

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/PV.425
28 July 1987

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 28 July 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. T. Terrefe (Ethiopia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 425th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the beginning, I should like to welcome the presence at this plenary meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Ali Akbar Velayati, who is listed as the first speaker for today. In that connection, I should like to note that Mr. Velayati has already visited the Conference on several occasions to convey the views of his Government on various questions relating to the work of the Conference.

I should also like to welcome among us the new representative of Brazil to the Conference, Ambassador Marcos de Azambuja, who is joining us today. Ambassador de Azambuja is a career diplomat with vast experience in multilateral diplomacy who has also been involved in disarmament matters during his career.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference begins today its consideration of agenda item 6, "Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". However, in conformity with Rule 30 of its Rules of Procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject pertinent to the work of the Conference.

As announced at our last plenary meeting, we shall today take up the draft decision submitted by the Group of 21 concerning the establishment of an ad hoc committee on item 3 of the agenda of the Conference. That draft decision has been circulated as document CD/515/Rev.3 and is on the table today. As I informed you at that plenary meeting, once the list of speakers is exhausted, I shall convene an informal meeting of the Conference to consider that document. After that, we shall resume our plenary meeting to take up again the draft mandate proposed by the Group of 21.

I have on my list of speakers for today, the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic. I now give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mr. Ali Akbar Velayati.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran): The world is moving towards arms proliferation and arsenal expansion with accelerated speed. The arms race has been extended from land, sea and air to outer space, which can lead to the extinction of humanity. In the current state of affairs, the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body sheds rays of hopes to prevent the "doomsday scenarios" from happening. The existence of the risk is enough; for the worst only needs to happen once. This is why I am delighted to be here among you once again today to rehearse the information on the issues together.

As a country of great strategic significance, the Islamic Republic of Iran is not only under constant and direct threat from conventional and chemical weapons, but also faces the perils of nuclear weapons indirectly. As a result, we accord special importance to the deliberations and endeavours of

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the Conference. The continued and wide-scale use of chemical and toxic weapons by Iraq at a time when negotiations on a new convention on chemical weapons are under way has drawn our attention to the items being discussed in this Conference.

You should recently have been informed about the terrifying reports coming from the Iranian city of Sardasht, which seem to have numbed us with their repetition. The residential areas in this city were subjected to the most brutal chemical bombardments, causing the death of hundreds of innocent people. This was not the first time that Iran was subjected to chemical weapons attack and it was not the first time that civilian areas and residential quarters were targets of chemical assault. But this was the first time that a city in its totality was poisoned by the Iraqi forces. The use of chemical arms was so vast that even several days later, when the United Nations specialists despatched to the area arrived in the city, the afflicted areas were still highly contaminated. A number of wounded inhabitants are still in European hospitals. I strongly urge you who are directly involved in important negotiations on the new chemical weapons convention to visit these patients and see for yourselves the dreadful effects of these destructive weapons. Among the injured there are individuals who were witnesses to the loss of members of their families while they themselves were chemically afflicted. I am confident that observing such crimes will contribute to the redoubling of your efforts and the reaching of definite and final agreement on a chemical weapons convention.

Despite achievements being made in these talks which have made an agreement closer at hand, the non-compliance with the present instruments reveals grim prospects for the future. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 may be more primitive than the present convention and of less complexity than the present deliberations. The undertakings of countries have, however, given sufficient strength to the Protocol. In the meantime, it has not set concrete measures for verification, compliance or use, which constitute the main part of the new convention. Yet the confirmed use of chemical weapons by Iraq shows vividly that verification can be successfully conducted. But, in the absence of firm political will, prevention of the use of chemical weapons -- which is definitely less complex than prevention of production, development and stockpiling of these weapons -- will not be possible.

We are formulating and preparing a convention in the Conference whose application will in the end depend on the activities of other organs of the United Nations, including the Security Council. It is, therefore, proper to pose the question whether the Council has been able to reflect the necessary capability and political will vis-à-vis the confirmed reports of the use of chemical weapons. The answer is axiomatic. If the Security Council has been faced with political considerations as regards the repeated violation of the Geneva Protocol by Iraq and has not been able to take effective measures, it is evident that no decisive decision can be expected of this body as regards assuring compliance with the provisions of the new convention.

In the latest report of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Security Council, it is declared that "technically there is little more that

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we can do that is likely to assist the United Nations in its efforts to prevent the use of chemical weapons in the present conflict. In our view, only concerted efforts at the political level can be effective in ensuring that all the signatories of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 abide by their deliberations and obligations. Otherwise, if the Protocol is irreparably weakened after 60 years of general international respect, this may lead, in the future, to the world facing the spectre of the threat of biological weapons". We can therefore conclude that there is no technical obstacle to a political decision.

