with the entry into force of a convention.

It is the expectation of my delegation that, as a result of its work this year, the ad hoc group should be able to elaborate a set of points on which there will be basic consensus as well as general agreement as to where and how they would be embodied in the convention. These would not be unrelated bits and pieces conceived in complete vacuum. As a matter of fact, they would logically fall into what my delegation would regard as a fairly close resemblance of our concept of an outline.

(Mr. Sujka, Poland)

The Polish delegation has always attached major importance to that part of the CW negotiating process which has been pursued bilaterally by the USSR and the United States. We would anticipate that these sustained negotiations will continue to stimulate and provide substance for the fruitful work of the ad hoc group. We would likewise hope that useful ideas developed in the working group will be heard and considered by the two negotiating parties. In a word, ideally, there should be a mutual relationship and feedback between these two forums which, after all, aim in the same direction and, therefore, are part and parcel of the same endeavour.

I have already referred to the problem of verification in a future CW convention. As we all recognize, these are difficult and complex problems which can be most usefully dealt with when there is total clarity as to the scope of the envisaged prohibitions as well as when there is a reasonable certainty of the geographical scope of the future CW convention.

It would logically follow, in our view, that these problems of how to assure compliance with a CW convention should be best approached only after we are fairly certain as to the ultimate shape of all other provisions of such a multilateral agreement.

Let me observe in conclusion that, apart from the intrinsic merit of an early and effective agreement on the total prohibition of chemical weapons, one compelling reason which motivates Poland, as I am sure many other countries, in seeking to supplement the Convention on the Prohibition of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons, is the fact that every delay in the radical proscription of chemical warfare agents not only adds to existing stockpiles of these weapons but also works to stimulate the technological race in which research and development may, at any moment, add new and still more abhorrent items to the inventory of these inhuman weapons of mass annihilation.

The Polish delegation will therefore spare no effort to contribute to the earliest establishment of an ad hoc group and to work, within its framework, for the earliest negotiation and conclusion of a universally binding agreement on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

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

This completes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

(The Chairman)

There being none, allow me to state the following two points: Firstly, this afternoon at 3.30 p.m. the Group of 21 will hold a meeting; secondly, as we have all heard, the representative of Poland has referred to the progress made by the contact group on chemical weapons. I know that this group intends to work actively in order to achieve a satisfactory result. Also, I understand that the contact group on radiological weapons has achieved some progress as well. Therefore, I suggest that we should make use of the time available this afternoon or the time before 10.30 a.m. tomorrow, to complete the tasks of the respective contact groups. In view of this situation, the informal meeting planned for today will be held at 10.30 a.m. tomorrow. I believe that such an arrangement will be agreeable to everyone.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.