

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 18 February 1988 at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Harald Rose (German Democratic Republic)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 441st plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

As was the case only two weeks ago, the Conference is receiving distinguished visitors who will address this plenary meeting. Accordingly, I take particular pleasure in warmly welcoming, on behalf of the Conference, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Finland, H.E. Mr. Kalevi Sorsa, and Brazil, H.E. Mr. Roberto Costa de Abreu Sodré, as well as the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, H.E. Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky.

I have already had occasion to stress how important it is for the Conference, in its search for agreement, to have high-ranking officials giving the positions of their Governments. The speakers addressing us today represent countries which play an important role in the field of disarmament. They have contributed and continue to contribute actively to the work of this Conference, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.

Finland, although a non-member, has none the less been participating on an equal footing in significant aspects of our activities with many concrete proposals. Its contribution to international security is recognized by all. The Helsinki Final Act is a solid basis for far-reaching measures of disarmament and détente and for peaceful relations among countries in Europe.

Brazil has been a member of the multilateral disarmament negotiating body since its establishment in its present political configuration in 1962. Throughout its active involvement in the tasks facing us, Brazil has played an outstanding role in multilateral negotiations, which it has always considered as an effective approach to the solution of the vital question of disarmament. Brazil's commitment to peace, security and co-operation in the South Atlantic region has received world-wide attention.

The contributions made by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in this Conference are well known. They demonstrate how this country is discharging its responsibilities in the field of disarmament as a nuclear-weapon State. In this context, we are all aware of Deputy Minister Petrovsky's personal commitment to multilateral disarmament efforts, which I have had the privilege of experiencing first-hand for many years. The recent agreement the Soviet Union has concluded with the United States of America on the elimination of two entire classes of nuclear weapons has led to the first measure of nuclear disarmament ever agreed upon, thus opening the door to a world free of such weapons.

I am sure that the three statements being made today will assist us in our activities, and I should like to thank, once more, our distinguished visitors for their presence amongst us. I also wish them a useful sojourn in Geneva.

(The President)

The Conference continues today its consideration of agenda items 1, "Nuclear test ban" and 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". However, in accordance with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

I have on my list of speakers for today, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Finland and Brazil, as well as the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, His Excellency Mr. Kalevi Sorsa.

Mr. SORSA (Finland): Mr President, permit me at the outset to thank you for the warm words of welcome you have just extended to me and my colleagues. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to address the Conference on Disarmament. May I, for my part, congratulate you upon your assumption of the leadership of this important body for the month of February. I am sure that the work of the Conference will greatly benefit from your skilful and experienced guidance.

"My Government regards with sincere interest and with a will to achieve definite results any proposal for the limitation and reduction of armaments. This attitude is, I think, a natural one for a small country which can never successfully ensure its future by force."

These words were first spoken 56 years ago by one of my predecessors at another disarmament conference held in this same city.

I chose to quote these words from another era because they express an unchanging truth about our disarmament policy. As a small, neutral country Finland has a permanent interest in disarmament. As a Nordic country, Finland has a particular interest in approaches which will enhance security in her own region. As a European country, Finland is concerned with advancing disarmament on this continent burdened by the heaviest concentration of armaments the world has ever known.

Seldom have so many expectations been raised by disarmament negotiations as today. The contrast to the sombre, even despairing mood of only a few years ago is striking. The INF Treaty signed by President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at the Washington Summit in December is, naturally, the prime instigator of renewed hope.

The present dynamics of United States-Soviet negotiations reflect a number of political and military developments. They have led to major reappraisals of policy on both sides. New thinking is manifested in new initiatives and new positions. As a consequence, road-blocks that have long impeded passage on the way to disarmament are being removed. For example, mandatory on-site inspections are becoming a reality. Drastic reductions in nuclear arsenals which were once derided as unrealistic are under negotiation.

(Mr. Sorsa, Finland)

The INF Treaty is a milestone. It demonstrates that nuclear disarmament is indeed possible. It is a first step in the direction which mankind has expressed its wish to take for a long time.

Moreover, the INF Treaty offers ideas which could, and should, be put to use in other disarmament negotiations, whether dealing with strategic, convention or chemical weapons. Verification arrangements as well as the acknowledgement of asymmetries are cases in point.

For Europe, the INF Treaty promises lesser reliance on nuclear weapons, thereby enhancing Finnish security too. With its implementation, a number of nuclear systems will be withdrawn from the vicinity of the Nordic region. The INF Treaty contributes to efforts to strengthen the de facto nuclear-weapon-free status of the Nordic region.

The broader significance of the INF Treaty will, of course, depend decisively on what comes after it, on whether the Soviet Union and the United States can come to an agreement that would strengthen strategic stability at a much lower level of armaments than at present, on whether chemical weapons can be abolished, on whether conventional arms can be reduced. The first step has been taken; other steps must follow.

It is our hope that the momentum visible in the negotiations between the two major Powers will take hold in multilateral talks as well. Multilateral disarmament diplomacy, at least in the global perspective, does not have much to show for its exertions over the past decade. A new momentum is urgently required to achieve definite results on long-standing issues such as the prohibition of chemical weapons and the nuclear test ban, as well as coming to grips with newer issues such as verification. As the single multilateral negotiating body of the international community, the Conference on Disarmament is in a unique position to translate ideas into action.

The prohibition of chemical weapons is a priority item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. This is rightly so. Chemical weapons pose a risk to all of us. They have been used; they could be used again. Chemical weapons are comparatively easy and inexpensive to manufacture. The danger of their proliferation not only exists, it is growing.

Banning chemical weapons is a matter of security. A ban would enhance the security of every State, whether in the North or South, East or West. Finland, for her part, does not possess chemical weapons and will never acquire such weapons. Nor will she help others to acquire them.

In our view, a chemical weapons convention, to be effective, needs to be total in its scope, global in its reach, and verifiable in its implementation.

Considerable progress has been registered in the chemical weapons negotiations over the past year or so. Many problems have been solved, some remain, and some have only recently been discovered. But on balance, it seems clear to us that the negotiations have now advanced to the point where redoubled efforts are needed. The chance to get rid of these heinous weapons of mass destruction once and for all should not be allowed to slip away.

(Mr. Sorsa, Finland)

It is imperative that no new chemical weapons emerge once the existing stockpiles have been destroyed. Parts of civilian industry need therefore to be supervised. We believe that such supervision will not be too onerous if carefully tailored to the objective of the Convention. The verification arrangements concerning non-production should make sure that production of chemicals in civilian industry cannot be misused in any military significant way.

One issue which has only recently come under discussion concerns assistance in relation to protection against chemical weapons. A consensus seems to be emerging that a State party should be entitled to assistance in the event that chemical weapons are actually used against it. We share that view. We also think that the character of such assistance should be strictly defensive.

