

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 14 April 1987, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. M. Vejvoda (Czechoslovakia)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 405th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In conformity with our programme of work, the Conference starts today its consideration of agenda item 7, entitled "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons". In accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, members wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

As the first part of the 1987 session of the Conference will come to a close at the end of this month, I should like to recall that the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its forty-first session decision 41/421, in which it recommends, with respect to work of the Conference on Disarmament on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament inter alia, "... that work on the elaboration of the programme be resumed at the beginning of the Conference's 1987 session for the purpose of completing that task during the first part of that session and submitting a complete draft of the programme to the General Assembly at that time". As we all know, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, Ambassador García Robles of Mexico, is exerting all efforts for an early completion of the draft programme. However, if we are to meet the request of the United Nations General Assembly and forward to it a complete draft Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament in accordance with decision 41/421, more active co-operation of delegations is needed. In that connection, it would be most desirable not to re-open questions which were agreed upon after many years of arduous negotiations.

I should like to inform members that, as announced at the 403rd plenary meeting of the Conference, I intend to put before the Conference for decision, at the end of this plenary meeting, the recommendation contained in paragraph 13 of the Progress Report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, which appears in document CD/745.

Also today I shall report to the Conference on the results of the consultations held on an appropriate organizational framework to deal with the substance of agenda item 2, entitled "Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament".

I have on my list of speakers for today, the representatives of the United Kingdom, Japan, Romania, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and France.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Cromartie.

Mr. CROMARTIE (United Kingdom): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to see you in the chair of our Conference as a close colleague of many years standing. You have been presiding over our work this month with your usual good humour and common sense. Since I did not have the opportunity last month, I should also like to thank Ambassador Lechuga Hevia for his sure touch in presiding over the Conference.

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I spoke at the beginning of this spring session in my capacity as outgoing Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have spoken so generously of my efforts in that capacity.

I wish today to range quite widely over the field of arms control and disarmament, especially in the light of my Prime Minister's recent visit to the Soviet Union.

Our approach in this field is incapsulated in the speech which Mrs. Thatcher made at a banquet in her honour in St. George's Halls in the Kremlin on 30 March. I have already circulated informally the full text of her speech, as well as her interview on Soviet television to all members of the Conference last week.

In the course of that speech, Mrs. Thatcher said, "It is because of the unity of the NATO Alliance and because of our hopes for greater security between East and West that we are ready to look for ways to achieve security at lower levels of armaments. I do not believe that it makes sense to try to achieve this in one leap. It makes better sense to approach it step by step, but we must always keep in mind the impact of each agreement on our overall security".

In the course of this speech, Mrs. Thatcher also explained clearly why the United Kingdom Government will not abandon the security provided by nuclear weapons. She said, "the fact is that nuclear weapons exist and the knowledge of how to make them cannot be erased. Conventional weapons have never been enough to deter war. Two World Wars showed us that. They also showed us how terrible a war fought even with conventional weapons can be, yet nuclear weapons have deterred not only nuclear war but conventional war in Europe as well. A world without nuclear weapons may be a dream but you cannot base a sure defence on dreams. Without far greater trust and confidence between East and West than exists at present, a world without nuclear weapons would be less stable and more dangerous for all of us".

It is sometimes suggested that we are too anxious about our security, and insufficiently confident in the good intentions of others. However, words alone cannot conjure away the facts. And the facts are that vast forces continue to be pointed firmly in our direction. These forces, conventional, chemical and nuclear, are far larger than could be justified for purely defensive purposes. And in addition, the record of the State concerned shows that it has been ready to use its armed might on weaker States when it thinks it is in its interests to do so. This situation is not likely to change quickly. It therefore remains only prudent that we should continue to rest our security on what we believe has guaranteed it successfully for the last 40 years or so.

Continued security is crucial. But we shall continue to pursue practical and realistic steps to move to lower levels of forces and armaments, both conventional, nuclear and chemical, including the elimination of whole categories of weapons where this is possible. Our approach is to focus on the

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areas where the two sides' positions converge, not on more distant visions whose impact on our security is doubtful. In such areas the prospects for real progress look better than ever. We were therefore pleased that during Mrs. Thatcher's visit to Moscow both sides agreed that progress requires a step by step approach with clear priorities. It was agreed that these priorities should include: an agreement on intermediate-range nuclear weapons, with strict verification, with constraints on shorter-range systems and immediate follow-on negotiations to deal more fully with shorter-range systems; a ban on all chemical weapons; early negotiations on reductions in conventional forces; and a 50-per-cent reduction in strategic nuclear weapons. There are, of course, still important areas where there are differing views. For example: we and our allies in NATO believe that we should have the right in any agreement on Long Range Intermediate Nuclear Forces to match certain Soviet shorter-range systems, in which they have an overwhelming superiority, and my Government is studying the latest Soviet proposals on this point. We also do not agree that 50-per-cent reductions in strategic nuclear weapons need be held hostage to the Strategic Defence Initiative.

In this respect, Mrs. Thatcher made proposals to Mr. Gorbachev for achieving greater predictability in the area of strategic defence, by agreeing a timetable spelling out the planned research programme of both parties, supported by a commitment not to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty for a fixed period. There were also differing views expressed on nuclear deterrence, which will have helped both sides to appreciate better the other's underlying security concerns. We note that the Soviet Union maintains a massive nuclear armoury presumably as a deterrent and still insists that moves to reduce it must be made multilaterally by agreement with the other side.

However, as Mrs. Thatcher said in her statement to the House of Commons on her return from Moscow, "I do not underestimate the differences which remain between us on these matters. But it was none the less clear from our talks that we do agree that progress on arms control requires a step-by-step approach with clearly identified priorities, and that we are largely in agreement on what those priorities shall be. This is a useful and positive step".

