

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/TIA/INF.2/Rev.1
27 July 1993

ENGLISH ONLY

Ad hoc Committee on Transparency
in Armaments

STATEMENTS MADE IN THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
DURING THE FIRST AND SECOND PARTS OF ITS 1993 SESSION
ON AGENDA ITEM 8: TRANSPARENCY IN ARMAMENTS
(CD/PV.636 - CD/PV.656:
19.01 - 25.03.1993 AND 18.05 - 24.06. 1993)

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Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament
on behalf of the
Secretary-General of the
United Nations

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19.01.1993
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"Transparency in armaments is an important new focus of the Conference's efforts. As you know from my report, I believe that confidence-building in the military sphere will be an important part of United Nations activities in disarmament in the future. The Conference on Disarmament has a role to play in the overall picture. Efforts begun in 1992 should be continued and intensified.

"The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms will be activated in 1993 as States will be making their submissions. The Panel of Experts' report helped to refine the reporting procedures. The Conference on Disarmament could certainly make a very useful contribution to this Register by addressing the question of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, for example, by establishing universal and non-discriminatory practical ways of increasing openness and transparency. I look forward to receiving the views of the Conference on Disarmament on this item, especially in the light of the review I have been requested to undertake in 1994.

Myanmar

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The question of transparency in armaments is a new item which was introduced into the agenda of the CD only last year. The consideration of this item in the CD is still in its early stages, and it requires careful study of the subject in all its aspects. I wish to stress here that transparency in armaments should be non-discriminatory, and it should cover not only conventional armaments but also armaments in nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction by countries large and small.

New Zealand

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Equally, we hope early work can begin on other issues identified by both members and non-members as priorities: transparency in armaments, negative security assurances, and outer space.

Mexico

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Although in the nuclear area marked progress has been made in recent months, we are concerned that transfers of or trade in conventional weapons have grown in alarming proportions over the last 12 months. In particular we are surprised that the purchasers of such weapons now include countries that we did not think were involved in military rivalry. The role played in this area by the five permanent members of the Security Council, which are involved in about 80 per cent of these dealings, should be examined, as was stated a few days ago by my country's Secretary of External Relations, both from the practical and from the moral point of view, given their position and the powers that they enjoy within the Council itself.

Netherlands

Pages: 24, 26, 28-29

The international community is tackling the issue of conventional armaments. There are agreements in this respect concerning the European region. Other regions show similar initiatives. Worldwide there is now in place the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. In the Conference on Disarmament we have engaged in the exercise of transparency in armaments.

The General Assembly has recommended immediate practical steps in the direction of enhanced security through greater transparency in armaments. At the same time it drew up a road map to achieve even broader objectives. Shaping a new, cooperative security environment in which agreed confidence-building measures effectively prevent destabilizing and excessive accumulation of arms; in which scarce resources are freed for socio-economic development of nations.

Another priority item would be non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and restrictions on conventional weapons. Taking up this subject in its broader context, at the same time dealing with its various specific issues of concern, would show that the Conference on Disarmament is capable of reacting, not only to the many signals and messages from other organizations and institutions, but also to concrete political and military events and developments in specific areas. It is the acquisition of the means of defence that must become transparent: reciprocal provision between States of accurate data on national holdings of conventional weapons has the potential of

Netherlands continued

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building confidence and of assisting identification of cases of excessive build-up. Despite the biological weapons Convention and despite the chemical weapons Convention, efforts to acquire those weapons of mass destruction or the means to manufacture them continue unabated.