As is well known, Finland has for the past 15 years devoted considerable resources to developing technical means for verifying chemical disarmament. The results of our research have been regularly placed at the disposal of the Conference on Disarmament in the form of so-called Finnish Blue Books. Lately, the Finnish research project has concentrated on air monitoring of chemical agents. On the basis of extensive studies and field tests, we have come to the conclusion that air monitoring would constitute an important complementary method of verification which could reliably detect and identify atmospheric releases of chemical agents regardless of source.

In view of these research results, one type of assistance which would seem to us well worth considering would involve provision of detection equipment and alarm systems for air monitoring purposes. This type of assistance would be strictly defensive in nature, and would have the additional advantage of being of value even before a possible attack by chemical weapons. Its mere existence might even help to deter the attack in the first place. Moreover, air monitoring facilities could at the same time be used to detect air pollution, thus safeguarding the environment.

Let me now turn to another important item on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

Finland supports the complete prohibition of nuclear tests. A comprehensive test ban would do much to constrain the qualitative development of nuclear weapons. It would also strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty, a key element of world security. The test ban would not, in our view, detract from the security of nuclear-weapon States either, if effectively verified.

Finland continues to believe that an effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty ought to be achievable right now. However, we also see merit in more gradual approaches so long as they hold promise of moving the world closer to ending all nuclear tests in all environments for all time. We welcome the stage-by-stage negotiations on nuclear testing issues now under way between the Soviet Union and the United States.

(Mr. Sorsa, Finland)

Yet, regardless of the outcome of bilateral efforts in this field, a multilateral treaty will still be required as the corner-stone of an international test-ban régime. Regrettably, the multilateral efforts to this end at the Conference on Disarmament have yielded very little. This Conference can and should do more. There is every reason to begin substantive work on the test-ban issue. Many aspects of a future treaty could be dealt with productively even in the absence of formal negotiations. General Assembly resolution 42/27, adopted by an overwhelming majority of Member States, contains a number of practical recommendations in this regard.

The Group of Scientific Experts working under the auspices of this Conference has made a valuable contribution to the development of an international data exchange system necessary for verification purposes. Finland strongly supports the work of the GSE, and is actively involved in the preparations for the world-wide technical data exchange test to be conducted in the near future.

In view of the major role that the GSE plays in developing procedures for detecting and identifying seismic events, it would seem appropriate for the Soviet Union and the United States to keep the Group regularly informed of their bilateral efforts in this field.

Finland looks forward to the forthcoming third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We see it as a universal and authoritative forum charged with articulating the views of the international community on the broad range of disarmament issues with which the world is confronted.

In the 10 years since the first special session, much has happened. There is progress, and there is stagnation. It is time to take stock of the state of disarmament in the world, identify new developments and trends, focus the debate and energize the action for years to come.

One thing is clear. The Final Document of the first special session remains the basis for any new efforts by the international community in the field of disarmament. Building on this solid foundation, we should look confidently to the future.

Obviously, nuclear disarmament remains a key priority at the special session.

At the same time, Finland suggests that the third special session should also focus on new concerns which are likely to grow in the future, as well as on sharpening mankind's common tools for dealing with them.

The importance of conventional disarmament grows under conditions in which nuclear weapons play a lesser role in security conceptions. As Europe shows, a regional approach is often a productive one. The results of the Stockholm Conference and the current talks in Vienna within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe demonstrate the viability of this approach.

(Mr. Sorsa, Finland)

A global focus on conventional disarmament could inspire progress in other regions of the world as well.

The need for curbing the naval arms race has become evident. While it is clear that naval armaments should be dealt with within the general context of the military balance, it is also pertinent to note that sea-borne military activities are growing in importance. They merit multilateral consideration. Confidence-building offers perhaps the best chance for progress.

One particular task of the third special session should be to enhance the role of the United Nations in dealing with disarmament. A promising area for closer United Nations involvement is verification. Many interesting and overlapping proposals to this end exist. A measure of consensus on certain principles that should govern verification of international disarmament agreements also exists. The third special session offers the international community an opportunity to unite behind a practical role for the United Nations in the field of verification.

The international machinery set up by the first special session to deal with disarmament requires a review so as to enhance its effectiveness. A full assessment of the Conference on Disarmament and its record is therefore also in order. I will not dwell on the substantive record of the Conference at this point. Some of it is reflected in my comments on chemical weapons and the nuclear test-ban issue. Instead, I will devote a few words to one aspect of such an assessment: the expansion of the membership of this Conference.

Five years ago, the Conference took a decision to expand its membership by four. It has been unable to implement its decision. At the time, in 1983, other interesting ideas were also put forward, notably by the Federal Republic of Germany. Recently, new proposals have been made, as explained here by my Czechoslovak and Hungarian colleagues.

Finland is a candidate for membership in the Conference on Disarmament. We have demonstrated our active interest in the Conference through practical contributions to its work, especially in the field of chemical weapons.

We have an open mind as to how the expansion of membership is carried out. We do not exclude any proposal capable of commanding consensus. If approached in the spirit of good will and compromise, and with a sense of urgency, the successful resolution of this question cannot remain beyond the reach of this Conference or the third special session devoted to disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland for his important statement, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, His Excellency Mr. Roberto Costa de Abreu Sodré.

Mr. SODRE (Brazil): Thank you, Mr. President, for the reference you made to my country. My presence here today underlines a deeply felt commitment of the Brazilian Government.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

This seemed to us to be the right moment to reaffirm Brazil's involvement with the multilateral negotiating effort in the search for a dependable peace in a more just world.

I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election and to tell you that, while recognizing your many qualifications for the fulfilment of your mandate, we do not underestimate your burden and we shall always be willing to be of assistance in the pursuit of our common goals.

Over the last few weeks a significant number of colleagues have come to this hall to express their hopes and their concerns. We have been enlightened by the Foreign Ministers of Czechoslovakia, Italy, Indonesia, the Federal Republic of Germany and Hungary, and we have just listened to the well-reasoned words of my colleague from Finland.

Mere coincidence does not lie behind such a convergence of voices at the present session of the Conference on Disarmament.

I believe that the call heard by Brazil was also heard in many other capitals, an indication no doubt that we stand at the threshold of a new and promising cycle of multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Diplomacy is a sharp perception of opportunities and the consequent capacity to seize the hour and give it historical content. We all have been perceiving over the last few months facts and circumstances that gradually substituted hope for scepticism, will to act for inertia.

There can be no doubt that in the vast and complex field of disarmament negotiations among nations - whatever the geographical dimension or the nature of the specific subject under consideration - we have entered 1988 with expectations we have not had since 1978, when SSOD-I ended with the adoption of a Final Document exemplary for its breadth of vision and for its permanent relevance.

It would be profitless to make an assessment of a decade during which the accomplishments have been meagre and few. Brazil believes that - keeping the Final Document of SSOD-I as our map and our compass - we should turn to the future and seek the ways and means to ensure the full implementation of the Programme of Action agreed in 1978.