The Security Council, in response to this important report, issued a statement on 14 May 1987 which contained nothing more than the statement of 21 March 1986. The Council knew well that the previous statements not only did not prevent Iraq from repeating such barbaric acts but, rather, encouraged Iraq to violate the Protocol more flagrantly and freely. In fact, following the 1986 statement, Iraq celebrated 1987 by generalizing the use of chemical weapons to civilians. The toothless statement of 14 May 1987 proved that the Security Council substantially lacks the capability for "concerted efforts at the political level", despite the open request of the Secretary-General. And the prevailing political atmosphere has prevented the Council from taking any fundamental position, let alone any just decision. We warned the international community at the time that such compromising and weak moves would embolden Iraq to intensify its crimes and we desperately regret that it so happened.

The Iraqi chemical attack on the city of Sardasht was without precedent in the history of contemporary wars. The name of Sardasht should castigate the consciousness of mankind along with the names of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the first city in history whose inhabitants were massacred by poisonous gases. Encyclopedias and history books should record the name of this innocent city as a shame on humanity. Yet the Security Council remained motionless and submissive and, even worse than that, discouraged the Secretary-General from any future action or initiative.

The Iraqi régime, in a bid to justify its crimes, has announced that it will halt its violation of international law only if the war is ended. Ironically enough, the United States, which had previously condemned the use of chemical weapons by Iraq, has now gone so far in supporting Iraq that it even prevents the Council from discussing the subject and receiving the technical report on the genocide of the people of Sardasht. In other words, the United States is condoning deployment of chemical weapons in the war and justifies its control only in peace time. The countries having clear stances on the issue in the past are now following the United States policy, due to their bilateral political considerations.

While the NATO alliance considers a nuclear attack in retaliation to a chemical assault on cities possible, how can this indifference vis-à-vis the Sardasht catastrophe be interpreted? Do not claim that the Council has not ignored the fact and has condemned the use of poisonous gases in its latest resolution. This has been the third consecutive year that such a showcase position has been repeated while the Iraqi crimes are constantly increasing.

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The Council has not only refrained from concerted efforts at the political level; it has not even made a binding call to Iraq to end its chemical attacks. It is evident that the weak positions of the Security Council have given carte blanche to Iraq to perpetuate its illegal and inhuman crimes.

It may be argued that these issues are irrelevant to the deliberations of the Conference on Disarmament, but that is not so. What I have just stated is an important matter dealing directly with the fate of the activities of this Conference on this subject. I hereby call on the representatives of all countries, particularly those of the permanent members of the Security Council, to pose this question to the representatives at the United Nations, and I quote, "Will the Council have the same approach towards non-compliance with and violation of the new convention?" If that is so, another régime must be worked out to guarantee the implementation of the provisions of the convention, particularly in the field of preventing the use of chemical weapons. If the Council is faced with certain political considerations vis-à-vis naked violations by Iraq, you should rest assured that the same results will be derived from new endeavours and it will be discredited in the same manner as the Geneva Protocol.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is constantly and strongly calling for an effective international régime for compliance with provisions on the use of chemical weapons. Concerted, all-out action for strengthening the present Protocol is a necessary prerequisite for fortifying the new convention. The theoretical views on verification and prevention should be accompanied by practical experiences of violation of the Geneva Protocol by Iraq. We have started compiling these experiences and we hope that we will be able to provide this Conference with the results at a convenient time.

The efforts of the Conference in the field of chemical disarmament are noteworthy. The decisions of the Conference regarding the convention on prohibition of the deployment, development, production and possession of chemical weapons will be a litmus test of how far the Conference has been successful in carrying out its obligations. The plans proposed by various countries regarding the new convention reflect the comprehension by delegations of the urgency and importance attached to the subject.

One of the positive elements in the draft convention is the destruction of the present world arsenals of chemical weapons. We believe that the expressed concerns regarding the prolongation of the time-limit for the destruction of all chemical weapons are justifiable because, during the 10-year period proposed, the possibility of the use of such weapons will continue to exist. Therefore it is advisable that the Conference should consider the reduction of this time-limit to the shortest possible and that during this period of time all the stockpiles should come under international supervision.

In the meantime, progress in the formulation of the chemical weapons convention should not prevent us from progress in other areas of disarmament. If the use of chemical weapons has given an incentive to expedite

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deliberations on the banning of chemical weapons, we hope that the international organizations will not wait for the same experience to move towards nuclear disarmament.

Technological and scientific advancements pave the way for new military theories, and this by itself is a starting point for new scientific development causing revision in military strategies. The gap between technological progress and military doctrines constantly neutralizes the disarmament measures and leads to quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons. This is at a time when the threat of accidental nuclear war remains unchecked.