In addition, as Mrs. Thatcher stressed during her visit, the changes which the Soviet leadership have set in train internally are welcome to us. Increased openness, "restructuring", and democratization point the way to greater trust and confidence, which will improve the prospects for progress in arms control, as well as in other areas.

To turn now specifically to subjects under consideration in this Conference, I should like to start with that of chemical weapons on which the most progress has been made. We welcome the skill and vigour with which Ambassador Ekéus is pursuing his task as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. As he knows, he has the full support of my delegation and my own personal support in his work as Chairman. The same applies to the three Co-ordinators, Mr. Niewenhuis, Mr. Macedo and Dr. Krutzsch, in their

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systematic work. We appreciate the practical contribution that has been made in this field by the workshops held during this session in Finland and in the German Democratic Republic.

The United Kingdom has tabled as a contribution to the negotiations a series of papers on different aspects of the convention, several on the verification of non-production, one on the constitution of the organization that will need to be set up under the convention, and most recently on challenge inspection. The proposals tabled last July by the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr. Renton, for Article IX of the Treaty, remain firmly on the table. Mr. Gorbachev confirmed to Mrs. Thatcher during her visit to Moscow that the Soviet Union accepted broadly the British approach. We welcome the greater readiness the Soviet Union has shown in this area as in some others to consider effective verification. It is an important step down the road to building the confidence between States that must be fundamental for our convention.

Our work on verification has thrown into relief that further practical work remains to be done in other areas of the draft convention. In particular, we must resolve how to provide for effective administration of the convention. It is becoming clear that the organization to be set up under Article VIII will need to be effective from the moment the convention comes into force. It will need to provide inspectors immediately to conduct initial inspection and evaluation of declarations and to provide effective international monitoring of destruction of stocks and production facilities. Verification of certain sectors of the civil chemical industry under Article VI of the convention will also be required at an early stage. A trained corps of inspectors will be needed to conduct challenge inspection under Article IX. In addition the organization will have an important task of receiving and collating data reported by States Parties. It will be essential to have an effective organization in which all parties will have confidence. To achieve this aim we must consider now how it is to be recruited, trained, equipped and paid for.

Further work is needed on the régimes for the different schedules of substances under Article VI and their relation to the organization. A mechanism for revising schedules will also be essential.

Nor must we lose sight that if our convention is to be effective, it must be global. As the distinguished representative of the United States asked recently, we wonder why more countries have not stated whether or not they possess chemical weapons? My delegation has made its position clear on many occasions but we willingly do so again. The United Kingdom unilaterally abandoned its chemical warfare capability in the 1950s. We believe, as Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Gorbachev agreed in Moscow, that the conclusion of an effective chemical weapons convention is one of the top priorities.

Turning to the nuclear-test ban item, we are still regrettably in a situation where no practical work is being done in this Conference in an ad hoc committee. Among other things, this means that the technical papers which my delegation has tabled on the subject, the latest being CD/610, have

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not received full consideration. It now seems to be accepted, at least by the vast majority of members of the Conference, that the best way forward procedurally is a non-negotiating mandate which will allow work on outstanding problems with regard to verification and also of scope. The latter is equally crucial since in our view it is essential that a Comprehensive Test Ban should cover all nuclear explosions, whatever their declared purpose.

During the deadlock on the mandate of an ad hoc committee, we particularly welcome the valuable continuing contribution on seismic monitoring of the Ad Hoc Group of Seismic Experts, as well as the related activities sponsored by Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany. We look forward to the further Level II experiment, for which the way has now been cleared, and we hope that where possible countries from all groups in the Conference will participate in this important and practical work.

We also welcome the bilateral discussions going on concurrently between the United States and the Soviet Union on matters related to nuclear testing. We hope that these will soon be able to clear the way for progress on the apparent agreement at the Reykjavik Summit between the two sides to a step-by-step approach starting with ratification of the Threshold Test Ban Treaty and the Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another important item on the agenda of this Conference. We are glad that it has proved possible to establish an ad hoc committee on this subject for the third successive year, and earlier in our proceedings than ever before. We wish Ambassador Pugliese well in his task as Chairman. Once again, my delegation hopes to make a substantial contribution to the preparatory work of examining the legal, political, strategic and technical aspects of the question. We appreciate the practical contribution that the Canadian Government is making by organizing a workshop in Montreal in May.

One of the perennially difficult items on our agenda is radiological weapons. We are pleased that our consistent view that it is preferable to work separately on additional protection for peaceful nuclear facilities and on radiological weapons in a classical sense now seems to be generally accepted. This, of course, will not in itself solve the outstanding issues on either track, particularly the complex questions involved in the Protection of Nuclear Facilities. But we hope that under Ambassador Meiszter's skilful Chairmanship, it will be possible to make progress in a more coherent manner on both these important subjects.

The Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament is also a subject which has been with us for many years, but the hope must be that we are at last in the final stages of this marathon endeavour. We believe that given the good will and flexibility that is evident on all sides it should be possible to resolve the outstanding issues in a generally acceptable way. If so, the achievement will be a tribute to the persistence and patience of Ambassador García Robles.

The subject of the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which was inspired by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to

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disarmament, leads me on to that of the forthcoming third special session which is set for next year. We are looking forward to this session, and intend to make a positive and constructive contribution to its work. We believe that it will take place against a better international background, and in a more realistic and practical spirit than the second special session, which ended in failure. There is now much more common ground on subjects worthy of discussion, including conventional reductions, and on the principles to be applied including truly effective verification, and compliance.