The last few months have provided us with good reasons for renewed hope. The United States of America and the Soviet Union have signed an agreement banning intermediate and shorter-range nuclear missiles that has generated such political momentum that it has also brought us closer to an agreement on strategic arms reduction.

Brazil, as well as practically the whole of the international community, recognized the historic importance of the agreement reached in Washington and conveyed to the two super-Powers our expectations and hopes for still further progress. In our contacts and consultations with both we made clear our appreciation and our special interest in continuing to follow their negotiating process.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

At every opportunity Brazil has indicated to these same Governments that we cannot accept that the role of the international community should be limited to applauding and encouraging the militarily more powerful in their negotiations. Our interests reach far beyond the support we shall always give to initiatives that reduce the threat of war and international tension and generate greater confidence between blocs and political systems.

It is precisely in this forum - the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum - that we are called on to act and we seek to ensure that the progress in our negotiations accurately reflects the great complexity of contemporary international life.

Nothing could be more deceptive than to imagine - as is done from time to time - that the closed negotiating process between the super-Powers and between the two military blocs should be favoured to the detriment of the multilateral negotiating process.

The great treaties and conventions of our time - universal in their scope, lasting in their effects, admirable as models - have emerged from free negotiation among many countries that express the diversity of our international reality and the different perspectives and expectations we all have with regard to the construction of a better world.

Responsible and unifying multilateralism still is - and I believe will remain - the groundwork upon which we will be able to build a system of legally and morally binding international covenants, free from any discriminatory traits.

Thus it was in San Francisco, thus it was with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, thus it was with the creation of the great specialized agencies of the United Nations system and also again with the convening of the major international conferences on the environment in Stockholm, on population in Bucharest, on the law of the sea in Jamaica, on science and technology in New York. Thus it will hopefully be in Geneva, in our negotiations to prohibit chemical weapons, to ban nuclear tests, to prevent an arms race in outer space. Thus the growth of military stockpiles and the refinement of systems of mass destruction will be interrupted. Thus a new world of peace and security will be born here.

Renewed trust in multilateralism found recent expression in the work of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in New York in August 1987, which produced an important Final Document.

This same impulse will preside over the work to be jointly accomplished by us in New York next June, during SSOD-III, for which this Conference will prepare the most substantive inputs.

Brazil will attend the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly with an open mind, and confident that we may be in a position to make our contribution to the collective effort.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

We are in a fortunate position to do so. We are surrounded by neighbours who are friends. The Treaty of Tlatelolco, which we have signed and ratified, establishes a framework of precisely outlined commitments and provides us with additional security guarantees. Brazil is located in the region with the lowest relative military expenditure in the world and, possibly, the least degree of international tension and insecurity. We are proud to contribute to this state of affairs, and we remain vigilant that conflicts and interests alien to our region do not disturb the good partnership that all of us in that part of the world have been able to establish and consolidate. The South Atlantic, as a zone of peace and co-operation, brings us closer to Africa.

We were very happy in 1986 at the adoption by an overwhelming majority, at the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, of resolution 41/11, declaring the South Atlantic a zone of peace and co-operation. Our satisfaction was strengthened by the adoption, in 1987, by the forty-second United Nations General Assembly, of resolution 42/16, which reiterates the importance of the Declaration and had as its sponsors all the South Atlantic States. It was equally gratifying to note in 1987 the inclusion in the draft Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament of specific paragraphs dealing with that zone of peace and co-operation.

The significant support of the international community for the zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic is an acknowledgement of the specific identity of the area and a recognition of the political will of the South Atlantic States responsible for the initiative to act jointly in order to preserve peace in the region and together promote its development.

The primary responsibility for fostering and implementing this important initiative lies with the South Atlantic States themselves. Other States have, however, the responsibility to act and to co-operate in such a manner as to preserve the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation, an essential prerequisite to the full implementation of the objectives contained in the Declaration. Brazil's concern - a concern shared by the other South Atlantic States - is to keep the South Atlantic as a zone of peace, free from conflicts alien to the area, free from the arms race and safe from hegemonic interests.

Unfortunately, however, I must admit, that serious trouble-spots persist in our region. I refer, in particular, to the situation in southern Africa, where the abhorrent régime of apartheid oppresses the great majority of the South African people. That same Government is responsible for the illegal occupation of Namibia and for armed attacks against neighbouring countries.

Brazil together with its South Atlantic partners will spare no effort in pursuing the goal of making the South Atlantic a true zone of peace and co-operation for our own benefit, for the benefit of other countries in the region and for the benefit of the international community as a whole.

At a moment when, for the first time, the deeds of the two super-Powers attest to their acceptance of the principle of nuclear disarmament beyond mere arms control measures, I would like to invite this forum to analyse the true scope and foundations of the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

Back in 1965, at the twentieth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Brazilian delegation, together with the other neutral and non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nations Disarmament Committee, co-sponsored resolution 2028 defining the principles to be observed in a future international treaty on non-proliferation.

Resolution 2028 included among others the principle that the treaty to be negotiated should establish an acceptable balance of obligations between nuclear and non-nuclear States and constitute, besides, a concrete step towards general and complete disarmament.

It seems to us repetitive and self-evident to stress again the great gap between the principles of the 1965 resolution adopted by the United Nations and the main thrust of the NPT signed in 1967. The discriminatory nature of the NPT in setting out the duties and obligations of States parties to it, as well as the failure of that Treaty to curb either the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons or the geographical dissemination of such arsenals, are matters of historical fact that do not require any further elaboration or proof.

What matters to Brazil, at this stage, is to suggest that we should try to return the concept of non-proliferation to its original formulation, in favour of models more equitable and less oligarchical than that embodied in the NPT, which would truly stimulate international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Latin America has played its part in this effort by providing the international community with a legitimate standard and a viable model for a non-proliferation régime: the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Brazil awaits the fulfilment of the conditions set out in article 28 of the Treaty, thus enabling the Treaty to come fully into force.

Mr. President, in preparing the words that I now address to you, I sought inspiration in what eminent Brazilians such as my predecessors as Ministers Francisco de San Tiago Dantas, Affonso Arinos de Mello Franco and João Augusto de Araújo Castro have said here, especially when they stated and reaffirmed Brazil's commitment to the strengthening of international peace and security. Their words, placed on our records, retain their timeliness and, on the one hand, bear witness to their wisdom and clear thinking, and on the other hand, are an expression of how slow is our progress and how formidable the obstacles that we have to overcome.