On the other hand, possession of nuclear weapons by Israel and South Africa intensifies this peril. If the present trend continues unabated, then other countries inevitably will resort to nuclear weapons to guarantee their own security and, in a short while, any political or military tension will be a recipe for nuclear confrontation. Despite all the warnings and concern about the consequences, the world has on many occasions been dragged to the verge of a nuclear war and catastrophe. The amount of nuclear weapons present in the world is sufficient to annihilate the world several times over. Yet the lunatic arms race is continuing unabated and, on the other hand, the talks on nuclear disarmament between two major nuclear-weapon States are proceeding very slowly. Since between 1 and 2 per cent of the nuclear arsenals is enough to erase civilization from the face of the globe, disarmament by less than 95 per cent will not be effective. The nuclear-weapon States, therefore, shoulder a very heavy responsibility to arrive at the earliest possible agreement for comprehensive nuclear disarmament. The prerequisite for moving towards this goal is denunciation of nuclear deterrence through a balance of terror. The means of destruction of human civilization should not serve as a guarantee of national security. The constructive proposal to eliminate nuclear weapons by the year 2000 has not yet been translated into practical terms. The pledge of some nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any condition has not received the consent of all parties although it by itself is not sufficient. Under these circumstances, we hope that scrapping medium-range missiles from Europe and Asia will be a first effective step towards universal disarmament.

We are of the opinion that a ban on nuclear tests is among the agenda items which should receive high priority. The continuation of nuclear tests has not only intensified the nuclear arms race but has also imperilled human life. The studies show that, should nuclear tests continue till the year 2000, the resultant radiation will cause the early deaths of 150,000 people in the world, of whom over 90 per cent will be from the northern hemisphere.

Regarding the pledge of nuclear-weapon States not to threaten to use or use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, although the most effective guarantee is a total ban on the use of nuclear weapons, the nuclear-weapon States should meanwhile announce their adherence to this decision through internationally-binding commitments. We hope that the ad hoc Committee dealing with this subject will be able to reach tangible results.

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The unabated nuclear arms race has gained momentum in such a way that it is going to contaminate outer space soon. It seems that the whole globe is not vast enough for the super-Powers to fill it with terror. Outer space is the common heritage of mankind and using it for any other than peaceful purposes is a crime against mankind. The development of space weapons has complicated the race qualitatively and has entangled the trend of nuclear disarmament with more complexity and problems. We believe that strengthening the legal régime for outer space can prevent the escalation of the arms race in new domains.

There is nothing to substantiate the claim that military satellites have a stabilizing role. If the presence of reconnaissance satellites is necessary in space, this can only be acceptable under strict international observance pending comprehensive disarmament. It is unfortunate to say that no sizable progress has been made in any of these areas. I hope that, by finalizing the convention on chemical disarmament the Conference will be able to gain momentum towards solving other disarmament issues.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his statement. I now give the floor to the next speaker on my list, the representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Tellalov.

Mr. TELLALOV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, since I have the floor for the first time under your presidency, I wish to express the deep satisfaction of my delegation in seeing you perform in such a successful manner the important duties of President of our Conference. The relations between our two countries are those of traditional friendship and close co-operation. It is also my personal pleasure to have the opportunity to work with you once again and to benefit from your vast professional experience, which you display anew in guiding so skilfully and efficiently our work during the month of July. I wish also to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Alfarargi of Egypt, for his able chairing of our meetings during the first month of the summer session.

The Conference has been honoured today by the presence of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati. We have listened with interest to his statement.

We shall be missing our colleagues who intend soon to leave, or who have already left the Conference, Ambassador Cromartie of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Dhanapala of Sri Lanka and Ambassador Tonwe of Nigeria. We wish them every success in their important new appointments.

Today I wish to speak only on two items of our agenda, "Negative security assurances" and "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

As you know, Bulgaria has always considered the security of non-nuclear-weapon States in the nuclear age as an important matter. My delegation is also co-ordinator of the socialist countries on this agenda item. Those countries have repeatedly reaffirmed their interest in advancing

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the consideration of this subject. It is so because we believe that the need to strengthen the security of non-nuclear-weapon States in the present circumstances has not decreased. Some negative developments have underlined the urgency of arriving at international arrangements to effectively, uniformly and, possibly unconditionally assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We believe, therefore, that the Ad hoc Committee on item 6, working under the chairmanship of Ambassador von Stülpnagel of the Federal Republic of Germany, should not give up its efforts to find a meaningful common solution of the problem -- a solution which is acceptable to all and could be vested in an international instrument of a legally-binding character.

In the Ad hoc Committee, my delegation has pointed out that various specific measures may be useful in seeking to increase the security of non-nuclear-weapon States:

Non-use of nuclear weapons in general would best serve this purpose. The CD has been requested to start the elaboration of an international legal instrument to exclude the use of nuclear weapons;

Pledging of non-first use by all nuclear-weapon States, not by China and the Soviet Union only. Such undertakings would have an important confidence-building effect;

Regional security arrangements, either unilateral or multilateral, providing for non-use assurances to States parties to agreements on nuclear-weapon-free zones. The Tlatelolco Treaty and the Treaty of Rarotonga now appear as two major elements of a future network of such arrangements that have been opted for by many non-nuclear-weapon States in various regions of the world. My country has, as you know, been actively pursuing this goal in the Balkans. One week ago, Bulgaria and Greece adopted at top political level a joint document aimed at undertaking practical actions to establish a Balkan nuclear-free zone. They appealed to all Balkan countries to take part in this process and expressed their determination to make bilateral contributions to this effect. We strongly favour also the conclusion of an international instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States having no nuclear weapons on their territories against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

