

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 11 February 1988 at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Harald Rose (German Democratic Republic)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 439th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

In accordance with its programme of work, the Conference will continue to listen to statements in plenary meetings, as well as considering the establishment of subsidiary bodies on items of the agenda and other organizational questions.

However, in conformity with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I should like to inform you that we have received additional requests for participation in the work of the Conference from non-members. I understand also that consultations have been successfully concluded on the appointment of chairpersons for the remaining ad hoc committees re-established at the opening of the annual session. Accordingly, I shall convene an informal meeting today to examine these questions.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representative of Cuba, Ambassador Lechuga Hevia, and I now give him the floor.

Mr. LECHUGA HEVIA (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. First of all we should like to express our satisfaction at the fact that you are presiding over the Conference at the beginning of the session, when it is crucial to be guided by a skilful diplomat devoted to the cause of peace and disarmament such as yourself. We are particularly pleased because you represent a country with which mine maintains the best relations in all fields, a country committed to ameliorating the international climate so that we may all live in an atmosphere of peace.

To Ambassador Morel, your predecessor, we should like to extend our gratitude for the effort he made during his presidency, and we take this opportunity to greet the new members of the Conference with whom we hope to enjoy fruitful working relations: Ambassadors de Montigny of Canada, Elaraby of Egypt, Azikiwe of Nigeria, Solesby of the United Kingdom and Sujka of Poland, whom we also wish success in chairing the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

We should like to extend our condolences to the distinguished delegation of the United Kingdom for the loss of Ambassador Cromartie, whom we all remember for his kindness and for his labours at the close of his life in the Committee on Chemical Weapons.

This year the conference begins its work in a situation different from years past, as it is obvious that a gap has opened in the thick wall which precluded all negotiations in the field of disarmament. The agreement signed in Washington by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the President of the United States is an historic landmark which will shine into the future to foster other disarmament agreements, and will contribute to the relaxation of international tension which led us to embark on a dialogue on stony soil, soil which was almost completely barren in every respect.

(Mr. Lechuga Hevia, Cuba)

As a result of the agreement reached at the summit meeting between the two major nuclear Powers to eliminate a class of weapons, and not simply draw up measures for their control, as had been the case up to then, there is no doubt that a dynamic situation has developed which points towards other arrangements that will expand on the steps taken, which, although very important, may be considered limited if compared with the total size of nuclear arsenals.

A promising sign of that dynamism is the agreement in principle between the Soviet Union and the United States to negotiate a 50 per cent reduction in strategic nuclear arms, and the reference made to the interrelationship between that reduction and the United States' controversial Strategic Defence Initiative, which requires that both parties should comply strictly with the provisions of the ABM Treaty and that there should be no withdrawal from it, which, along with negotiations under way in the Conference on Disarmament on a convention to put an end to the manufacture of chemical weapons and destroy their stockpiles, forms a negotiating process which we must stimulate at all costs and most resolutely so that what has been done so far should not remain a mere isolated achievement, but rather a brilliant flash in the darkness which surrounds us.

Though a variety of factors have undoubtedly played a role, I think it should be emphasized that the progress made, and especially the warm atmosphere which is beginning to be formed in international relations, is due to a large extent to the perseverance and flexibility of the Soviet Union in leaving the confrontation of recent years behind and seeking common ground for understanding, and also to the failure of the policy of adventurism and domination, the failure of that outdated "cold war" policy which, as we can see every day, is irretrievably in tatters.

Of course, the prospects which are opening up should not lead us to a state of lethargy, because there are still many obstacles to complete disarmament, which is the goal we have set ourselves: the elimination of all nuclear weapons. What has already been achieved bilaterally, and what is being negotiated for the near future, are stages which must be completed in multilateral bodies, in other words with the participation of all States, as we all have an interest in peace, we are all affected by the policy of confrontation, we are all adversely affected by the unbridled arms race, and most particularly of course the developing countries, the countries which today, owing to the profound crisis in the world economy, are truly in a process of underdevelopment.

