

# CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

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## FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 31 March 1987, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr Lechuga Hevia

(Cuba)

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 401st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work the Conference will continue its consideration of agenda item 4, "Chemical weapons". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure any member wishing to do so may raise any other matter relating to the work of the Conference. Once we have finished the list of speakers for today I will convene a short informal meeting of the Conference to consider a request for participation from a non-member State. We shall then resume the plenary so as to formalize any agreement we may reach in the informal meeting. I have on the list of speakers for this plenary meeting the representatives of Argentina and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Cámpora.

Mr. CAMPORA (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I am very happy to see that at this session the Conference on Disarmament has given mandates to Ad Hoc Committees for the consideration of five agenda items. We might think that the work of our Conference on Disarmament benefits from the changed international conditions. A more favourable international climate is developing as the two military alliances are showing a greater inclination for dialogue. The dark years that characterized the first half of the 1980s with the heightened arms race are yielding to less gloomy times and, albeit very slowly, multilateral and bilateral multilateral negotiations seem to be finding their feet in the search for certain agreements. However, bilateral negotiations are not producing concrete results embodying the belief expressed by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in Geneva in November 1985 that a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought and that neither country would seek to achieve military superiority.

These two basic principles of the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union at present should meet, like two co-ordinates on a plane, at the point that makes them meaningful through disarmament agreements, since in our view, these two principles have created the changed climate that we are starting to see in international relations.

For the first time in history, two countries recognize that the nuclear weapons they possess is mutually annihilating, and also for the first time in history these two countries recognize for that reason that neither should try to seek military superiority over the other.

The inevitable consequence of this premise must be nuclear disarmament, at least as far as logic is concerned.

We realize that the orientation towards dialogue has reached a point that should be taken advantage of by attaining concrete results, before the favourable climate vanishes. Attitudes of mistrust will finally prevail if both sides do not accommodate each other's initiatives but instead reject them. So the cycle of détente should be self-sustaining by means of concrete disarmament agreements.

The international community demands that the super-Powers should start to go back along the road that they have taken in their unbridled arms race,

(Mr. Cámpora, Argentina)

because in that race they have more than reached saturation point. There is no longer anywhere in the world on land or at sea that is beyond the reach of both super-Powers' weapons.

Everything suggests that this year, as in preceding years, the Conference on Disarmament will continue to be blocked on the substantive treatment of the three first items on its agenda, which as we all know refer to nuclear weapons.

We acknowledge this situation, but that does not mean that we are doing so in silence. On the contrary, we raise our voice in protest against the totalitarian behaviour that denies the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament the possibility of carrying out the mandate it was given in the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978.

If the treatment of nuclear disarmament is banned for us here in the Conference on Disarmament, we demand that the two super-Powers produce results in this field in which they have decided to substitute themselves for the rest of the international community. We also hope that we will shortly receive a joint report on the state of those negotiations.

We said at the beginning of our statement today that we were happy to see that the Conference on Disarmament has been able to set up Ad Hoc Committees on the other five agenda items.

It must be a rather exceptional and unprecedented situation in the history of the Conference on Disarmament that at this early stage of its work this year it has managed to reach these agreements. We have some intense work in front of us. We have no doubt the Conference on Disarmament is sufficiently able to respond to the challenge of negotiating disarmament agreements for all the items on its agenda.

The negotiation of a convention that would ban chemical weapons is of unprecedented importance. This is a real leading case for the international community, since never yet has it undertaken the drafting of an instrument of such political and technical complexity in the field of disarmament with a view to eliminating weapons of real military significance. The task that has been started implies that national territories will be opened up to international scrutiny. This in itself will be a very important step in the strengthening of international confidence.

It is difficult to imagine the Major Powers open to international inspection to verify the destruction of their arsenals of chemical weapons and production installations. However, all the negotiations are directed towards that aim, and there should be no retreat or vacillation in achieving it.

We have heard so many times delegations from the Great Powers state here that the task of the Conference on Disarmament should be to give priority to the negotiation of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons that we cannot accept at this stage of our work any pretext which would hinder the speedy conclusion of that instrument.

(Mr. Cámpora, Argentina)

As in earlier sessions of the Conference on Disarmament, we have established at this session Ad Hoc Committees for items 6 and 7 on negative security assurances and biological weapons, respectively. I would like to say that both issues are of definite interest to the Argentine delegation, and we continue to hope that the Conference on Disarmament will move towards the drafting of appropriate agreements on both of them.

The nuclear-weapon countries should give assurances that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against countries that have renounced the possession of such weapons. In the Ad Hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances it has been made evident in the sessions held in previous years that some countries place various conditions on the granting of such assurances because they do not really want to limit in any way the tremendous weight which the possession of such weapons gives them in international relations. The mere possession of nuclear weapons creates a climate of intimidation which definitely affects non-nuclear weapon States.