This "global approach" to the negative security assurances problem has been discussed for several years already in the Ad hoc Committee on item 6, still inconclusively. We regret that those States which practise a policy of nuclear deterrence based on first use of nuclear weapons have not yet deemed it proper to re-examine their position -- a fact which has appeared as a major obstacle to completion of the negotiations. We recognize, however, that there have been some -- perhaps still academic -- attempts to rethink the security perceptions of at least some of those States. Suggestions to this effect have recently been made by representatives of various schools of strategic thinking. We look forward to seeing appropriate formal actions at State level reflecting the growing need for fresh political and military approaches to urgent security problems. Such a doctrinal reassessment may help also this forum to arrive at a common solution on negative security

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assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. In the search for a solution to the NSA problem, priority should be given to the legitimate security concerns of the non-nuclear-weapon States, which, by virtue of forgoing the nuclear option and of not allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on their territories, have every right to be most effectively guaranteed against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. They do deserve this, since there is no way such States can become a source of nuclear threat to other nations.

The socialist countries believe that the Ad hoc Committee on item 6 should try to solve the difficult problems relating to the substance of the negative security assurances. It is our firm conviction that a fresh approach is really needed if we are to find a meaningful solution. Recent developments in international politics provide a reliable basis on which to seek for and arrive at such an approach. I will confine myself to mentioning the important political understanding between the Soviet Union and the United States of America that "a nuclear war can not be won and must never be fought", which should have positive impact on the subject of negative security assurances as well; the non-first use tendencies at doctrinal level which are slowly becoming a standard prerequisite of strictly defensive military postures; the positive results of the Stockholm Conference in building confidence between European States; the Berlin document on the military doctrine of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. All these developments may encourage us to explore new ways and means to resolve the problem of effectively and uniformly assuring, in a legally-binding way, non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

An interesting new proposal has been tabled in document CD/768 by the delegation of Nigeria. My delegation has extensively commented on it in the Ad hoc Committee and will continue to take part in its future consideration. We concur with the basic thrust of this proposal seeking to find a way out of the present impasse and put the NSA problem back on the negotiating table. The Ad hoc Committee will, however, need some time before being able to reach a common solution which would be in line with the non-proliferation commitments of many of the States represented in this Chamber and could be submitted to the next United Nations special session on disarmament.

The Ad hoc Committee on item 5 has been discussing the subject of prevention of an arms race in outer space for three consecutive years. This session it is working under the chairmanship of Ambassador Pugliese of Italy. In spite of the efforts of many delegations to move us closer to some kind of agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the current proceedings of the Ad hoc Committee are widely perceived as repetitious in many respects of the Committee's work last year. The decreased intensity of the Committee's deliberations might well be indicative of an already exhausted and apparently inadequate mandate. What we need now, and maybe next year, is more concrete, purpose-oriented and structured work on this item, with the eventual identification of points of convergence in the positions. Elaboration of specific treaty language and mutually agreed definitions on areas of generally recognized interest could well be the most logical next step in our work. The proposals put forward would be a natural focal point in this respect.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

A subject which already seems ripe for concerted action is an agreement on an ASAT ban. The existing legal régime for outer space places some important restraints on the nature, deployment and possible use of such weapons. These restraints do not seem, however, to be comprehensive enough. Non-nuclear ASAT weapons, for instance, could well be developed and deployed in outer space despite the established legal restraints.

We consider that there are available, at least currently, two important prerequisites conducive to concrete negotiation and early conclusion of an ASAT ban agreement. Firstly, the two leading space powers now observe an actual moratorium on testing and deployment of such weapons. Secondly, the majority of the countries today favour an early agreement to ban all dedicated ASAT weapons and dismantle the existing ones. Many CD delegations have already tabled specific proposals on how to achieve such a ban.

Appropriate measures, designed also to produce a confidence-building effect, could lead us to the accomplishment of this objective. Ensuring the immunity of satellites and, possibly, their associated ground stations, for example, may be viewed as an important step towards attaining an ASAT ban in a more comprehensive and realistic manner. Such an agreement could take care of the need to prevent development, testing and deployment of new dedicated ASAT weapon systems and to eliminate the existing ones. There could also be a prohibition of the use of force against space objects. Such a provision would have the merit of outlawing interference with the normal functioning of space objects by systems which usually serve other purposes but could, in principle, be used in an ASAT mode. This would address the problem of the so-called dual-capability space weapon systems.