It is for this reason of great clarity and great fairness that the agenda of the vast majority of countries on all continents includes the question of disarmament and development, the reduction of the mad waste of resources of all kinds on the manufacture of armaments in order to devote resources to the well-being of peoples. This is something which for us is intimately and inextricably linked to the process of disarmament.

It is this common interest of mankind in disarmament, in the dismantling of militarist policies, which makes it necessary to strengthen and encourage multilateral negotiations, and this depends solely and exclusively on what has been called political will to promote negotiations in these forums, and

(Mr. Lechuqa Hevia, Cuba)

especially in this Conference. It is clear that if we compare what can be obtained bilaterally with the lack of results at the Conference on Disarmament, we can see that there is an intent to leave the multilateral arena aside, to exclude the rest of the international community from the negotiations, the aim of paralysing or destroying multilateral diplomacy, because what can be negotiated and accepted bilaterally can be negotiated and accepted multilaterally.

We are convinced that it would be in the interests of one and all for bilateral and multilateral negotiations to complement each other, not to be mutually exclusive, for the negotiations to take account of general interests, the interests of all, and for all of us to contribute to solutions, enrich discussions, all contribute ideas and initiatives for a better and more stable solution to the problems that are being tackled.

We have been gratified to see how special attention is being given to the improvement of the Conference on Disarmament and the effectiveness of its negotiating machinery. The six heads of State and government who met recently in Stockholm declared that the Conference should be strengthened, and a document has been circulated which was adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty member States proposing practical measures for the greater effectiveness of the Conference. Let us hope that all the member States represented here will evince the same concern for the smooth running of multilateral bodies.

Opportunities will not be lacking. In fact they already exist. Our programme of work contains such items of major importance and urgency as chemical weapons, the cessation of nuclear tests and the militarization of outer space. There is no reason why the treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons should not be completed this year. It is a measure which international public opinion has been clamouring for, and substantial progress has been made in the Ad hoc Committee, though important matters remain pending for satisfactory completion of the negotiations, as set out in the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee, which we were indeed not able to improve upon, despite the majority opinion of the Conference. This situation is further complicated by the decision of the United States to begin to manufacture binary weapons in the very middle of negotiations, an action which obviously complicates the process further. A happy conclusion of negotiations this year will offer proof of the sincerity of the approach to the question of disarmament, of whether words - propaganda - and deeds follow the same path.

A halt once and for all to nuclear test explosions, which is a key topic in the Conference and constitutes perhaps the greatest aspiration today of almost the entire world, because of what it would mean for stopping the arms race, is another proof of sincerity on which world attention has been focused. How is it possible to reject the opportunity to arrive at an arrangement on a matter of such dimensions to promote a climate of peace and trust? The Ambassador of Sweden, Mrs. Theorin, correctly described the continuation of nuclear tests as a "sinister message" for the world. And in truth, how dismal and grim the message is in view of what it entails as a nuclear threat for mankind!

(Mr. Lechuga Hevia, Cuba)

The demand for an end to nuclear test explosions is universal. A genuine expression of that clamour is the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the item to which Ambassador García Robles referred as the most important amongst those adopted by the Assembly. That resolution, adopted by an overwhelming majority of the Member States of the United Nations, appeals to all members of the Conference on Disarmament to promote the establishment by the Conference of an ad hoc committee with the objective of carrying out the multilateral negotiation of a treaty on the complete cessation of nuclear test explosions. Will we achieve that objective? Let us hope so. Let us hope that some of those who talk about disarmament and peace are sincere in their pronouncements.

There is another resolution of the General Assembly which refers to another crucial aspect of our work, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We know that military programmes for outer space constitute a serious hindrance to disarmament agreements, a new threat for the future, for the survival of mankind. The Assembly declared itself "gravely concerned at the danger posed to all mankind by an arms race in outer space and, in particular, by the impending threat of the exacerbation of the current state of insecurity by developments that could further undermine international peace and security and retard the pursuit of general and complete disarmament".