It must be pointed out in particular that in the specific case of the quest of disarmament, science and technology - reliable friends to mankind on so many fronts, and with such wonderful results - constitute an additional challenge, and due to their dynamism renew and increase the risks and threats that hover above all of us. To the horror of nuclear devastation ever more sombre scenarios of desolation and death are being added. Under a perverse kind of logic the search for increased security is carried out through the paradoxical incorporation of ever more lethal technologies, opening up new vistas of endless unpredictability in which what pertained to the realm of science fiction acquires the contours of reality.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

Mr. President, I came to Geneva to tell you that Brazil's commitment to the work of this Conference is profound and permanent, and that we do not wish the opportunity for concrete achievements that we now detect to be frittered away without lasting results.

It is evident that the issue or area of negotiations where most progress has been accomplished, and where the final result can already begin to be perceived, is the prohibition of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stockpiles of this type of armament.

As a member of the Group of 21, Brazil, together with the non-aligned countries represented in this Conference, hopes that we may finalize, before the end of 1988, a comprehensive and effective draft convention. We are prepared to support, be it in the substance or procedure, any practical initiatives that might further intensify the rhythm of our work and the pace of our consultations. We are not in a hurry. We simply refuse to waste time.

In this spirit, I wish to state anew the interest of the Brazilian Government in ensuring that the future convention is universal and non-discriminatory in nature and that it safeguards the right of access of all countries to all peaceful uses of chemical industry and technology.

There are other items on our agenda where progress is hardly noticeable. A certain type of pragmatic realism might make it attractive to postpone such questions for a more favourable moment, when there is a clearer manifestation of political will on the part of the most heavily armed States. Brazil responds to a different type of realism, remembering that the world is still a dangerous place to live in; that the assurances of deterrence are deceptive; that the urgent need for the construction of a more just international order determines a new tempo and requires immediate action. We shall not hesitate - in the good cause - to say again what we have said before. We shall not tire of demanding with quiet insistence measures of verifiable disarmament in all areas. With equal conviction we will demand that all of us be heard and all our interests be taken into account in matters that are relevant to all. As possible targets and as probable victims, all human beings and all the States that represent them have a legitimate stake in the fight against the arms race. This collective voice has to be heard and heeded.

Brazil reiterates the importance and urgency that all participants in this Conference on Disarmament - in particular nuclear-weapon States - muster the essential political will to set in motion work on the crucial items on our agenda. I have in mind, inter alia, the prompt setting up of an ad hoc Committee - empowered with a negotiating mandate - to draft a comprehensive treaty to ban nuclear weapons tests, an exercise which I believe we are competent to pursue without further delay to a successful conclusion. I also have in mind the need to provide the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space with a specific mandate that would enable us to ensure - with the urgency that the matter requires - the utilization of that environment solely for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Sodré, Brazil)

This was the inspiration for the words spoken by the President of my country, José Sarney, at the United Nations General Assembly in 1985, with which I would like to close this statement:

"We are at one of the many crossroads that have marked the 40-years of existence of the United Nations. The peoples are aware that concessions made to the realities of power are a one-way process. Only the united will of the majority to adopt a new attitude can remedy the scenario created by confrontation and by the mechanisms of power."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil for his important statement, and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky.

Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, we are especially pleased to see you, the representative of the German Democratic Republic, in this important post today, at a time when the political situation taking shape in the world is imparting a powerful impetus to international negotiating forums, including the Conference on Disarmament, to speed up their work to outstrip the arms race. I would like to express the hope that under your guidance the Conference will be able to develop such a pace of work, so as to get down finally to business-like concrete negotiations on the range of issues included in its agenda.

May we also thank your predecessor at this post, the head of the delegation of France, His Excellency Ambassador Morel, for the considerable work he accomplished at the previous stage. We should also like to welcome the presence here at the Conference on Disarmament of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Mr. Sorsa, and of Brazil, Mr. Abreu Sodré, who have just made statements which undoubtedly represent a most valuable contribution to the practical work of our Conference.

We find ourselves now at an important turning-point when the prospect is opening up for the establishment of a new and better type of international relations, democratic and human in nature, free from intimidation, mutual threats and distrust. The times themselves set major tasks and direct us towards major deeds.

After the Soviet-United States summit in December 1987 we all have a better understanding of what has to be done, and how, in order that the concept of security through disarmament formulated at the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament should move to the centre of international policy in both bilateral and multilateral efforts.

The Treaty Between the USSR and the United States on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles is an irrefutable confirmation of the feasibility of disarmament in practice, the first step towards converting it into a consistently unfolding and expanding process.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

For the first time two entire classes of nuclear arms with a range of 500 to 5,500 km are to be physically eliminated. And even though they make up a relatively small part of stockpiles of nuclear missiles, a breach has nevertheless been opened up in those stockpiles, figuratively speaking.

The INF Treaty has no parallels either in the detail of the procedures developed for the elimination of nuclear systems or in the specific forms and methods for verifying compliance. Six different varieties of on-site inspection alone are envisaged. This undoubtedly provides a wealth of experience for elaborating the system of verification in future agreements.

The diplomatic side of the Treaty is also qualitatively new. Instead of elementary arithmetical calculations, instead of using the categories of a zero-sum game, where one side's gain is the other side's loss, in this case a different rule is applied - that of seeking agreement on the basis of a balance of interests rather than figures. Each side conceded just the amount necessary to find such an equilibrium. The outcome is beneficial for everybody - a tangible step towards greater security for all.

The INF Treaty and other joint Soviet-United States documents are examples of the new political thinking in action, the first shoots of genuine nuclear disarmament fighting their way through the concrete walls of prejudice and hostility. Referring to what has already been done, and what remains to be done, M.S. Gorbachev wisely said:

"Our road towards this watershed was a difficult one. It involved lengthy and heated arguments and debate, the overcoming of accumulated emotions and ingrained stereotypes. What has been accomplished is only a beginning. It is only the start to nuclear disarmament, although as we know even the longest journey begins with a first step. Moving ahead from this start will require further intensive intellectual endeavour, honest effort, the abandonment of certain concepts of security that seem incontestable today, and of all that fuels the arms race."

An important role in the success of the negotiations was played by the allies of the USSR which not only supported the concept of the treaty but also contributed to its realization by their advice and specific ideas and proposals. Other countries and public movements also helped in reaching agreement. Of course, success would not have been possible if the United States Administration had at the crucial stage of the negotiations not shown a sense of realism and readiness to find mutually acceptable solutions.

After the signing of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles a prospect has opened up for reaching agreement on a more difficult question: 50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive arms while observing the ABM Treaty.

This of course is no simple task, but we are convinced that there is every chance of accomplishing it and preparing a new treaty to be signed during the next Soviet-United States summit scheduled for the first half of this year.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

At the same time, it is impossible to close one's eyes to the fact that a whole set of extremely difficult issues remain to be solved, the main issue being the task of making it impossible to undermine strategic stability while strategic offensive arms are being radically reduced. The key to solving this problem lies in maintaining the ABM Treaty. The instructions given by M.S. Gorbachev and R. Reagan, the President of the United States, to the Soviet and United States delegations in Geneva note the direct relationship between reductions in strategic offensive arms and the preservation of the ABM Treaty: the leaders of the USSR and of the United States instructed the delegations in Geneva to work out an agreement that would commit the parties, when conducting their research, development and, where required, testing permitted by the ABM Treaty, to observe the ABM Treaty as signed in 1972, and not to withdraw from the Treaty for a specified period of time.