The view has been expressed in the Ad hoc Committee on item 5 that the problem of dual-capability systems might present certain difficulties in banning all dedicated ASAT systems. Such apprehensions do not seem, however, to be justified. There are ways to overcome possible difficulties in this respect. The key criterion to be used, for example, in assessing the actual capability of a system to be a militarily significant ASAT weapon could be the testing of such systems. Opponents of a CTB have insistently tried to convince us that nuclear testing is of immense importance for ensuring the military significance and reliability of new weapons designs. If we are expected to believe such an argument regarding the CTB, I fail to see why we should have to believe otherwise in the ASAT context. To be reliable, a space system meant to perform ASAT functions should be tested extensively enough in such a mode. Given the existing monitoring capabilities of each side, these tests cannot remain hidden. Thus, militarily significant ASAT systems would inevitably be known to the other side, something that would facilitate verification of the ban on them.

Another reservation with respect to the suggested agreement on satellite immunity contends that, under Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations, space objects are already protected against use of force. We do not recognize the importance of the Charter in international law. A careful consideration of Article 2, paragraph 4, in its entirety would, however, reveal that its provisions actually prohibit the use of force against

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the territorial integrity and political independence of States. It seems very hard to imagine how the specific case of outer space -- this common heritage of mankind -- could reasonably be linked with the notion of "territorial integrity and political independence of States". A more feasible alternative is the elaboration of a special agreement to provide immunity for satellites, which would specifically complement and enhance the general provisions of the Charter.

In my statement of 2 April this year, I dwelt in detail upon a valuable idea relevant to all measures providing for the non-introduction of weapons into outer space. I refer to the Soviet proposal of 3 February 1987 to establish an international inspectorate for the purpose of verifying such agreements. The concrete elements of this proposal deserve very careful consideration. The suggested team of international inspectors could serve to monitor the implementation both of an ASAT ban and of a comprehensive prohibition of the deployment of any other type of space weapons. The Ad hoc Committee should, in our opinion, take up the proposal seriously and examine, in practical terms, its specific provisions.

All the Ad hoc Committees are entering now that final stage of their proceedings in which delegations will start considering the respective reports. We hope that these reports will reflect some progress reached during the current session. My delegation believes that such a development could lay the ground for even more productive work in the following session of the Conference, which may well be the last one before the next special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to myself and my country. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Rose.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, to begin with, I would like to congratulate you very warmly on the assumption of the presidency of our Conference for the month of July. It gives me satisfaction to see this important office entrusted to the representative of a country with which the German Democratic Republic enjoys deep friendship and close co-operation. We have already benefited from the valuable service you are rendering to the Conference thanks to the many years of experience and your diplomatic skill.

My delegation welcomes the presence at our Conference of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We listened with great attention to his important statement.

I regret very much, Mr. President, that your predecessor, Ambassador Alfarargi, will leave the Conference. I take this opportunity to thank him once again very sincerely for his work as President of this forum and for his friendly way of co-operating with my delegation. I wish him good luck and all the best for his future activities. That is exactly what I wish also to our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Tonwe of Nigeria. My delegation is also sorry that Ambassador Cromartie will no longer be present

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

at the Conference. I wish him good health and I shall always remember him in particular for his dedicated work as Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I take great pleasure in welcoming in our midst a good old friend, Ambassador Rodrigo of Sri Lanka. I am certain that the excellent relations existing between our two delegations will be maintained under his ambassadorship.

Today I would like to make some observations on item 5 of our agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". But, before I come to that, let me comment briefly on the most recent developments regarding the envisaged elimination of medium-range and operative-tactical missiles.

All relevant statements at this Conference have made it clear that we are well aware of the far-reaching implications an accord between the USSR and the United States in that area would have for the entire disarmament process and the strengthening of international security. Everyone is agreed about that. The German Democratic Republic believes the successful conclusion of the negotiations currently under way would literally constitute the key with which the door to disarmament can be opened wide. The impact on the work of the Conference would unquestionably be a positive one, since the mere commencement of the negotiations brought about a significant improvement in the political climate.

A few days ago, General Secretary Gorbachev granted an interview to the Indonesian newspaper Merdeka, in which he presented a new offer aimed at giving a fresh impetus to the negotiations and bringing them closer to a conclusion. The Soviet Union is totally renouncing medium-range and operative-tactical missiles, based on the concept of the double-zero option. Given reciprocity, it will, therefore, no longer insist on retaining 100 warheads for medium-range forces in its Asian territory, as was agreed in Reykjavik. Thus, it does appear comprehensible that the Soviet Union expects the United States not to increase its nuclear presence in certain regions of Asia. It is up to the other side now to remove the remaining stumbling blocks obstructing progress in the bilateral negotiations. And this would have to include the destruction of United States warheads for Pershing-1A missiles.

In making this new proposal, the USSR has met the wishes of Asian nations. At the same time, it has drawn our attention to the need for, and the concrete possibilities of, promoting disarmament security and confidence in the Asian and Pacific region. Obviously, this is of special interest to the countries in that part of our planet. The very discussion about the global double-zero option has, however, seen all sides stress the worldwide dimension of disarmament and security. That is why my delegation welcomes all relevant efforts not only in Europe, but also in other parts of the globe.