That assertion cannot be gainsaid, and no subterfuge can conceal it. Outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, and should not be the arena for an arms race, as the same resolution states, and as is obvious. Hence, by majority agreement of the Assembly, this Conference has been requested to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. It is a challenge we cannot shirk, a duty we must fulfil as effectively and as practically as we can.

A danger we bear in mind is that of partial solutions, that agreements may be sought which do not encompass the whole problem, because that would constitute deception and foster illusions among the public without meeting their legitimate aspirations. We are referring here in particular to the convention on chemical weapons and the halting of nuclear test explosions, two items which have reached the stage where comprehensive agreements can be concluded. On these items we must stand firm, because there are no valid reasons to accept incomplete agreements. What we do must at least involve formal commitments that in the near future definitive solutions will be arrived at.

The latest developments in the international arena, as we have said, open up a chapter of hope for all, a breath of fresh air in our situation of anguish, and we must continue struggling to make that hope a reality. Hence it is not idle to quote the following from the recent Stockholm Declaration:

"All States have the responsibility to uphold the rule of law in international relations. Respect for its basic principles is a fundamental prerequisite for creating a just and stable world order and for making disarmament possible.

(Mr. Lechuga Hevia, Cuba)

"These principles are being trampled upon at this very moment. International disputes are more and more dealt with through resort to force. The dangerous delusion that might is right is, particularly in the nuclear age, one of the most threatening features of our world."

This is a reality we are all aware of, and consequently, despite what has been achieved recently in the ongoing negotiations, the struggle for peace and development, which are inextricably linked, must continue unflinchingly.

The Co-ordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries will be meeting soon, in Havana, at the ministerial level, to consider the current international situation in the light of the disarmament negotiations and issue a statement including conclusions that will guide the member States of the Movement, which constitute the majority of the world's countries, in actions to be undertaken in the multilateral field.

In a few months, too, the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will be held, which will have to give a decisive stimulus to the measures proposed in the plan of action of the first special session, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of the second session, since it is not possible to fragment these efforts by the United Nations because they constitute a single process in the same way as the bilateral and multilateral disarmament negotiations. In this supreme and difficult cause of peace for a world free of threats, the Conference on Disarmament will have to play a cardinal role.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair and to my country. That concludes my list of speakers for today. I understand that Ambassador Pugliese, the representative of Italy, has asked for the floor, and I give him the floor.

Mr. PUGLIESE (Italy): Mr. President, as I am taking the floor for the first time under your presidency, I would like to wish you every success in the discharge of your important responsibilities. I am confident that under your able guidance the Conference will enjoy a good start to its 1988 session and will make substantial progress. My thanks are also due to your predecessor, Ambassador Morel, for the outstanding manner in which he steered the work of the Conference in August 1987 and the inter-sessional period. Allow me also to extend a warm welcome to the new representatives who have joined the Conference on Disarmament since last August - Ambassador Marchand of Canada, Ambassador Elaraby of Egypt, Ambassador Nasser of Iran, Ambassador Azikiwe of Nigeria, Ambassador Sujka of Poland and Ambassador Solesby of the United Kingdom.

Today I would like to make some remarks on behalf of the group of Western countries, on the occasion of the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons for the 1988 session of the Conference on Disarmament.

It remains a matter of high priority to the Western Group that an effective, verifiable and comprehensive convention on a global ban on chemical weapons be concluded as soon as possible. Thus we note with satisfaction the progress which was achieved during the inter-sessional period.

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

We thought it would be helpful as we resume our work to address briefly some of the remaining issues. It is the view of the Western Group that our work in the upcoming months should concentrate on many yet unresolved issues in our negotiations. These issues are encompassed within such broad categories as non-production, institutional issues, challenge inspection, and destruction of chemical weapons and their production facilities. Vigorous efforts are needed and we must address these issues, working to take into account national concerns and to resolve differences through serious debate.