Before the third special session, in fact later this year, the Conference on Disarmament and Development will be held. We hope that this Conference will give a realistic estimate of the issues involved, including the importance of increased regional security in order to reduce expenditure on armaments in the developing world itself.

I should like to mention one other event outside this Conference, but as always relevant to our efforts here. We have been most heartened by the work of the experts meeting set up by last September's Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference which is now drawing to a close. We hope that this will contribute towards the strengthening of confidence in the Biological Weapons Convention.

Mr. President, thanks to your efforts and to those of your two immediate predecessors, the Conference has got off to an excellent start this year. Looking ahead, in addition to what has already been achieved, we hope that the Ad Hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances will find a volunteer to act as Chairman, and we are ready to explore with him whether anything further can usefully be done about this item at the present time. We also hope that it will be possible to have informal plenary discussion of item 2 of our agenda and also this year on item 3. We recognize that this would not be an ideal solution for all, but it would at least allow some consideration of these items on our agenda.

As several previous speakers have already pointed out, the activities and agenda of this Conference will be reviewed at the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly. Of course, the Conference can only negotiate realistically on subjects where there is common ground. But at the same time, there are also items where practical work or some substantive discussion could also take place and we should seek an acceptable procedural way to make this possible. It is up to us to ensure that the remainder of this year's work makes a positive and practical contribution to the disarmament process.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Cromartie, for his statement and for the kind words expressed to the President. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Japan, Ambassador Yamada.

Mr. YAMADA (Japan): Mr. President, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference for the month of April. With your experience and skill, you will no doubt lead us to a successful conclusion of the spring session of the Conference. I wish also to take this

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opportunity to express our deep appreciation to Ambassador Fan Guoxiang of China and Ambassador Lechuga Hevia of Cuba for the excellent work they each performed during their respective tenures as President of the Conference.

Today, I would like to make a few observations on the Progress Report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events contained in Document CD/745, which is before us.

First, I wish to pay tribute to the Chairman of the Group, Dr. Ola Dahlman of Sweden, for the dedicated and superb work he has been performing to bring together the expertise of the seismological experts of the interested countries to provide the important scientific underpinning to our top priority item, namely agenda item 1, Nuclear Test Ban.

I was happy to learn from Dr. Dahlman's presentation on 2 April of the Progress Report that substantial progress has been made towards the design and testing of a modern seismic data exchange system.

It is particularly encouraging that the Ad Hoc Group has reached agreement in principle on the design, or the major components, of such a modern system -- a system which is based on the expeditious exchange of all available seismic information, both waveform and parameter data, for all detected signals, and the routine use of all data at international data centres.

As I understand from Dr. Dahlman's report, the Ad Hoc Group is to engage in working out the details of the modern seismic data exchange system, some of which involves the breaking of new grounds in seismology.

I am certain that my colleagues in the Conference on Disarmament share my hope that we will hear the fruitful outcome of the work of the scientific experts in this regard at the earliest possible date.

As we look forward with anticipation to the work of scientific experts, I wish to draw the attention of the Conference to a couple of important pointers which are already contained in the Progress Report of the Ad Hoc Group.

The Report states, "The Group agreed that the IDCs (International Data Centres) should be open facilities for participating States, providing free and easy access to any data and analysis results. It is important that the data base structure at IDCs allow participating States easy automatic access to and extraction of information".

I believe that this principle of openness and free and easy access constitutes a very important guideline as we engage ourselves in the task of building a modern international seismic data exchange system.

Speaking for my own country, this is also the basic principle which guides Japan's contribution to this worthy international undertaking.

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

We have attached particular importance to establishing and widening the network of co-operative national investigations into Level II or waveform data exchange. Since our proposal to this end in March 1986, we successfully obtained the participation of 16 countries in the exercise, and the investigations have been under way since last December. I am happy to report to the Conference that progress to date has been encouraging, thanks to the keen interest on the part of participating countries.

In the course of the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts last month, the Japanese expert, Dr. Suehiro, worked together with his colleagues from 18 countries covering the Western, Non-Aligned, Socialist and other Groups, to compile a report entitled "Progress of Co-operative National Investigations into Waveform Data Exchange", submitted to the Ad Hoc Group as Document GSE/JAPAN/26. In this connection, I wish to express my appreciation to the Canadian Government for having organized an informal workshop on data communication in October last year which played a valuable role in furthering our common work. Our thanks are also due to the Federal Republic of Germany which organized a useful and interesting demonstration of existing national facilities in the course of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Group.

As is mentioned in GSE/JAPAN/26, there are already clear and positive signs for further evolution and widening of these co-operative endeavours. A number of countries other than the present 16 have indicated that they will take part in the near future.

I welcome the prospect of wider participation in our undertaking, and wish at the same time to reiterate my delegation's hope that as many countries as possible will see fit to participate in these and similar exercises.

Another point of note in document CD/745 is the realistic approach taken with respect to the preparation for a large-scale experiment on the exchange of Level II data, which the Ad Hoc Group envisages carrying out in approximately 1988. Such a large-scale experiment provides an important target towards which the Ad Hoc Group can intensify and focus its work. At the same time, it is important that when the experiment takes place, it be carried out on the basis of careful planning through a series of preparatory experiments. I therefore fully support the stage-by-stage approach taken by the Ad Hoc Group, which will call initially for a number of bilateral and multilateral experiments. I feel certain that the co-operative investigations I mentioned earlier will play an important role as a part of such multilateral experiments.