Let me come back now to item 5. In a few months, it will be 30 years since the signals of Sputnik 1 were first received, signals which ushered in the space age. The striving to put weapons in outer space and to create regional SDI offshoots is today casting shadows over the prospects space is holding out in terms of peaceful uses. There is not much time left to ensure, through international agreements, the exclusively peaceful use of outer space including the immunity and protection of satellites.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

The Ad hoc Committee on Outer Space, under the able leadership of Ambassador Pugliese has been doing a useful job. A valuable set of ideas and proposals has been accumulated and a rather good basis has been laid for concrete, businesslike and goal-oriented work. To this end, working papers have been presented to the Conference on Disarmament by, for example, Italy (CD/9), the Soviet Union (CD/274 and CD/476), Canada (CD/678 and CD/716), Pakistan (CD/708) and Venezuela (CD/709/Rev.1). Item 3 of the Committee's work programme, entitled "Proposals and future initiatives on the prevention of an arms race in outer space", should really be used to conduct discussions and, later on, negotiations on appropriate measures.

In the course of the debate, various delegations have addressed the question of what a treaty banning ASAT weapons should look like and how the immunity of satellites could be ensured in a legally-binding manner. At the plenary session on 24 July 1986, my delegation described the principal elements which it felt ought to form part of a future treaty. Today, I intend to develop a number of ideas which concern the scope of a future accord, verification of compliance, and the relationship between a ban on ASAT systems and the peaceful use of outer space. In so doing, I will take into account suggestions and proposals put forward by various other delegations.

Even though the Committee has not been able so far to agree on the objects to be protected in outer space, it seems to us that a common denominator is emerging on what the envisaged treaty should cover. The assumption to proceed from, in this context, is that there are no weapons in outer space and that, consequently, all objects in space must be protected. Given this assumption, it should be within the scope of the treaty to:

- (a) ban the use of force against any space object;
- (b) prevent the deliberate destruction or damaging of space objects;
- (c) prohibit interference with the normal functioning of any space object;
- (d) proscribe the development, production or deployment of ASAT weapons;
- and (e) provide for the destruction under international control of any ASAT weapons that may already exist.

It ought to be possible on this basis to meet the concerns expressed by a number of delegations, which have said that it would be difficult to distinguish between dedicated and non-dedicated ASAT capabilities. "Rules of the road" or a "code of conduct" could find their place under the type of scope I have outlined just now. It goes without saying that all these things require in-depth study.

Ensuring compliance is undoubtedly one of the most crucial and thorniest problems. Various options would be conceivable individually or in combination:

- (a) broadening of information exchanges on trajectory parameters and functions of space objects;
- (b) use of national technical means of verification;
- (c) creation of a multilateral consultative mechanism complementary to other forms of consultation;
- (d) establishment of an international inspectorate provided with far-reaching powers, including the right to conduct stringent on-site challenge inspections.

The details of these measures and methods need to be worked out.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

In this connection, allow me to comment briefly on the role an international inspectorate could play. The USSR delegation has suggested the establishment of such an inspectorate for the purpose of verifying that no weapons are deployed in outer space. The proposed body should, for instance, have the right to conduct on-site inspections of all objects designed to be launched into and stationed in outer space. The creation of that inspectorate would also be of major importance for ascertaining compliance with a future ASAT accord. In fact, the inspectorate would serve to verify reliably the non-deployment of whole classes of possible ASAT weapons. With this Soviet proposal and the French suggestion that an international satellite monitoring agency be set up, plus Canada's PAXSAT concept, a full-fledged system of possible verification measures is shaping up. At this stage, it would seem desirable to probe its potential. Therefore, the Ad hoc Committee should have a closer look, in the near future, at all the issues related to that matter, preferably by enlisting the help of experts, who could function as a working group of the Committee.

In view of the above-mentioned possibilities, an international inspectorate would be quite capable of verifying the non-stationing of ASAT weapons in outer space. As for verification in regard to ground- and air-launched ASAT weapons, it may be a good idea to draw on the experience gathered also in other disarmament negotiation fora.

There is another aspect of broad importance for the verification of compliance with multilateral treaties. Their effective operation is in the interests of every signatory. It is against this background that my delegation believes it to be necessary to discuss how information on compliance, obtained by national technical means could be made available to all States parties, either directly or through a multilateral machinery.

We must seek not only to prohibit arms in outer space, but also to advance co-operation in peaceful research into and use of outer space. Any disarmament agreement will have to be a direct contribution to the strengthening of international collaboration. This very endeavour is behind the proposal the Soviet Union tabled on 10 June 1986 concerning the establishment of an international outer space agency, which could be placed in charge, among other things, of monitoring compliance with multilateral treaties. This idea was pursued further in the Soviet proposal that an international centre for joint space technology research for developing countries should be set up with the assistance of the leading space Powers.

There is no denying that an intrinsic interrelationship exists between the prevention of an arms race in outer space and its peaceful use by all peoples. We should always think of that in our practical work.