For example, progress has been made on non-production over the past months. We believe work should continue to elaborate the régime and schedules [1], [2] and [3] of article VI as well as the procedure for amending them. In doing so we should be guided by the consideration that we need to arrive at solutions which are at the same time practicable and effective. We must also work toward a solution to the question sometimes referred to as schedule [4]. Furthermore, we consider it necessary to review the verification of non-production as a whole. The régime in article VI should, while taking due account of legitimate economic interests, raise to the highest possible level confidence among States parties that there is no production for chemical weapons purposes.

On institutional questions, the work on article VIII dealing with the international organization to be established for the implementation of the Convention has resulted in a new version of article VIII in the "rolling text". This provides a basis for further work on this aspect of the Convention, and more detailed work needs to be done with regard to the powers, functions and interrelationship of the various organs of the international organization, including their composition. We will also need to address the expense of administering the Convention and a formula for allocating those costs.

On challenge inspections, the consultations carried out in this field have been helpful. The paper on this issue prepared by the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Ekéus, which appears as appendix II of document CD/795, provides a basis for developing a challenge inspection régime.

On the destruction of chemical weapons, useful work has been done on article IV. However, one question which will require particular attention in coming weeks is the order of destruction of chemical weapons. A solution to this issue must be consistent with the requirement that the security of all States parties should remain undiminished during the entire destruction period.

Another significant security concern that will have to be addressed is the potential problem of chemical-weapon-capable States remaining outside the Convention.

In addition to these four examples, other important issues also need to be resolved, such as multilateral data exchange. While some work has been done on assistance, economic and technical development during the inter-sessional period, further discussion on these issues should continue with a view to developing realistic formulations which are consistent with the basic thrust of the Convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Italy for his statement and for the kind words he expressed to the Chair. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I see none.

As announced at the opening of this plenary meeting, I intend now to suspend it and to convene an informal meeting of the Conference to deal with requests for participation from non-members and the appointment of the remaining chairpersons of the ad hoc committees re-established at the opening of the 1988 session. The plenary meeting is suspended.

The meeting was suspended at 10.35 a.m. and resumed at 10.40 a.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 439th plenary meeting of the Conference is resumed.

We shall now proceed to formalize the agreements reached at the informal meeting.

I put first before the Conference for decision working papers CD/WP.320 and 321 concerning requests for participation in the work of the Conference from Bangladesh and Turkey. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Conference agrees to the draft decisions.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: We shall now turn to the appointment of chairpersons for the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons and the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. I invite the Conference to decide on the appointment of Ambassador Dimitar Kostov of Bulgaria as Chairperson of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons. May I take it that the Conference so agrees?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like now to put before the Conference the appointment of Ambassador Tessa Solesby of the United Kingdom as Chairperson of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. I take it that the Conference agrees to her appointment?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to extend to Ambassadors Solesby and Kostov the congratulations of the Conference on their important appointments as well as our best wishes for success in discharging the important responsibilities assigned to them.

In the next few days the secretariat will issue the timetable for the coming meetings of the plenary and the Ad hoc Committees, once the newly appointed chairpersons have concluded their consultations concerning the work of their subsidiary bodies.

Before adjourning, I should like to make the following announcements:

(The President)

The Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament will hold its first meeting this afternoon at 3 p.m. in this Conference Room.

I have been asked by the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons to announce that the first meeting of the Committee will be held tomorrow, Friday 12 February at 11 a.m. in Conference Room III. He also informs me that, in principle, the programme of meetings of the Ad hoc Committee for the coming week will be as follows:

Monday 15 February	3 p.m.	Room III	<u>Ad hoc</u> Committee on CW: Working Group C
Wednesday 17 February	3 p.m.	Room III	<u>Ad hoc</u> Committee on CW: Working Group C
Friday 19 February	10 a.m.	Room III	<u>Ad hoc</u> Committee on CW: Working Group C

The programme that I have just outlined is subject to confirmation at the first meeting of the Committee tomorrow. Once the Committee decides on this question, those meetings will appear in the timetable that we will issue later.

I should also like to inform you that the Group of Seven, dealing with the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, will hold its first meeting at 3.30 p.m. on Monday 15 February, in the conference room of the secretariat offices.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday 16 February at 10 a.m. The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.