At the current round of the Soviet-United States talks the Soviet side, guided by these instructions, tabled a draft "Protocol to a treaty between the USSR and the United States on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms", which is fully based on the joint Soviet-United States statement.

The Soviet Union holds a flexible position concerning the form of an agreement to observe the ABM Treaty. We have now proposed that such agreement should be recorded in the form of a protocol to the treaty on strategic offensive arms. At the same time we do not rule out the possibility of signing a protocol to the ABM Treaty on this issue. Finally, we do not object to reflecting the corresponding provisions directly in the treaty on strategic offensive arms either. However, the agreement should in any event enter into force at the same time as the treaty on strategic offensive arms, and should have the same legal status as the treaty on strategic offensive arms and the ABM Treaty.

In so doing - and I should like to stress this - we are not making abandonment of the SDI programme by the United States a precondition for a treaty on 50 per cent reductions in strategic offensive arms. As M.S. Gorbachev has repeatedly stressed, SDI is not on the negotiating table. The United States side has the right to carry out any programme if and in so far as it is not contrary to the ABM Treaty. But we are resolutely opposed to roundabout efforts by the United States, in a situation where the process of nuclear disarmament is taking concrete shape, to propel the arms race in other directions, especially in the direction of outer space. This would be contrary to the mutual understandings reached in Washington.

In this context we cannot fail to be concerned at the fact that, while the words of the United States side proclaim adherence to the Washington understandings, its actions appreciably depart from them, thereby blocking progress towards the resolution of the tasks entrusted to the delegations. The draft "Treaty between the USSR and the United States on certain measures to facilitate a co-operative transition to the deployment of future strategic ballistic missile defences" which it tabled at this round proposes that agreement should be reached on a transition to the deployment - I stress, deployment - of defences against ballistic missiles in space, instead of

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

observing the ABM Treaty, which is tantamount to scrapping the Treaty régime. In the United States draft the future commitment not to withdraw from the Treaty is hedged about with reservations, which give the United States a whole range of possibilities for unilaterally terminating the Treaty even during the agreed period of non-withdrawal.

I am obliged to say that the United States position also impedes agreement on reductions in strategic offensive arms. For example, it continues to evade agreement on limiting long-range sea-launched cruise missiles on the pretext of difficulties in verification, although the Soviet side has tabled detailed proposals on verification at the negotiations. The United States side is also holding on to what is left of its former pre-December positions on the question of sublimits for ballistic missile warheads.

As a result, the situation at the nuclear and space talks has now noticeably deteriorated. And for the time being, we must frankly inform the Conference that it is difficult to offer a very reliable forecast of how these negotiations will proceed. We hope that United States Secretary of State George Schultz's visit to Moscow in a few days will provide the necessary clarity concerning what the United States Administration intends to do and is able to do as regards the radical reduction of strategic offensive arms and the observance of the ABM Treaty.

As for the Soviet side, it will continue to strive for the realization of the Washington understandings, which are in the interests not only of the USSR and the United States, but also the entire international community. The participants in the Conference can be absolutely sure of that.

The Soviet Union considers that the major task now is to ensure uninterrupted progress along all avenues leading to ridding this planet of nuclear and any other weapons of mass destruction, and decreasing the levels of military capability to limits of reasonable sufficiency.

Our approach to further action involves raising the efficiency of the whole system of disarmament negotiations, both bilateral and multilateral, both within and outside the United Nations framework, on the basis of their complementarity.

The answer to the question of how to achieve this, which is a question of principle and by no means an academic question, is directly linked to enhancing the role and output of the Conference on Disarmament, a unique negotiating body of multilateral diplomacy. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, E.A. Shevardnadze, stressed in his statement made last year in this room, this representative forum can assert itself more forcefully by practical deeds matching the magnitude of the tasks before it. We fully share the opinion expressed by the heads of State and government of the Six-nation Initiative in the Stockholm Declaration: "The Conference on Disarmament ... should be strengthened and made a more efficient instrument for achieving nuclear disarmament and for the elimination of all other weapons of mass destruction."

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Of the items on the Conference's busy agenda, the one which is most ripe for decision and which opens up real prospects of immediate results, is the item on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Here the Conference can now make basically the last spurt on the home stretch in order to reaffirm its capacity as an effective negotiating body after a lengthy interval.

The convention on the elimination of chemical weapons and the industrial base for their production is both a political and a moral imperative. It is designed to become a genuinely palpable measure of disarmament and confidence building.

The need for the speedy conclusion of the convention is dictated by the specific situation in the field of chemical weapons. The participants in the Conference are well aware of the reports on the proliferation of chemical weapons, the recent initiation of production of binary chemical weapons in the United States, the French plan for a chemical arms build-up. These are all dangerous trends.

We are also alarmed by the fact that the United States delegation at the negotiations is in no hurry to take account of the positions of other countries, but has locked itself into its 1984 position. Activity at the negotiations should obviously be measured not by the quantity of paper submitted, but by real efforts aimed at eliminating existing divergencies - exactly what is manifestly lacking on the part of the United States Administration. This lack is more than compensated for by the concrete steps taken by the United States to build up chemical armaments. Hardly had the production of 155-mm binary artillery shells begun when the Administration immediately submitted a request for "Bigeye" aerial bombs. Thus binary weapons are acquiring new parameters, the United States military machine is becoming obsessed with them, and quite naturally this does not increase the pressure on the United States to reach an early agreement.

It may be objected that the United States delegation has stated its desire to work on the elaboration and conclusion of a convention. Moreover, the Soviet-United States summit in Washington confirmed the need for intensified negotiations towards the conclusion of a truly global and verifiable convention. Yet a legitimate question comes to mind: how do the United States' words tally with its actual deeds?

Chemical disarmament, like any other undertaking, is a serious and responsible matter. There can be no place here for double standards or double moral values. The initiation of production of binary chemical weapons in the United States most seriously undermines confidence in its declared commitment to the drawing up of a verifiable, comprehensive and effective international convention on the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons.

The Soviet Union will resolutely strive to ensure that the future convention provides for an effective ban on all types of chemical weapons and for their destruction. We will not agree to attempts to except binary chemical weapons from the ban and replace a comprehensive convention by partial measures regulating chemical armaments.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

In our opinion, the French arguments to the effect that every party to the future convention should have the right to produce chemical weapons pose a serious threat to chemical disarmament. Although such views are founded on the need to ensure security, no strengthening of security actually occurs. On the contrary - in practice, this concept threatens both the proliferation of chemical weapons, and the transfer of the chemical arms race under the protection of the convention, with all the ensuing consequences pernicious for stability, confidence and, in the final analysis, for the security of all, whether parties or non-parties to the convention.