Those who possess nuclear forces and do not undertake not to use them or to threaten to use them against non-nuclear-weapon States clearly do so because they have the intention of intimidating both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon countries.

As for the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons, the delegation of Argentina feels that we should not wait any longer to start drafting an agreement that would prohibit military attacks against any nuclear installation whose destruction would lead to the dissemination of radioactive material.

This aim of giving wide and non-discriminatory immunity to nuclear installations in case of armed conflict has won broad support from public opinion everywhere and is supported by many countries.

We trust that the Ad Hoc Committee concerned will be able to make considerable headway in this direction this year.

Mr. President, before concluding I would like to convey to you the congratulations of the delegation of Argentina for your work during the month of March. As I have said, the Conference on Disarmament is attaining a very intense pace in its negotiations, particularly in the Ad Hoc Committees and Working Groups, and very possibly this will produce specific results. The impulse given by you as President of the Conference on Disarmament during the month of March has been clear and certainly very positive. That is the reason why I would like to say once again how much we appreciate the considerable work you have done. I take pleasure in stressing this because of the excellent relations between our two Latin American sister countries, Cuba and Argentina.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Cámpora, for his statement and for the kind and stimulating words addressed to the President.

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

Mr. NAZARKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): On 24 and 25 March this year a regular meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty was held in Moscow. The delegation of the USSR, the country which hosted and chaired the meeting, has requested the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament to circulate, as an official document, the decisions which were adopted by the Foreign Ministers Committee session. I am referring to the Communiqué of the meeting, the Statement "For Furthering the CSCE Process and Bringing the Vienna Follow-Up Meeting to a Successful Outcome", and the "Statement by the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty on the Issue of a Chemical Weapons Ban".

The distinguished representatives thus have the opportunity of considering the full texts of the documents adopted in Moscow. Meanwhile, we would like to highlight some aspects since the decisions of the Committee of Foreign Ministers have a direct bearing on the important problems we are discussing here.

The documents adopted at the Committee's meeting in Moscow testify to the continuing vigorous efforts of the States Parties of the Warsaw Treaty to end the arms race, reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons, prevent the militarization of outer space, destroy chemical weapons and the industrial base for their production, and bring about deep reductions in armed forces and armaments in Europe. These efforts are a reflection of the unvarying policy of principle of the allied socialist States aimed at building a comprehensive system of international security and creating a nuclear-free, non-violent world.

At the Committee's meeting in Moscow, particular attention was given to the task of lowering the level of military confrontation, reducing armed forces and conventional arms in Europe, further developing the CSCE process in all fields and strengthening peace and security on the European continent. In this context, the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty attach prime importance to ensuring that the Vienna meeting will proceed in a constructive and business-like way and to achieving meaningful and positive results there. If that is to be achieved, what needs to be resolved first is the question of a forum and mandate for future negotiations on reducing armed forces and conventional arms in Europe. It is the firm conviction of the allied socialist States that the best solution to this question would be to supplement the mandate of the Stockholm Conference in such a way that it would specifically discuss disarmament matters as well.

With a view to making progress on the whole complex of humanitarian issues, the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty propose that the Vienna meeting shall agree to a conference being convened in Moscow on the development of humanitarian co-operation to examine the whole set of issues of co-operation in that field, and to hold a comprehensive discussion aimed at achieving practical results.

The allied socialist States believe that a speedy completion of the elaboration of a convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons and on the destruction of the industrial base for their manufacture is a crucial objective for the world community. They call on all States to do their utmost to conclude such a convention in 1987 so that this year already we could see the beginning of general and complete chemical disarmament. The

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

participants in the Moscow meeting of Foreign Ministers consider that no country should take any steps whatsoever which might complicate the elaboration and conclusion of a convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons.

These, in brief, are the points on which I wish to dwell today.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement. I have no more speakers on my list for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor?

As I announced at the beginning of this plenary, we will now hold a brief informal meeting of the Conference to take a decision on a request for participation by a non-member State. The plenary meeting is now suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 10.40 a.m. and resumed at 10.45 a.m.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): The 401st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

In accordance with the exchange of views during the informal meeting we have just held, I would like to submit to the Conference the request from Switzerland to participate in the work of the plenary meetings of the Conference and of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. The draft decision to this effect has been circulated by the secretariat in document CD/WP.281.

If there is no objection, I will take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): We have no other business to consider today, but before I make a brief statement at the end of my term as President I would like to ask if any delegation wishes to speak.

Since no delegation wishes to speak, I wish to make a brief statement at the close of my term as President of the Conference during the month of March.