In my intervention at the plenary meeting on 10 February, I stressed the high priority that my Government attaches to the realization of a comprehensive test ban and our ardent wish to see an early resumption of substantial work by the Conference on the issue. I feel compelled to express my disappointment at the inaction of the Conference on this item. I do not intend today to repeat the elaboration of the circumstances which, in my view, hold out prospects for recommencement this year of this long-suspended work. Let me simply state that the circumstances still hold, and that what we need is the collective will to make full use of them.

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

In the course of the past two months, a number of delegations have addressed this issue. Let us face the political realities surrounding the issue. Then we can fairly well anticipate what is feasible and what is not for the Conference to attain this year. Let us bear in mind that progress can be achieved only by substantial and practical work in the Ad Hoc Committee on the basis of what is now a widely shared perception of the subject matter, and not by the language of its mandate.

With this in mind, may I once again pledge the full co-operation of my delegation in the important work under agenda item 1.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished delegate of Japan, Ambassador Yamada, for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Romania, Ambassador Dolgu.

Mr. DOLGU (Romania) (translated from French): Comrade President, may I first of all join the previous speakers in expressing to you my warmest congratulations on the occasion of your accession to the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We are particularly gratified as you represent the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, a country with which the Socialist Republic of Romania traditionally maintains relations of friendship and co-operation in all areas. I am convinced that thanks to your intellectual abilities and diplomatic experience our work will develop very favourably in a period where new efforts are required on the part of one and all in order to ensure effective progress towards achieving specific and significant results. I should at the same time like to express our sincere appreciation and our warmest thanks to the distinguished Ambassador of Cuba, Ambassador Lechuga Hevia, for his remarkable efforts as President of the Conference in the month of March.

Two months ago I submitted in plenary of the Conference the overall views and proposals of the Romanian delegation regarding the problems on the agenda of this session.

Since then, new possibilities have opened up to forge a nuclear-free world. The USSR has expressed its readiness to attain an agreement on the problem of the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe separately from the other issues covered by the bilateral negotiation. Naturally, we have welcomed this decision -- all the more so since our country has always considered that the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe is a priority among priorities. A few days ago the USSR stated that it was ready to begin negotiations on shorter-range missiles in Europe. The dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States is continuing, and Mr. Schultz is now in Moscow. All these are indications leading us to believe that there is every ground to consider that, on the basis of the proposals of the Soviet Union as well as of the proposals submitted by the United States, there are real possibilities very soon to arrive at an agreement designed to settle this problem. As the distinguished representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador von Stülpnagel, stressed, "the early conclusion of an agreement would be a visible sign of the seriousness and credibility of the arms control efforts".

(Mr. Dolgu, Romania)

Since Reykjavik many views have been expressed on such an agreement. One of them relates to the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons. As far as we are concerned I would like to state that we very much doubt that effect. After the accident at Chernobyl, the fact that the use of nuclear weapons by anyone at all leads to results that are unacceptable to all, including the party that resorted to them, has become more self-evident than ever. In such conditions, what credibility can nuclear weapons have as a deterrent? We believe that the problems of security require a new approach and options that exclude the nuclear factor. The elimination of nuclear weapons seem to us both necessary and possible. In this connection the year 2000, close as it may be, is certainly not Utopia. In keeping with the security interests of all countries, it objectively represents a realistic goal.

Nuclear disarmament can only be achieved stage by stage, while of course respecting the security interests of all States. But in our view, for a real nuclear disarmament process to begin, the measures adopted should lead not only to the reduction of armaments in one particular area but at the same time to the reduction of nuclear arsenals as a whole, with the purpose of their complete elimination. If a certain class of weapons is reduced or eliminated but at the same time the level of arsenals in another area is increased, the result can only be to maintain or even to heighten the level of nuclear confrontation. This is why we should not lose sight of the goal of ensuring the military balance at the lowest possible level.

On the basis of these considerations I feel compelled to say once again that we can see no justification for the continuation of nuclear testing. Neither verification of the reliability of existing weapons, nor their further improvement, nor the development of new types and systems of weapons, a subject to which I shall be reverting later, can be valid arguments. The institution of a general moratorium, with the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of an international treaty for a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, is a priority and extremely urgent objective.

On the basis of these considerations, I should like to stress, above all, the regret, indeed the disappointment, of my delegation regarding the situation of the discussions concerning the ad hoc committee on a nuclear-test-ban. We do not believe that a precise negotiating mandate should be a sine qua non condition for the creation of a structure which could provide the framework for substantive discussions. By the same token, we are unable to share the view that we should confine the substantive problems to be considered to a few specific aspects. In our view, the recognized interlinkage of the work of the Conference with other negotiations has nothing to do with these limitations; as the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the disarmament field, the Conference has the right -- indeed the duty -- to consider and negotiate on all aspects of the problem of the nuclear-test ban or any other issue on its agenda.

With regard to agenda items 2 and 3, nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war, the Romanian delegation believes that, in view of the current situation, efforts to reach agreement on certain work structures and the consideration of substantive questions in their entire complexity should be continued.

(Mr. Dolgu, Romania)

Previous speakers, particularly the distinguished representatives of the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany, have stressed that to eliminate the danger of nuclear war we should act at the same time to prevent any war, even a conventional war, which in current circumstances would be much more devastating than the Second World War. This is a truth that need not be demonstrated -- particularly as it is on European territory that both world wars were unleashed and it is in Europe that the two opposing military blocs are face to face, and where we find the greatest concentration of destructive arsenals. The reduction of conventional arsenals is a problem of crucial importance for the security of the continent, in terms both of the reduction of the dangers of confrontation and sources of tension and distrust, as well as of the very process of nuclear disarmament.