A solution must definitely be sought to the question of the security of States parties to the convention, particularly during the vital first 10 years after its entry into force, but not through the stockpiling and proliferation of chemical weapons - by negotiating a mutually acceptable order of destruction of all chemical weapon stocks and the most stringent verification. As far as chemical weapon stocks and production facilities are concerned, this verification should basically imply international sequestration.

The Soviet Union fully shares the desire of the overwhelming majority of the participants in the negotiations to conclude work as soon as possible, and welcomes the business-like attitude which was quite evident in the statements made in this room by Foreign Ministers B. Chnoupek of Czechoslovakia, P. Várkonyi of Hungary, M. Kusuma-Atmadja of Indonesia, G. Andreotti of Italy and H.-D. Genscher of the Federal Republic of Germany, and in the statements we have just heard from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Mr. Sorsa, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. Abreu Sodré.

Certainly, really serious major issues are still outstanding in respect of the convention. Joint solutions should be sought to them - daringly, in the spirit of the new political thinking, with each participant correctly assessing and taking into account both his own interests and those of his partners in the negotiations.

One of the most important tasks as we see it is to finalize the negotiation of provisions on verification. The Soviet Union will work to ensure that the convention contains provision for mandatory challenge inspections without the right of refusal, with the possibility of requesting an inspection of any facility or any site which causes suspicion.

It is also essential to ensure the most effective systematic monitoring of the non-production of chemical weapons in commercial industry.

I should like to assure you that the position of the Soviet Union will not become an obstacle to agreement on the convention's provisions enhancing the effectiveness of international verification of the destruction and non-production of chemical weapons. We note with interest the ideas put forward by Australia regarding "spot checks", and those of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding ad hoc inspections. In our view, requests for inspections could well emanate from the international inspectorate in cases where the need arose, in the context of their systematic verification activities, to clarify some insufficiently clear situations.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union has great respect for other States' views and opinions which are aimed at expediting the preparation of the convention. It is widely held, for example, that at present the factor of openness and mutual awareness of the subject matter of the negotiations is becoming increasingly important for the progress of the negotiations. This was mentioned in particular in the letters from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of various States which we received in response to the message sent to the participants in the negotiations by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR last November.

We agree with this, and we confirm our agreement by practical deeds. The Soviet Union is so far the only State to have officially declared the size of its chemical weapon stockpiles. At Shikhany the Soviet Union presented CW agents contained in its armaments, standard munitions and a chemical weapon destruction technology.

Today the Soviet delegation is introducing for the consideration of the Conference a "Memorandum on multilateral data exchange in connection with the elaboration of a convention on the complete and general prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons". The purpose of the exchange is to facilitate the earliest possible elaboration, agreement, signature and entry into force of the convention, and in particular to facilitate the practical resolution of the issues of international verification and of creating greater openness in the field of chemical weapons.

The idea is that, as an act of good will, every State participating in the negotiations will, in the first half of 1988, submit information regarding its stocks of chemical weapons (indicating the approximate amount) chemical weapons production facilities, and past transfers or acquisition of chemical weapons and the technology and equipment for their production.

Thereafter it would be desirable for every State participating in the negotiations to submit, at a time to be agreed, information on the number of chemical weapons storage and production facilities, laboratories for their development, commercial facilities for the production of key precursors and dual-purpose chemicals for peaceful purposes, and so on.

At the same time the Soviet Union proposes that the States participating in the negotiations should agree to designate, on a voluntary basis, one facility each where a specially established international group of experts could test the procedures being worked out at the negotiations for systematic international monitoring of the non-production of chemical weapons in commercial industry. In our view, such a measure would not only make it possible to test in practice what we are negotiating now on paper, and to make any necessary adjustments, but would also actually mean a really tangible step towards establishing an international inspectorate.

These are the specific new ideas of the Soviet delegation aimed at the early conclusion of a convention. They are dictated by the Soviet Union's desire to achieve this within the shortest time possible - ideally, in time for the opening of the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

The prospect of reducing the strategic offensive arms of the Soviet Union and the United States by half and eliminating chemical weapons creates favourable conditions for a start now, in the Conference, on substantive discussions on specific areas for multilateral efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The stagnation in the Conference in this key area is becoming scandalous. For the second year running the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus - I stress, by consensus - a resolution on the general aspects of nuclear disarmament which acknowledges that the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament is the elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that the time has come to buttress this general understanding with joint actions. The Soviet Union proposes that an immediate start be made on identifying in practical terms the substance of possible multilateral measures in this field.

For the Conference to be able to come to grips with nuclear disarmament, it is necessary to overcome the blind adherence of a number of States to the concept of nuclear intimidation. It is this concept, the armour-plating of mental stagnation, which, prevents the Conference from holding multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war.

The advocates of intimidation refuse to see the obvious inherent defect in nuclear deterrence, which, allegedly in the name of strengthening security, calls for a continuous build-up of the means of destruction, whose use threatens to produce a universal catastrophe, in other words, zero security. Attempts to achieve security in accordance with the canons of nuclear deterrence are a latter-day version of the labours of Sisyphus.

Nuclear deterrence, which advocates force and exclusiveness, represents the antithesis of democracy and humanism. The yearning of billions of human beings for democracy, the right of every one to participate personally in solving problems of vital importance, to build a peaceful future for himself with his own hands - these are inconsistent with the dictatorship of the nuclear button, with a situation where the whole of mankind becomes hostage to a miscalculation by a handful of politicians or a computer error.

Two hundred years ago the Great French Revolution proclaimed "liberty, equality and fraternity". Today reluctance to storm the Bastille of nuclear deterrence prevents the scrapping of the system of castes and categories in international relations.

Sometimes we hear arguments that nuclear arms cannot be scrapped completely because of the objective existence of knowledge of their production technology. Yet knowledge of the phenomenon of cannibalism did not prevent humanity from rising above it. Is it possible that modern civilized society cannot discard nuclear cannibalism as well?

One cannot but see that a situation of nuclear stalemate has developed which cannot be overcome through traditional methods of military technology - they have simply become morally obsolete. The way out of this

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

situation lies in adhering to the principles of defensive strategy and reasonable sufficiency, with corresponding changes in the structure and deployment of armed forces and the elimination of the nuclear components.

The Conference has a huge potential to block off that major source fuelling the nuclear arms race, nuclear weapon tests. The drawing up within the framework of the Conference, as rapidly as possible, of a draft multilateral treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear tests would meet the interests of all States, and would be a major multilateral contribution to nuclear disarmament.

We are convinced that the Conference can proceed to agreeing the basic elements of an international verification mechanism and the corresponding international legal procedures to ensure compliance with a treaty on the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, including on-site inspections, the establishment of an international seismic and radiation monitoring system and the functions of international monitoring bodies.