Nobody is overlooking the problems negotiations on the prohibition of ASAT weapons will be posing. To point them out is a legitimate thing to do. The time is ripe, however, to proceed to their solution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair and to my country. This concludes my list of speakers for today. Is there any other member who wishes to take the floor at this time? I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. FRIEDERSDORF (United States of America): Just a comment on Ambassador Rose's remarks: I appreciated his statement and found it very interesting, but I would just remind the Ambassador that the discussion of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces was a proposal that the United States tabled five or six years ago, and Chairman Gorbachev's recent acquiescence on that came after five or six years of deliberations. I would also point out that, as far as the Pershings are concerned, that is a matter for the Federal Republic of Germany. It involves their sovereignty, and not the United States and the Soviet Union.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States for his comments. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): I do not want to comment very extensively on the remarks just made by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, but it was always my understanding that the warheads of the Persing-1As are in the ownership of the United States. Maybe I am in error?

The PRESIDENT: I now give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. von STULPNAGE (Federal Republic of Germany): I wish just to remand the Conference that my delegation set out the view of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany on this question a few weeks ago.

The PRESIDENT: May I now turn to another subject? As announced at the opening of this plenary meeting, I intend to suspend this meeting and to convene an informal meeting of the Conference to deal with the proposal of the Group of 21 contained in document CD/515/Rev.3. Immediately after, we shall resume our plenary meeting to continue our discussion of that document. The plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 11.25 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: the 425th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

I now put before the Conference for decision document CD/515/Rev.3, submitted by the Group of 21 and entitled "Draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 3 of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament". I should like to know if there is any objection to the draft mandate.

I give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. NIEUWENHUYIS (Belgium) (translated from French): I wish to make a statement on behalf of the Western Group. The Western Group is somewhat disappointed to see draft mandate CD/515/Rev.3 proposed once again for decision by the Conference. That has been done without consultation with the Western Group, which cannot share the view that the submission of this draft mandate will facilitate discussion on this agenda item. It will come as no surprise, therefore, that we are once again unable to associate ourselves with a consensus on this draft mandate.

The Western Group attaches great importance to agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". For many years, we have repeatedly emphasized, both within this Conference and in the General Assembly, that we are ready to have an indepth discussion and exchange of views on this important issue. This year, too, we have shown ourselves willing to renew our efforts to define within this Conference an appropriate framework for indepth consideration of this agenda item.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that my Group attaches the greatest importance to concrete policies and actions aimed at preventing all war, including nuclear war. We share the view expressed by the leaders of the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in their joint communiqué of November 1985 concerning the importance of avoiding all war, nuclear or conventional, between them.

The PRESIDENT: Are there any further speakers? I give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. FAN GUOXIANG (China) (translated from Chinese): Prevention of nuclear war, an issue of universal concern to the peoples of all countries, has all along been placed on the agenda of this Conference as a priority item. For the past several years, delegations of all member States have on numerous occasions conducted discussions and consultations on the establishment of an ad hoc committee on this item. The Chinese delegation has all along been opposed to the nuclear arms race and attaches great importance to the issue of prevention of nuclear war. On many occasions the Chinese delegation has stated its positions and views on this issue and it has submitted its working paper, CD/691.

We maintain that the CD should intensify its work on this item, including through the establishment of a relevant subsidiary body. In our view, the Group of 21 has all along attached importance to this item and the draft

(Mr. Fan Guoxiang, China)

mandate submitted by this Group contained in document CD/515/Rev.3 is a rational one for which we express our support. Meanwhile, we can also agree to the CD carrying out its work on item 3 in other forms.

The PRESIDENT: I give the floor now the representative of Bulgaria.

Mr. TELLALOV (Bulgaria): As everybody knows, the Group of Socialist Countries considers the prevention of nuclear war an issue of the highest priority. We believe that concrete negotiations can, and should be undertaken to elaborate urgent measures to help prevent a nuclear war. The socialist countries have always maintained that this issue should be addressed in a comprehensive manner, considering all related matters. To this end, a number of specific proposals have been put forward by our Group and by members of the Group of 21. This underlines our firm belief that the solid bases for starting such negotiations do exist and an appropriate subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament should be established for this purpose. The Group of Socialist Countries fully supported the formal proposal for a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 3 of the agenda of the Conference as contained in document CD/515/Rev.3 of 21 July 1987 submitted by the Group of 21. The establishment of such a committee would have permitted the Conference to consider, as a first step, all proposals relevant to agenda item 3, including appropriate practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war. In a United Nations General Assembly resolution, A/RES/41/86 G, the overwhelming majority of the international community requested the Conference on Disarmament "to undertake, as a matter of the highest priority, negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures which could be negotiated and adopted individually for the prevention of nuclear war and to establish for that purpose an ad hoc committee on the subject at the beginning of its 1987 session".

I must reiterate the urgency of adopting measures on the prevention of nuclear war. The socialist countries firmly believe that, as was stated in the Berlin Declaration on the military doctrine of the Warsaw Treaty States in May this year, "in the nuclear and space age, the world has become too fragile a place for a war and politics of violence. ... A world war, notably a nuclear one, would have disastrous consequences not only for the countries directly involved in such a conflict, but for all life on Earth".