During this period the Conference adopted a number of decisions on the organization of its work. A number of States and non-member States were invited to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committees established at the beginning of the 1987 session. We also appointed the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees on agenda item 5, Prevention of an arms race in outer space, and item 7, Radiological weapons. Both Chairmen have been holding consultations on the programmes of work for these Ad Hoc Committees, and at the end of this week, on Friday, the subsidiary body that will be dealing with radiological weapons will hold its first meeting.

During March the Conference also had the first consultations of 1987, open to all delegations, on proposals to improve its functioning and make it more effective. During the exchange of views, opinions were expressed on various aspects of the topic. These referred both to the procedure to be

(The President)

followed in considering the question and also to the issues involved in it. It will be up to my successors to continue the consultations on the consideration of proposals already presented, and any which may be introduced in the future, on the issue in question.

The two Ad Hoc Committees which have been working practically since the beginning of this annual session continued their active search for agreements on questions of substance. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament would have its work considerably facilitated if the Conference itself were able to make headway in its consideration of those agenda items dealing with nuclear issues that we have been examining without results for far too long. The Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is working on particularly important topics in the search for a convention that would finally prohibit these weapons, and it is clear that considerable progress has been made since the opening of the session.

We have to recognize, however, that the Conference still has a lot to do during the session, not only on organizational matters, but also on matters of substance. Despite the many consultations held during the month of March, it has not yet been possible to appoint the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee we established on item 6 of the agenda, entitled "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". It is to be hoped that this issue will be resolved as soon as possible.

I am particularly concerned by the fact that practically since the beginning of the annual session all the efforts aimed at organizing our work better on the three first agenda items, those relating to the top priority nuclear issues, have not produced positive results. This is not a new situation for the Conference, of course. For a number of years we have been unable to agree on an appropriate procedure for considering those items, with the exception, perhaps, of a first effort last year, that was very limited, I must say, on item 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

I believe it is my duty to report to the Conference about the consultations I have held during the month of March on those three topics, since their importance justifies further efforts to find an appropriate way of starting to consider them.

On item 1, "Nuclear Test Ban", it was impossible to advance from the position of the various groups, despite the fact that the deliberations of the recent regular session of the General Assembly allowed some hope that we would be able to find a formula for agreement. Various delegations have indicated a tendency to adopt more flexible positions but this attitude has to extend to all members to make it possible for us to move closer to agreement.

Item 2, which I have already mentioned, was the subject of active consultations which, unfortunately, did not produce a generally acceptable formula. Proposals on the establishment of an ad hoc committee still have not achieved consensus. Nor is there consensus on considering the item in informal meetings of the Conference, as we did last year. The suggestion I made as President during the meetings of Co-ordinators, so as to reconcile the various positions, was not sufficient to remove all existing difficulties.

(The President)

At one time I suggested as a working hypothesis that the Conference should have a number of informal meetings on the substance of item 2, on the understanding that the exchanges of views should be reflected in the annual report of the Conference to the General Assembly. In order to facilitate what was called in the consultations a "structured discussion" on this item, the President would circulate a list of topics based on the issues considered during the informal meetings last year. That list would be the exclusive responsibility of the President, its sole purpose being to organize the debate, and it would not require the agreement of delegations. Of course, pursuant to rule 30 of the rules of procedure of the Conference, delegations wishing to refer in informal meetings to other matters not included on the list of topics would have every right to do so.

This is how things stand now, but as I have already said, this idea has not removed the doubts that some delegations appear to have. For the time being, I will simply say that if we are able to move ahead in our consideration of item 2, that would perhaps enable us to tackle with greater optimism the problems that remain on item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters".

None of the ideas considered in the Conference for the purposes of having appropriate machinery for this topic have brought us nearer to consensus. It is clear that it is not possible at this moment to establish an ad hoc committee because of the objections of some delegations. The suggestion that we should create a committee of the whole has also run into the reservations of some delegations, and since this is the case, some of those delegations regard as insufficient the proposals to consider the item in informal meetings. In other words, we are exactly where we were in 1985 and 1986.

The outlook for the first three agenda items is not very encouraging. Perhaps if we recognize this openly, it will help us to try new approaches to overcome the deadlock that we now have on these matters.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude for the co-operation I was given by members of the Conference during March. I am convinced that it will be equally needed by my successor, Ambassador Vejvoda of Czechoslovakia, whose experience in disarmament matters and diplomatic skill will be particularly useful to the Conference. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Komatina, and the Deputy Secretary-General, Ambassador Berasategui, as well as the interpreters and all members of the secretariat for the valuable co-operation they have provided.

I shall now adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be on Thursday, 2 April, at 10 a.m. The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.