Our efforts with respect to non-proliferation should be intensified and go hand in hand with the work the Conference on Disarmament has already embarked on, namely concerning transparency in armaments and conventional disarmament. With the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms now in place both subjects complement each other, in their purpose and in their approach. It is a task where the Conference on Disarmament is still in its infancy. It is important because of the possible future expansion of the Register, a task we will face in the United Nations in 1994, but also because of its correlation with another subject which the Conference on Disarmament might take on: regional issues. The Conference on Disarmament is a body that engages in consultations and negotiations on a global scale. However, if the purview of the activities of the Conference on Disarmament remains strictly global, it might soon risk becoming sterile. It is the regional disputes that allow their impulses to become threats to international peace and security. International transfers of conventional arms beyond legitimate defence needs, particularly to regions of tension, increase the dangers of conflict and hinder the achievement of peaceful settlement of disputes. In connection with efforts aimed at achieving confidence-building measures, the Conference on Disarmament might provide expertise for consultations and negotiations on specific guidelines, adapted for specific circumstances if the need for that is felt and if the political opportunity to do so presents itself.

Turkey

CD/PV.637

21.01.1993

pages: 3-4

In the second part, which is entitled "Globalization: Enhancing the multilateral approach", emphasis is given to the evils of the conventional arms race and excessive transfers of arms. Attention is very rightly drawn to the alarming situation in the Middle East. Yet on reading this section it would appear that the danger of nuclear armaments takes second place to the conventional threat. That does not correspond to our way of thinking because despite the recent positive results achieved in the field of disarmament, the risks of proliferation in this field mean that the nuclear threat continues to grow. It would therefore be preferable to give equivalent attention to these two dangers in this part of the report.

We fully concur with the views of the Secretary-General concerning weapons of mass destruction, efforts to prevent proliferation, arms transfers and transparency in armaments and other confidence-building measures, as set out in the third part of the report, entitled "Revitalization: Building on past achievements".

Romania

CD/PV.638

26.01.1993

Pages: 6-7

Potential spread of the capability to produce or acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them constitute a growing threat to international security. There can be no justification to acquire the tools and technologies of mass destruction at a moment when real progress and substantial disarmament are finally beginning to occur. Years ago the world community began to develop a regime aimed at creating responsible proliferation control, not only of nuclear, biological and chemical arms, but also of long-range delivery systems and dual-use technologies, due to the growing threat posed by some States that have the potential capability and the will to produce them secretly, unwise export policies, regional destabilization following the end of the cold war and the proliferation of technology in general. Such controls should be balanced and fair and, in order to be effective, must not hamper the peaceful uses of science and technology.

As is well known, the export regimes aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons are based on the NPT, while the export of nuclear items usually falls under the heading of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Considerable efforts have been made to improve the rules on preventing the spread of biological and chemical weapons and their precursors, which now have their roots in the BWC and, hopefully, the CWC. Guidelines for nuclear, biological and chemical transfers have been established in the frameworks of international bodies and groupings, such as the "London Club", "Nuclear Suppliers' Guidelines", the NPT Exporters Committee (also called the Zanger Committee), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the "Australia Group". At national levels, export regimes aim at preventing the export of commercial goods to certain destinations and constitute an instrument to control and prevent the proliferation of merchandise, which could contribute to undesired arms developments in receiving States.

The Romanian Government reiterates its commitment to the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, missiles capable of carrying such weapons and missile technology. It is in this spirit that my Government has adhered to the Nuclear Suppliers' Group and has publicly committed itself to respect MTCR and other groupings' guidelines. My Government has decided to join all these international bodies and is determined to further cooperate with partner States in reaching the major goals of non-proliferation. To this end and in order to assure full respect of these guidelines at the national level, as well as to give itself the means to control that through its national legislation and law enforcement authority, the Romanian Government adopted, on 28 September 1992, decision No. 594 on "the import and export regime of items and technologies under final destination control, as well as on the export control regime for the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and of missiles carrying such weapons". This document, which has been distributed as document CD/1178, is self-explanatory. It represents indeed a true and efficient legal instrument which establishes an effective system ensuring that the Romanian technology is used solely for economic development, not diverted to military purposes or to unintended countries. It ensures at the national level the appropriate regulations and machinery which would guarantee the strict control of the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and also cooperation with other States on these issues.