The alternative to this reduction could only be the transfer of the arms race into the conventional area in both quantitative and qualitative terms. It is precisely for this reason that Romania, President Nicolae Ceaușescu, are in favour of a comprehensive and global approach to disarmament issues so that along with the reduction of nuclear arsenals, the stage by stage reduction of conventional armaments should also be considered, as well as the establishment of a timetable for the dismantling of military bases and the withdrawal of troops from foreign territory, the reduction of military bloc activities and their simultaneous dismantling, and the renunciation of large-scale military manoeuvres at the frontiers of other States or in international waters.

I should like to refer briefly to agenda item 5, that is, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In this area too differing views are expressed regarding all sorts of issues: what is a space weapon? When did the militarization of space begin? Which country is most advanced in any particular area? Are the new space weapons offensive or defensive? Do they have a destabilizing effect? And so forth. Undoubtedly these issues are important, and experts must deal with them. In our view, however, there are two vital issues: the first is whether we want the arms race to spread into outer space, and whether we want it to be stepped up on Earth. The second is whether we want space to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, as the common heritage of mankind. We believe that if we truly want the efforts of our States to lead to a peaceful world we should reply in the negative to the first question and in the affirmative to the second.

Is it reasonable for us to expect such an answer to these questions? This in itself is a difficult question. Difficult because so far there has been absolutely not a single new possibility opened up by the progress of science and technology which has not been used for military purposes. It seems logical to conclude that once they have become possible, the development and the deployment of space weapons will thereby become inevitable, but we do not share this fatalistic reasoning. Indeed, we do not share the view that the development of space weapons would be a tool or the tool for the elimination of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, such action would rather stimulate the arms race in outer space and on Earth.

(Mr. Dolgu, Romania)

We do not share this fatalistic outlook because our experience is in itself a reason for optimism. I am thinking of the fact that bacteriological weapons have been banned and we hope to succeed in banning chemical weapons and that most if not all States, and particularly the Soviet Union and the United States accept the idea that nuclear weapons should be banned. Why then should we not try and break the vicious circle of the arms race with all its sequel of extremely harmful consequences for peace, for growth and for development. Why should we not try to take a short cut by banning this new class of weapons -- space weapons -- before they are developed, before they jeopardize the security, indeed the very existence of each of our countries, before they swallow up vast resources which are so vitally needed today in order to carry out the transition to a new civilization, a civilization based on other technological foundations, on other consumption models, on other forms of behaviour in respect of the environment. Countries which have neither the means nor the ambition to become space Powers cannot remain indifferent to the absolutely catastrophic consequences of this new arms race. In our increasingly interdependent world, its effects will be felt by all peoples, whether large and powerful or small and weak.

The ongoing negotiations show how difficult it is to rid ourselves of chemical weapons and of nuclear weapons. Why leave our successors the difficult legacy of trying to rid themselves of these weapons which in a few decades will have turned the heavens into a real hell. It is infinitely easier, from the technical and political standpoint, to ban something that does not yet exist than something that does exist and is perceived as a threat. This is the very central idea which the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should take as the basis for its work. This also applies to the entire concept of new weapons of mass destruction, including radiological weapons.

As far as the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes is concerned, it is high time for us to begin to discuss this issue in practical terms, similarly to the way in which the law of the sea was discussed. A great philosopher said that mankind only poses itself problems that it is perfectly capable of resolving. This is now the case of space. The USSR and the United States are great space Powers. Other countries have or are acquiring appropriate means, whereas the great majority of countries remain outside the entire competition for space. Are we going to resign ourselves to the idea that the history of the conquest of space by mankind should pass through a period of colonial empires? No, I don't think so. The world is no longer what it was a century ago. States are aware of the stakes and of their security and economic interests as well. They are interested in the uses of space and they should have something to say on the subject as of now. In this spirit, may I reiterate Romania's proposals to prepare an international treaty on the use of space for exclusively peaceful purposes as well as the creation of an international body entrusted with ensuring the implementation of this goal. It is essential to lay all the necessary legal groundwork so that there should be absolutely no room for doubt that outer space falls within the common heritage of mankind, a heritage which should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and consequently protected from any military competition. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of the Arms Race in Outer Space, whose

(Mr. Dolgu, Romania)

work has begun under the Chairmanship of the distinguished Ambassador of Italy, Ambassador Pugliese, is called upon to make an effective contribution to the achievement of this objective of undoubted importance and urgency.

As far as the prohibition of chemical weapons is concerned, like many other delegations we have also welcomed the new positions expressed by the Soviet delegation in the statements of 24 November 1986, 17 February 1987 and 5 March 1987, intended to contribute to finding solutions to certain crucial problems: the declaration of chemical weapons stocks, and their verification, the non-production of chemical weapons by civilian industry, and international on-site inspection including challenge inspection. We also welcome the new measures recently announced by the Soviet Union, particularly the cessation of the production of chemical weapons and the beginning of the construction of a facility for the destruction of stocks. These are important steps which should help confidence-building and facilitate the conclusion of the convention.