With a view to the early formulation of practical proposals on a system for monitoring the non-conduct of nuclear tests, the Soviet Union, as you know, favours the establishment of a special group of scientific experts, and is putting forward the idea of an international system of global radiation safety monitoring using space communication links. We are ready to give positive consideration to the constructive initiatives of other States. Thus, the Soviet Union supports the Swedish proposal for the development of a "CD station", which it believes could be set up on a co-operative basis to allow for direct participation by all interested States.

We reaffirm once again our readiness to use the services of the authors of the Six-nation Initiative in the field of monitoring the non-conduct of tests. In our view the Conference on Disarmament could also be interested in this proposal.

Practical work in the Conference on banning nuclear testing is becoming especially urgent in the light of the full-scale Soviet-United States negotiations in this field now taking place here in Geneva. The Soviet-United States agreement on starting such negotiations provides that, as a first step, the two sides will agree on effective verification measures which will make it possible to ratify the 1974 and 1976 treaties, and will proceed to agreeing further intermediate limitations on nuclear tests in terms of yield and quantity on the way to the ultimate objective of the complete cessation of nuclear testing. We can now note with satisfaction that the documents agreed upon in the first round of negotiations provided a sound basis for speedy progress towards fulfilling the tasks set before these negotiations. Reciprocated visits to nuclear test sites in Nevada and at Semipalavinsk have been carried out. These visits, as well as the planned joint Soviet-United States verification experiment, will in our view contribute to the development of a reliable verification system, which could be useful for the multilateral negotiations as well. In the long run the closure of all nuclear test sites on the planet for good can be effected only by means of the keystone of a treaty on the complete and general prohibition of nuclear weapon testing.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Although the Conference and the bilateral negotiations have their own specific tasks, each of these forums can make its contribution to solving the problem of nuclear testing. There is no doubt that combining their efforts will considerably facilitate expeditious progress towards a complete ban on all nuclear testing.

Our Conference can also erect insurmountable barriers to the extension of the arms race into outer space. The Conference has thoroughly studied all aspects of this problem, and it is high time that the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space focused on practical matters. In this respect it is of major importance to ensure proper verification, leaving no loopholes for violations. As one possible solution the Soviet Union has introduced for the consideration of the Conference the idea of establishing an international outer space inspectorate. In the near future the Soviet delegation will provide new, more comprehensive observations on this issue, with practical details concerning the permanent presence of groups of inspectors at all space launch sites, the conduct of inspections at agreed storage facilities, industrial plants, laboratories and testing centres, as well as emergency inspections without the right of refusal should suspicion arise that an undeclared launch of a space object has been carried out.

I should like to emphasize that making its work more concrete is the only way for the Conference on Disarmament to make a substantial contribution to fulfilling the mandate spelt out by the international community - to keep outer space peaceful.

The Soviet Union is in favour of the most stringent and effective monitoring in all fields. We have proposed the creation, under the auspices of the United Nations, of machinery for broad international monitoring of compliance with agreements on reducing international tension and on arms limitation, as well as monitoring of the military situation in areas of conflict. Such machinery, to our mind, would involve the use of various forms and methods of monitoring for the purposes of collecting information and transmitting it expeditiously to the United Nations. Considering that, as we move along the road to disarmament, verification will become a most important factor in ensuring international security, we call for a comprehensive international dialogue on these issues, a substantive discussion of all existing ideas, including the important new proposals from the Six-nation Initiative, and the joint outlining of mutually acceptable ways and means of implementing them.

We believe that during the process of renewal in international relations which is just beginning, prejudice, alienation and confrontation will give way to understanding that all countries and peoples share a common destiny in ensuring the survival of mankind. We are convinced that practical deeds, and only practical deeds, opens the way to confidence, while confidence opens the way to partnership among all countries and peoples on the basis of the balance of their interests.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

Today, the role and importance of the Conference on Disarmament is growing, and the issue of making it more effective is becoming more urgent. Practically all countries have joined in the search for ways of enhancing the work of this forum. As you know, the socialist States have put forward a set of proposals in this respect contained in their joint document entitled "Towards increasing the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva".

The socialist countries consider that a consultative council might be established within the Conference which would identify long-term factors of crucial importance to ensuring international security. This would contribute to the mobilizing the intellectual efforts of the international community for the solution of future disarmament problems, which would undoubtedly render concrete practical assistance to the negotiations, both bilateral and multilateral.

The current session of the Conference on Disarmament is taking place on the very eve of the third special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is to discuss in a broad and comprehensive manner the search for practical avenues of confidence-building and disarmament, leading to a nuclear-free and non-violent world.

We are profoundly convinced that there is every possibility for the Conference to come to the special session with a solid record of resolved issues - first and foremost, a finalized draft of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons.

In conclusion, allow me to wish all the participants in the Conference success in fulfilling the important and uncommon tasks they face.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his important statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. The memorandum that has been introduced today has been received by the secretariat and will be circulated shortly as an official document of the Conference. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I recognize Ambassador Morel, the representative of France, and I give him the floor.

Mr. MOREL (France) (translated from French): Mr. President, allow me, in opening my statement, since I am taking the floor for the first time this month, to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Conference, to extend to you all our good wishes for success in this very important month and to assure you of the full participation of our delegation. At the same time I wish to thank all the members of the Conference for their very kind words addressed to me on several occasions since the beginning of this month on my past presidency, and I must say to all my colleagues that I was very touched by these remarks.

Likewise I wish to state how interested we have been to hear the very high-level presentation of the views of several countries on disarmament issues since the beginning of this month. Here I am thinking of the numerous

(Mr. Morel, France)

ministerial presentations we have had, which I think testify to the very considerable interest in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Among these statements we have heard three in particular this morning, by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, which we listened to with great interest, as well as the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, which we also listened to most carefully.

It is with regard to this latter statement that I would like simply to offer by way of reply one or two remarks on two issues more particularly, which we thought were not presented in the most appropriate way. I refer to security stocks, and also the question of deterrence.

Concerning security stocks, that is, the proposal that was made by my country, we have been directly implicated in this case in a way which, I must say, we consider distorted. What is in fact involved here? A basic point which I think all delegations have accepted and acknowledged and emphasized, namely that there should be undiminished security during the transitional period of the Convention. We think this is an absolutely crucial point, which is tied up with the very existence, the credibility, the viability and the definitive nature of the Convention. It will not be possible to secure a definitive convention unless undiminished security is assured throughout the transitional period. France has been raising this problem for years. We have made various statements on this subject, without the possibility of an appropriate solution having emerged thus far. It is for this reason, and for this reason alone, that we made a specific proposal for establishing a transitional arrangement that we called "security stocks". We have been told today, in particular in the statement by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, that this would lead to proliferation. I am not going to embark on a debate on chemical weapons proliferation today. I will merely emphasize that we did not invent CW proliferation, that we are the first to deplore it and observe that unfortunately the risk exists and is growing. We do not intend to contribute to this proliferation; on the contrary, our wish is for universal accession to the future convention, and the point is that we will not have universal accession to the future convention unless the undiminished security of all States parties is guaranteed during the transitional period. So we do not think at all that we are provoking or heightening or creating this risk. It exists, and what we wanted to do was to face up to the situation in an appropriate way, and not by noting that a certain country will remain outside the convention.