Egypt

CD/PV.639

28.01.1993

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We have all witnessed some newly emerging trends in the field of disarmament during the last few years. Issues such as arms transfers and transparency have become increasingly topical in the global and regional disarmament debate. I must admit we have followed these trends with mixed feelings. On the one hand, we share the view that overarmament is rampant and must be addressed, thus do not object to the declared objectives of controlling arms transfers - quite the contrary, we endorse them. We also believe that greater transparency is imperative for successful disarmament negotiations, and are therefore enthusiastic about the emergence of this trend as well. On the other hand, I cannot but admit to being disappointed as to the piecemeal, tailor-made manner in which some of these issues are being dealt with. While the professed objective of regulating arms transfers is to prevent over-armament, and the proliferation of destabilizing weapons, this whole exercise has been limited to importing and exporting of conventional weapons. We wonder, do not domestic military industrial production capabilities provide for a significant, often major portion of the aggregate military arsenals? And would we not be exacerbating already unstable situations if, by limiting our endeavours to imports and exports, we provided an added advantage, quantitatively or qualitatively, to States with developed military industries? We have similar questions with regard to transparency. Why is it that weapons of mass destruction or their relevant technology are not covered by such measures? Cannot they be equally destabilizing? Are they not subject to disarmament negotiations? Are we not all interested in eliminating these weapons as well?

India

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Within the constraints and limitations cited above, India has sought to build confidence in its neighbourhood through transparency and dialogue. The range of CBMs entered into with neighbouring countries is impressive and covers three broad categories - political, communications and technical. The political CBMs include "declarations of intent", discussions on security-related concepts and doctrines, measures aimed at improving people-to-people contacts, and developing a broad base for bilateral relations; the communications CBMs include the provision of communication links such as hot lines, dedicated channel links, risk reduction or conflict prevention mechanisms and periodic meetings at official level to discuss issues and defuse tensions; technical CBMs include activities relating to arms limitation and transparency, i.e., prior notification, constraints on military activities in certain zones, ceilings on military equipment, etc.

Inevitably, the range and depth of these CBMs with each of our neighbours vary depending upon the relationship and the mutuality of interest. As a point of interest, it may be noted that at the first round of Foreign-Secretary-level talks with Pakistan in July 1990, India put forward an integrated package of CBMs. The package included CBMs in all the three categories - political, communication and technical. It provided for information-sharing on military exercises as a means of promoting transparency

and reducing misapprehensions, improving communications among military commanders, joint border patrolling, exchanges of delegations of armed forces and at the political level, reiteration and reaffirmation of settling disputes through peaceful means and bilateral negotiations, ceasing hostile propaganda, respecting the Line of Control and refraining from acts detrimental to maintenance of peaceful harmonious relations and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

The six rounds of Foreign-Secretary-level talks held so far have focused on carrying forward the elements of the CBM package. At the sixth round of Foreign-Secretary-level talks held in August 1992, instruments of ratification were exchanged on agreements signed on advance notice of military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements, prevention of airspace violation and permitting overflights and landings of military aircraft. Also, at the sixth round of Foreign-Secretary-level talks, in anticipation of the multilateral, global convention on chemical weapons, India and Pakistan signed an agreement to ban the development, production and use of chemical weapons.

While the CD has finally been able to complete negotiations on a global, non-discriminatory CWC, the recommendations regarding priorities in the field of disarmament endorsed by the international community at SSOD-I have never been translated into universally accepted norms, principles and processes to deal with the dangers and to eliminate the threat comprehensively. The adoption of an "arms control" approach, as distinct and different from a "disarmament" framework, has failed to arrest proliferation and is unlikely to provide a viable paradigm for the future. The Secretary-General has expressed the hope that "over the longer term, ... we may achieve more equitable and comprehensive approaches to responsible proliferation control, not only of weapons but also of long-range delivery systems and dual-use technologies". He has also expressed the view that "to be fully effective, such controls must be balanced and fair; they must not unduly hamper the peaceful uses of science and technology; and they should not divide the world into the invidious categories of 'haves' and 'have-nots'". While we fully endorse this view, we feel that this is a goal which should be achieved in the shortest time-frame possible. Closed-door "clubs", "groups" and regimes created to impose unilateral restrictions on trade in technology, equipment and material on a discriminatory basis will not prevent proliferation. Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot be achieved by proposals aimed only at arms reduction, though they are welcome. Nor can initiatives which in reality only preserve the monopoly of a few States over weapons of mass destruction, missile technology and export markets for conventional weapons contribute to prevention of proliferation.