We consider that, on the basis of results achieved in the intersessional period, the new proposals which I have mentioned and the willingness of all delegations, remarkable results have been achieved, particularly in the first part of the session. Thus thanks to the personal qualities and the dedication of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Ekéus of Sweden, and the Group Co-ordinators, Mr. Nieuwenhys, Mr. Macedo and Dr. Krutzsch, and through the contributions of delegations, sizeable progress has been achieved in the drafting of article IV and its annex regarding chemical weapon stocks, as well as in the clarification of certain elements of article VI and its annexes on non-production of chemical weapons in civilian industry, and article VIII on the Consultative Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

It will be most important to get the green light from our capitals at the earliest possible time for mutual acceptable solutions to problems which have not yet been settled. Equally important is the duty to refrain from any action which at this stage could complicate or slow down the pace of the negotiations and the reaching of agreement on essential substantive elements regarding the draft convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

It would not be reasonable to ask States to give up their security interests. But it is legitimate to demand that certain perceptions of these interests and of how to guarantee them should be given up. If we do not agree as early as possible on the need to take a new approach to security problems, we may arrive at other agreements, undoubtedly useful for the international climate, but we shall not be able to avert the deadly danger weighing upon mankind.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Romania for his statement and for the kind words expressed to the President and to my country. 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): The delegation of the USSR to the Conference on Disarmament has provided the secretariat with the text of the foreign policy section of the statement made by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Mr. Gorbachev, in Prague on 10 April, for it to be issued as an official Conference document. Today it is my intention to introduce that document.

When speaking in the capital of our ally, socialist Czechoslovakia, at the very geographical centre of Europe, the Soviet leader touched on a wide range of issues, both domestic and international, including questions relating to the deepening of interaction among the socialist countries on the basis of equality and mutual responsibility. He also dwelt in detail on the need to develop broad co-operation in Europe on the widest range of issues.

The statement also contains a frank and critical analysis of our domestic problems, omissions and failures. Having noted that the ultimate objective of restructuring in the Soviet Union is to ensure a better life for Soviet people and firmly to establish higher standards of social organization and social justice, Mr. Gorbachev emphasized that the furthering of socialist democracy is the motive force which will ensure such restructuring.

I am drawing your attention to this because the foreign policy of the Soviet State is inseparably linked to and proceeds from its domestic policy and an objective observer cannot but note that link. The very rapid process of democratization and openness now under way in our country is reflected in an increasingly active peaceful foreign policy and in new initiatives intended to find solutions to the intricate military and political problems which have accumulated in the post-war years, and I noted with pleasure the understanding of the process and the positive attitude expressed to it in the statement we heard from the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Cromartie, when summing up the results of Prime Minister Thatcher's visit to our country.

In his statements, General Secretary Gorbachev clearly outlined the position of the Soviet Union on some of the most urgent issues of limiting the arms race, confidence-building and developing co-operation. He also made important new proposals, including proposals relating to matters on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. Today there is not a single issue where the socialist countries are on the defensive: they are on the offensive for peace and comprehensive security.

The Soviet Union is convinced that a nuclear war can be prevented and the threat of war can be reduced. This conviction stems from the increased realization in the world of the fatal consequences a nuclear conflict would have, as well as from the opportunities emerging in Reykjavik. The Soviet Union is continuing to strive to seek solutions on the whole interrelated set of nuclear disarmament issues. Of course, it is the two Powers possessing the largest arsenal of nuclear arms, i.e. the Soviet Union and the United States, which should give impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament and get this process away from a standstill.

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In reaffirming its readiness to take the most decisive steps -- a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive arms over five years and their total elimination over 10 years (provided, naturally, that the ABM treaty is strictly complied with and that there is no arms race in outer space) -- the Soviet Union, as we know, recently proposed that an agreement on medium-range missiles should be negotiated and agreed on separately and signed without delay. Of the nuclear disarmament problems, this is the closest to a solution. The solution depends above all on the readiness of the United States and its allies to reach agreement.

Now the Soviet Union is taking an important new step: it is proposing that, to facilitate the conclusion of an agreement on medium-range missiles, talks should be started on radical reductions in and total elimination of shorter-range missiles (with a range of 500 to 1,000 kilometres) in Europe without any linkage to the outcome of the talks on medium-range missiles. For the duration of the negotiations, the sides would undertake not to build up such missiles.

After the signing of an agreement on medium-range missiles, and regardless of progress in discussions on the shorter-range missiles, the Soviet Union, in agreement with Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic, would withdraw its missiles stationed in those countries -- which were stationed there as a counter-measure to the deployment of Pershing 2 and cruise missiles.

Nuclear disarmament is one of the central items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. Unfortunately, our work in this area is not progressing. The reasons for this, which stem from the positions of a number of member States of the Conference, are well known and we have pointed them out. We hope that our new proposals in the bilateral field will have a stimulating effect on the consideration of these matters in the Conference on Disarmament as well and will induce it to get to grips with the problem on which mankind's survival depends.

Frequently, including here in the Conference on Disarmament, we hear allegations that it is impossible to achieve a radical breakthrough on the question of nuclear disarmament due to the absence of a solution on the problem of verification, resulting from the alleged unwillingness of the Soviet Union to accept far-reaching verification measures. This is far from being the case. The Soviet Union's position on verification was again explained in the Prague statement made by Mr. Gorbachev. Once again the world can see that on questions of verification, the Soviet Union is prepared to go as far as is necessary to find a solution.

The participants in the Conference are aware of our concrete proposals on verification of compliance with future agreements on the prohibition of chemical weapons, on the cessation of nuclear tests, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as on other matters. Our concept of verification encompasses the whole spectrum of arms and armed forces. Needless to say, the Soviet Union pays due attention to other States' proposals on verification, and participates in the joint elaboration of the

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most effective forms of verification. I repeat that we regard verification as an essential component of effective agreements, if it is a question of the real limitation, reduction and elimination of arms, armed forces or military activity.