The Group of Socialist Countries will continue to accord priority to item 3 of our agenda and to insist on the establishment of an appropriate subsidiary body of the Conference to deal with it in concrete and practical terms. The draft mandate proposed by the Group of 21 is realistic and has taken into account other delegations' points of view. Thus, it could have represented a meaningful basis for productive joint work. Consequently, we regret all the more the unwillingness displayed by the Western delegations to join in the consensus and to allow the Conference on Disarmament to make its concrete contribution to the efforts in this area.

The PRESIDENT: We have listened to the representatives of the various groups on this topic. In view of the exchange of the views held at this plenary meeting, I have to state that there is no consensus at present on the draft mandate contained in document CD/515/Rev.3. Does any other member wish to take the floor at this stage?

Mr. TEJA (India): Mr. President, earlier this month, I had the occasion to congratulate you and to convey the assurances of our delegation's co-operation in the discharge of your responsibilities. Today, as this month draws towards an end, I would like to compliment you on the able and efficient manner in which you have conducted the work of the Conference during this month. Today, we have also had the privilege of listening to the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Ali Akbar Velayati.

We, the Group of 21, would like to express our deep regret at the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc committee on agenda item 3. We have shown ourselves ready to exchange views on this subject here, or in the General Assembly, but some delegations have been unable to accept this view, perhaps because they attach different priorities to this item.

I do not need to emphasize the importance that our Group attaches to this subject. We believe that the greatest peril facing the world is the threat of destruction from a nuclear war and that consequently the removal of this threat is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. While nuclear-weapon States possess the primary responsibility for avoiding nuclear war, all nations have a vital interest in the negotiation of measures for the prevention of nuclear war, in view of the catastrophic consequences that such a war would have for mankind. The Harare Declaration adopted at the eighth non-aligned summit also emphasized this point, and I quote: "use of nuclear weapons, besides being a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, would also be a crime against humanity. In this regard, [we urge] the nuclear-weapon States to agree, pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, to the conclusion of an international treaty on the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

It is a matter of grave concern for all delegations present here that no progress has been possible on this item since its introduction as a separate item on the CD's agenda in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/183 G. During these years the arms race has accelerated, leading to the expansion and introduction of still more lethal warheads into the nuclear weapon stockpiles. The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly requested the Conference on Disarmament to undertake, as a matter of the highest priority, negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on appropriate and practical measures for the prevention of nuclear war and to establish for that purpose an ad hoc committee on this subject.

During the 1986 session of the General Assembly, there were three resolutions on this subject, which were adopted with overwhelming majorities. Two of these resolutions, A/RES/41/60 F, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", and A/RES/41/86 G, entitled "Prevention of nuclear war", were introduced by members of the Group of 21.

I would like to recall here the results of recent atmospheric and biological studies which indicate that, in addition to blast, heat and radiation, a nuclear war, even a limited nuclear war, would trigger an arctic nuclear winter, freezing the Earth into a darkened frozen planet. The conclusions of the studies have already been compiled in a report by the Secretary-General. In view of the irreversible consequences, it is clear that

(Mr. Teja, India)

conventional wars cannot, under any circumstances, be equated with nuclear war, since nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction. In view of this unique destructive character, invoking the Charter to justify the use of nuclear weapons in the exercise of the right to self-defence against conventional armed attack is neither legitimate nor justifiable.

We remain convinced that the shortest way to the removal of the danger of nuclear war lies in the elimination of nuclear weapons and that, pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited. We have welcomed the declaration of President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev in November 1985 that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". Now is the time to translate this will into a binding commitment.

In deference to the position of the other delegations, the Group of 21 has put forward, in CD/515/Rev.3, dated 21 July 1987, a non-negotiating mandate that will permit a thorough consideration of all aspects -- legal, political, technical, military -- of all the proposals before the Conference. We believe that such consideration will not only contribute to a better understanding of the subject, but also pave the way for negotiations for an agreement on the prevention of nuclear war. Such an objective cannot be achieved through discussions in the plenary or informal meetings. We are disappointed, therefore, that, despite the urgency accorded to this subject and the flexibility displayed by the Group of 21, we are witness to the spectacle of the CD not being able to justify its own mandate, which comes from the General Assembly and is reflected in paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We would like to hope that the gravity of the matter will lead to a rethinking on the part of those who have expressed reservations concerning the mandate proposed by the Group of 21.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of India for his statement on behalf of the Group of 21.

Before I adjourn this plenary meeting, I should like to recall that the Ad hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances will meet in this conference room immediately after the adjournment of this plenary meeting.

In accordance with the timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference this week, I should also like to recall that, on Thursday, 30 July, immediately after our regular plenary meeting, we shall have an informal meeting to consider the report of the Chairman of the Group of 7 on "Improved and effective functioning of the Conference". That informal meeting will be followed immediately by an informal meeting devoted to the substance of agenda item 2 entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 30 July, at 10 a.m. This plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.