The views of the Secretary-General on arms transfers are noteworthy. The arms build-up, spiralled by the increased military expenditure of the big military spenders and exporters of armaments, affects developing countries doubly - in the first place, the proliferating expenditure on armaments reduces the resources available for economic development and growth, and secondly, it fuels further competitive expenditure on account of perceived defence requirements for the security needs of the developing countries. India has all along advocated that steps should be taken to curb this tendency and trend. Unfortunately, without self-restraint on the part of the big industrialized arms suppliers and curtailment of financial assistance for purchase of weapons, this may just be a pipedream. We are impressed that everybody wants transparency in arms transfers but we are concerned that transparency is becoming an end in itself. In our view, transparency will serve no purpose if it does not achieve the objective of reduction in massive

India continued

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arms transfers. Transparency must be reflected in defence expenditure in per capita terms and as a proportion of GDP. It will necessarily have to be ensured that arms freed as a result of disarmament measures in one region are not diverted to other countries or organizations. An important dimension of transparency in armaments is the illicit arms trade which is most dangerous because of its destabilizing and destructive effects through the fuelling of phenomena like State-sponsored terrorism directed against other countries, subversion and drug trafficking.

We agree with the views of the Secretary-General on the practical importance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. This is a global CBM. To succeed, it must however be non-discriminatory and attract universal adherence with a high degree of simultaneity.

Russian Federation

CD/PV.640

02.02.1993

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As you know, the Russian delegation actively supported efforts to add the new issue of transparency in armaments onto the agenda of the Conference. The consideration of this topic at the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations General Assembly stems from the growing importance of the problems of conventional arms cuts, confidence-building measures and the settlement of regional conflicts. We view transparency in armaments as an important confidence-building measure, a means to strengthen security and remove mutual concerns and misunderstandings. We intend to provide data for the United Nations register on this topic, and to participate actively in discussing transparency problems here in the Conference, which we regard as the most appropriate forum to this end. Bearing in mind the novelty and the profundity of the transparency problem, the diversity and complexity of its component elements, we believe it is worth while first of all to determine more precisely the scope of tasks to be tackled under this agenda item and to establish an order of priorities for addressing them.

United Kingdom

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Building on the idea put forward last year by our former Swedish colleague, Ambassador Hyltenius, for a merger of agenda items 2 and 3 and 6 and 8 under the heading "Other nuclear issues and new types of weapons of mass destruction", we might aim for an agenda with three main clusters: first, nuclear issues and other weapons of mass destruction; secondly, conventional weapons, transparency and confidence-building measures; and, thirdly, existing agreements. A number of sub-items might then be listed under these clusters, and taken up as and when appropriate. For instance, work done under the heading of transparency and confidence-building might include the negotiation of a standard framework for regional confidence-building measures, and the drafting of an annual declaration of the size and organization of military forces to complement the existing return on military budgets.

Germany

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Talking now about proliferation or non-proliferation of conventional weapons we must recognize the legitimacy of conventional weapons. The transfer of arms and related technologies, however, may create problems if weapons and technologies acquired exceed the needs for self-defence and establish capabilities for aggression. Germany is deeply concerned about the growing concentration of conventional weapons in certain regions of the world as well as about certain transfers of weapons, which could lead to a destabilization of entire regions. In our view, therefore, international action is required in order to establish a regime of internationally accepted and implemented restraint in exports and imports of conventional arms, particularly in situations of tension and conflict. Such international action should cover the following areas: transparency in all transfers of conventional arms and related technologies; agreement on common principles for the transfer of conventional arms and related technologies; and development of procedures to prevent or even redress regional instabilities created by excessive arms build-ups.