Since, according to the new Soviet proposals, we are talking about the elimination of whole classes of nuclear arms in Europe, questions of verification of compliance with future agreements take on a qualitatively new meaning. The Soviet Union favours the strictest measures in this field. Appropriate verification, including on-site inspection, must cover the missiles and launchers remaining after the cuts, both in combat service and at all other facilities -- test ranges, manufacturing plants, training centres, etc. Inspectors should also have access to military bases in third countries. One would think that the proposals of the Soviet Union on verification measures, with regard to reductions in nuclear weapons, could also be used in solving verification problems in the multilateral negotiations on item 2 of the Conference's agenda. The Soviet Union has consistently favoured the beginning of such negotiations.

In his statement, General Secretary Gorbachev advanced ideas which are important in terms of finding a mutually acceptable approach to the problem of preventing a nuclear war which is, of course, item 3 of our agenda. The Soviet Union believes that in Europe even a "conventional" war would be devastating, not only because of the much more destructive nature of conventional weapons as compared with the past, but also because in Europe there are about 200 nuclear power stations and a widespread network of chemical plants, the destruction of which would render this continent unfit for living.

In view of all this, and wishing to avert the threat of a military catastrophe in Europe, the Soviet Union proposes that the situation be changed drastically by adopting measures to reduce and eventually to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons and to radically reduce armed forces and conventional arms in order to preclude the possibility of surprise attack. An important step in this direction would be to implement the Budapest programme of the Warsaw Treaty countries adopted on 11 June last year.

We are in favour of discussing questions of disarmament in Europe within the framework of the CSCE process. The Soviet Union is now raising the question of convening a meeting in Vienna of all Foreign Ministers of the States participating in the Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe in order to decide on the initiation of negotiations aimed at radically reducing tactical nuclear weapons, armed forces and armaments in Europe.

In doing this, we wish to remove the inequality which has developed in certain components of the armed forces, not through increases by the side that is lagging behind, but through reductions by the side that is ahead.

We see the process of lowering the military balance in Europe as a step-by-step process, with equilibrium maintained at a level of reasonable adequacy, with international verification and on-site inspection, as well as with an exchange of data on armed forces and arms.

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The objectives of strengthening European security would also be enhanced by a measure such as the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free corridor in central Europe, and the Soviet Union supports the appeal addressed by the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia to the Federal Republic of Germany on the subject, and would be ready to withdraw on a reciprocal basis all its nuclear systems from such a corridor and guarantee its status. The implementation of the proposals by Bulgaria, Romania and Greece on a nuclear and chemical weapon-free zone in the Balkans would be of great importance.

We believe that in the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons the necessary prerequisites have been created to allow us this very year to find solutions to outstanding issues and to draw up an international convention on the subject.

The Soviet Union regards the speedy finalization of negotiations on a general and complete ban on chemical weapons as one of the main objectives of its foreign policy. On this basis, the Soviet Union has recently presented a number of important major initiatives with a view to establishing the necessary conditions to accelerate and intensify negotiations on the convention.

In his Prague statement, General Secretary Gorbachev announced new practical steps on the part of my country in this direction. The Soviet Union has ceased production of chemical weapons. The Soviet Union does not have any chemical weapons outside its borders. Construction of a special facility for the destruction of chemical-weapon stocks has begun in the Soviet Union. The commissioning of this facility will allow the rapid implementation of the process of chemical disarmament once the international convention was concluded. Here I would like to thank the distinguished representative of Romania, Ambassador Dolgu, for the high appreciation he expressed today of the steps we have taken.

In making such steps, the Soviet Union proceeds from the firm assumption that the chemical weapons convention will be ready for signature in 1987. This, naturally, requires that States must begin now to take practical measures to prepare for the implementation of the obligation they will take upon themselves as parties to the future convention.

As with other measures for real disarmament, the Soviet Union is seeking to establish the most stringent system of verification, including international verification, regarding the elimination of chemical weapons and the industrial base for their manufacture. On the basis of such an approach, we are prepared to look for mutually acceptable solutions to questions related to compliance with the convention by all parties and to confidence-building among them. I note with satisfaction the positive attitude of the United Kingdom towards our steps in the area of effective verification of compliance with the future convention.

I wish to emphasize once again that the Soviet Union, which is consistently in favour of the speedy elaboration of the convention this very year, will continue to do its utmost to achieve decisive progress towards

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agreement on the elimination of chemical arsenals. Now it is up to the United States and the NATO countries to show their political will, realism and high sense of responsibility. Then this year, 1987, would see the commencement of general and complete chemical disarmament.

These are the comments our delegation wished to put forward in connection with the distribution in the Conference on Disarmament of the foreign policy section of the statement of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, which contained important new proposals on the limitation of the arms race, disarmament and confidence-building.

In conclusion, in connection with the statement made by Ambassador Cromartie of the United Kingdom on the results of Mrs. Thatcher's visit to the Soviet Union, I would like to state that we agree with the assessment of the importance of the talks which took place in Moscow. They are of major significance both for bilateral relations and the international level. In the new conditions developing in Europe and throughout the world, we saw a continuation of dialogue with a major Western Power and permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. This dialogue allowed for a frank statement of views on relations between States with different social systems, on regional conflicts and on other important problems and -- something which is especially topical -- on the prospects for disarmament. There was an in-depth comparison of the positions and clarification of the intentions of both parties.

The negotiations showed that both sides recognized the importance of solving the issue of medium-range missiles, although the United Kingdom still has reservations on the approach to agreement. I noted today that Ambassador Cromartie informed us that in London they are still continuing their study of our new proposals. Both sides, during the negotiations in Moscow, expressed their readiness to eliminate chemical weapons and to reduce military confrontation in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals and to expand the Helsinki process and promote the settlement of regional conflict by political means.