It might appear that our proposal is paradoxical, and I am ready to recognize that. But I would be tempted to say that the paradox could perfectly well lead to disarmament, and may even facilitate it. Today the INF Treaty is welcomed. It is indeed a treaty offering appreciable benefits, which we have emphasized. But there is no doubt that for this to be done a number of preparatory phases were necessary in order to produce this treaty, including the deployment of certain intermediate nuclear forces. Thus there are situations where the well-thought-out and temporary re-establishment of a certain equilibrium can, when it is necessary, lead more easily to the limitation or even the complete elimination of an entire category of weapon.

(Mr. Morel, France)

This is not a special invention for a hypothetical case - it is quite simply a statement of fact drawn from practical experience. Perhaps one should not generalize, but I believe that experience with the INF Treaty enables us to confirm with regard to a given category of armaments that the reality of undiminished security must perhaps in some cases prevail over appearances and set formulae.

As far as deterrence is concerned, here too - and this is my second point - we have heard a distorted presentation of the state of affairs. I will not go back over the substance again. Deterrence is not a theory to which some people allegedly adhere blindly; it is a fact, a historical fact that has existed for more than 40 years. Everybody has had to adapt to it; we cannot go back on it by decree.

We simply think that what is important here is not words but deeds. Among the facts that we have to face, I will recall that in the present state of the world's arsenals, the SS-24 and SS-25 missiles and the Typhoon strategic nuclear submarines have no technical equivalents. These are the elements that determine our position with regard to deterrence.

Therefore, on the two points I have mentioned, I cannot refrain from saying that we have witnessed a somewhat distorted presentation of the position of some countries, particularly my own. I do not think that this type of presentation is conducive to making progress in disarmament. It leads to polemics, which I wish to avoid. It leads to misunderstandings, which I do not think are desirable in this body and should be avoided. The language that has been used is not the language of treaties, it is not the language of conventions, it is not the language of international agreements or the Charter of the United Nations. If the purposes pursued are so sincere, if the objective sought is so urgent, then why do we need such distorted expressions or presentations to get there? For our part we think that, for the benefit of all, we could do without them.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of France for his statement, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. The representative of Argentina, Ambassador Cámpora, has asked for the floor, and I give him the floor.

Mr. CAMPORA (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Today we have had the opportunity of listening to major statements at a very high level of representation, such as those made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union. But I wish in particular to emphasize the interest with which we followed the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. Roberto Costa de Abreu Sodré.

The declaration of the South Atlantic as a zone of peace and co-operation received the support of the Argentine Government from the time it was originally raised by President José Sarney of Brazil in the United Nations General Assembly in 1985. Unfortunately, it is not easy to institute this zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic at a time when tension is

(Mr. Campora, Argentina)

being created with the announcement of military manoeuvres in the Malvinas Islands area. We think that those countries that have given their support to United Nations resolutions that declare the South Atlantic to be a zone of peace and co-operation should refrain from creating international tension by organizing air and naval manoeuvres that are unnecessary and have no justification nor any reasonable explanation.

The international conduct of nations, as has been said repeatedly, must be transparent. A country that undertakes to create a zone of peace and co-operation in the South Atlantic and at the same time sows tension throughout the area with military manoeuvres has fallen into a contradiction that is impossible to understand - especially when in the western South Atlantic all countries, and in particular the Argentine Government, are bent on building a democratic society with freedom and justice, in an international situation that is not at all easy for the developing countries.

For all these reasons, the Argentine delegation found the statement made by the Foreign Minister of Brazil of major importance in the present circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina, and I now give the floor to Ambassador Butler, the representative of Australia.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): I think we must all be very grateful indeed to the two Foreign Ministers and the Deputy Foreign Minister who have taken the time to call in at our Conference today and make such interesting statements. I unhesitatingly express to them the gratitude of my Government for what they have done today.

The last speaker this morning, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, listed a number of proposals which have been made with regard to the verification of an end to nuclear testing. It is certainly not my place to seek to amend his list, but I am sure he would not mind my recalling the proposal that is given in document CD/717. It was put to this Conference by the Foreign Minister of Australia, Mr. Bill Hayden, almost two years ago, and it is a proposal for the immediate establishment of a global seismological network to monitor nuclear test explosions as a step towards the verification of a future comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. The Deputy Foreign Minister did not refer to this proposal, so I thought he would not mind if I took the opportunity now of recalling it to him.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Australia for his statement. Does any other member wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Solesby.

Miss SOLESBY: (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I wish simply to comment on the intervention by the distinguished Ambassador of the Argentine. He referred to military manoeuvres taking place in the South Atlantic. I assume that this reference was intended to the reinforcement exercises which have taken place in the Falkland Islands.

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

Let me first of all say that these reinforcement exercises have been purely a defensive exercise and, without being provocative, I hope I can perhaps point out that, unfortunately, in recent years we have been given all too good reason to believe that it is important for us to maintain our defensive capabilities in the Falkland Islands. As far as the South Atlantic zone of peace is concerned, that enjoys our full support. We have made this very clear on a number of occasions, including in the United Nations General Assembly. We indeed want peace in that area.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Solesby for her statement. I recognize Ambassador Cámpora, the representative of Argentina, and I give him the floor.

Mr. CAMPORA (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Very briefly, I wish to echo the words of the distinguished Ambassador of the United Kingdom when she said that the United Kingdom wants peace in the South Atlantic. The Argentine Government also wants peace there, and in wanting peace looks to the future. The Conference on Disarmament and the efforts towards disarmament will hold out no hope if countries look towards the wars of the past in order to think of wars of the future. The history of mankind will be an unending spiral of wars.

Today in the South Atlantic there are signs in the conduct of the Argentine Government, definite signs, that through an international policy seeking the peaceful settlement of conflicts, military manoeuvres are absolutely unnecessary, unless what is being contemplated is the maintenance of a situation of tension that will hamper the development of a country like Argentina, which, as we have said before, strives to be a firmly democratic country that meets the needs of its people, who, like all developing peoples, are going through a difficult international situation. Holding military manoeuvres in areas close to our country creates disruption and is lacking in justification, as they impede the building of this democratic society that is struggling to give a better standard of living to its people.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It is not the case.

The secretariat has circulated today, at my request, a timetable of meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the informal paper.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I have no other business for today. I now intend to adjourn the plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 23 February at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.