On the cardinal issues of international development there remain disagreements in principle. We saw confirmation of the Soviet leadership's thorough disagreement with the position according to which the conduct of international affairs and national security can only be conceived in terms of reliance on nuclear weapons, although this encourages their development and is fraught with the danger of universal disaster. We cannot accept the argument that we need to maintain nuclear weapons, the so-called nuclear deterrent, forever. We heard no convincing reasons in favour of this. Indeed, we cannot base our foreign policy on dreams; we agree with this, but it can and must be based on boldness. Our view of the future is a non-nuclear, non-violent world, a world without obsolete stereotypes, a world built on confidence and trust. This was directly put to Mrs. Thatcher, with supporting arguments in the talks in Moscow. The main point is to work towards this world through practical action; of course, step by step, but we must never lose sight of the main aim. This resolve, this approach, was demonstrated yet again quite recently, the other day in fact, by the statement made by General Secretary Gorbachev in Prague.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement, and I now give the floor to the last speaker on my list, the distinguished representative of France, Ambassador Morel.

Mr. MOREL (France) (translated from French): Speaking as Co-ordinator for Outer Space of the group of Western countries, I wish to reply to remarks which were directed at this group during our last plenary session on Thursday, 9 April, about the mandate and the programme of work of the Ad Hoc Committee on our agenda item 5.

I wish at the outset to state that we do not want to prolong an argument about the word "measures", which can only have a negative influence on the quality of our substantive work, but since the Western position on the subject was described as inexplicable, I shall repeat here what you all know.

Firstly we have no objection to the consideration, in the course of our work, of proposals for measures relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Secondly, we find no difficulty with the word itself, and we have been the first to underline that it can be found more than a dozen times in the relevant part of last year's report of the Conference.

Thirdly, the Western group has agreed, on the occasion of the adoption of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee for 1987, to confirm that, as was the case in 1986, the consideration of proposals for measures relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space was part of the work of the Committee.

Bearing this in mind, therefore, if there is to be a debate on the subject, and we hope this will not be the case, it can only concern the place to be given to such "measures" in our work. There are, on this question, perfectly explicable and legitimate differences which should, however, not prevent us from proceeding with our discussions. We do not have a common final position on the subject at the Conference. Our sole concern, as the Western group, has been to avoid prejudging the question.

It has, moreover, been suggested, in respect of the programme of work of the Ad Hoc Committee on item 5, that use has been made of a procedure to obstruct our work on the substance. We do not share this view; each group has submitted a draft programme of work. We do not believe that this type of comment is likely to facilitate the progress of our work, which is now based on a practical and concrete programme.

Finally, we wonder whether it is appropriate to refer here publicly to the informal exchanges which led to the drawing up of the single resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly. Likewise, is it appropriate thus to question the outstanding work of a delegation, the Italian delegation, which played a special part in the consultations leading towards this resolution.

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As has been noted, we are indeed referring to another forum, that of the United Nations. Need I recall that the conditions in which consultations are conducted in the First Committee are different from those obtaining here? In New York there is no group which entrusts a co-ordinator with presenting a position defined by the group. There are only delegations which show goodwill and try to bring different viewpoints closer with a view to producing resolutions that enjoy the broadest possible measure of support from the international community.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his statement, and that concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor? I see none.

At the beginning of this plenary I announced that I intend to put before the Conference for decision the recommendation contained in paragraph 13 of the Progress Report on the twenty-third session of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. By that recommendation the Ad Hoc Group suggests that its next session should be convened from 27 July to 7 August 1987 and takes note of the information received from the secretariat concerning the availability of conference services. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the recommendation contained in paragraph 13 of document CD/745.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I now turn to another subject? At the opening of this plenary meeting, I already informed you that I should report to you today on the results of the consultations on the question of how to proceed on agenda item 2. I am now informed that some delegations would like to have more time available before the actual convening of the meeting which I planned, as you know, tentatively for next Thursday. This being the case, I will propose the new dates of informal meetings as soon as possible. I am going to continue my consultations with representatives of groups and still hope to be able to find a mutually acceptable approach to the organization of such a meeting. I firmly believe that it is high time to make some steps on deliberations on the most important items of our agenda, namely the nuclear ones. I also wish to inform the Conference that the consultations concerning the establishment of an informal group to begin work on the subject of the improved and effective functioning of the Conference have proceeded successfully, and I believe that we are now in a position to convene that Group as soon as possible. The Group of 21 has nominated Ambassador García Robles of Mexico, and Ambassador Teja of India; the socialist group has appointed Ambassador Meiszter of Hungary and Ambassador Nazarkin of the USSR. Ambassador Fan Guoxiang of China will also be a member of the Group. As regards the Western group, I shall invite Ambassador Beesley of Canada and Ambassador Butler of Australia for the beginning of the activities of the group. I should also like to note that many members have indicated that it would be desirable for the small group to report on the progress of this work, approximately every six weeks, to an

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informal meeting of the Conference. We shall proceed as suggested. The members of the small group will be informed shortly concerning the convening of their first meeting.

Before I adjourn I would again like to ask if any representative wishes to take the floor. The distinguished delegate of the German Democratic Republic has the floor.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Comrade President, I have listened very carefully to your announcement referring to item 2 of our agenda. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the hope of my delegation that work on this item can start very shortly, and I would like to encourage you in making every effort to come to a solution of outstanding problems and to find an agreement very soon. I appreciate very much the efforts you have made up to now to find a solution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic and I wish to assure him that I shall continue my consultations with groups. The first agenda item of my consultation with the co-ordinators will be agenda item 2 tomorrow afternoon. Does any other representative want to take the floor? As there is no further business for today, I intend now to adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 16 April, at 10.00 a.m. The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.