With the adoption of resolution 46/36 L, a universal and non-discriminatory register of conventional arms has been established. This is a first and important step towards more transparency in the transfer of conventional arms. Germany is committed to provide data as required; we hope for large and equally unconditional participation from countries around the world. As a follow-up, after worldwide participation is emerging, we hope for further steps towards an expansion of the register and towards closer international cooperation with a view to self-restraint in arms transfers. However, transparency in transfers of conventional arms and related technologies is not an end in itself, as the distinguished Ambassador from India rightly pointed out a few days ago. Instead, its political value emerges when it can give assurance to countries concerned at the subregional and regional level that arms transfers are carried out only in accordance with the needs for self-defence. I mentioned some ideas on the furthering of this goal before, and I am confident other members of the CD will take up this issue in order to add their own ideas.

Sweden

CD/PV.641

04.02.1993

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Openness and transparency are fundamental confidence-building measures. One instrument in this respect is the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, established by the General Assembly in 1991. Sweden is now in the process of providing the information requested in the Register, and we hope that other countries will follow suit. Sweden will take an active part in the discussions in this and other forums to expand the scope of the United Nations Register by the addition of further categories of equipment and data as

Sweden continued

pages: 5, 6

regards military holdings and procurement. The General Assembly has requested that the Conference on Disarmament address the issue of destabilizing accumulations of arms, and elaborate practical means to increase transparency and openness in this field. These endeavours are one aspect of efforts at the United Nations to improve the reporting system for objective information on military matters. This task is relatively new for the CD, and the in-depth discussions which are required have been delayed considerably. I hope that these difficulties can be overcome and that a comprehensive report with proposals can be submitted to the next General Assembly.

Secondly, intensified efforts are required to address the problems of excessive and destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms. Such efforts should include, inter alia, the exchange of information, and also control and restrictions on transfers of conventional arms.

Poland

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My delegation strongly believes that efforts to check the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ban them altogether should go hand in hand with the endeavours commenced only last year in respect of transparency in armaments and conventional disarmament. While transparency and openness in military matters per se are no substitute for concrete arms cuts, they are in the view of the Secretary-General "crucially important as part of the process of building confidence". Measures in that regard, by alerting the international community to excessive concentrations of armaments going beyond legitimate defence needs, would facilitate timely preventive action.

The Conference on Disarmament needs to approach this agenda item with dedication and a sense of purpose. As the distinguished representative of the Netherlands observed earlier in his intervention, we are only at an initial stage of examination of the issues involved. In considering the interrelated questions of transparency in armaments, conventional disarmament and confidence-building, the Conference on Disarmament should bring to bear its negotiating expertise and live up to its standing as the single, multilateral disarmament negotiating body, a standing so remarkably reaffirmed by the successful conclusion of the CW Convention.

Indonesia

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My delegation shares the view that international security and stability would be greatly enhanced by increased openness and transparency in the military field, particularly in the area of arms transfers. In this connection the register of such transfers should be comprehensive, universal and non-discriminatory and implemented in such a way as to facilitate input from all States. We also believe that meaningful progress in the whole exercise remains doubtful unless the pervasive role of the arms industry and the military establishment as well as the producers and suppliers of arms is taken into full account.

Indonesia continued

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By the same token, our attention should be focused on enhancing the United Nations role to become the repository of objective data, primarily through the collection, compilation and dissemination of information on military matters. In line with the emerging trend toward greater openness in the military field, the establishment of a satellite communications system under the auspices of the United Nations would be particularly useful to compile data on armed forces and armaments production, military research and development, arms transfers, etc., all of which would make a significant contribution to confidence-building, remove apprehension and ultimately facilitate the process of disarmament in general.

Argentina

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In our opinion, the Conference has an irreplaceable role to play in such areas as the prohibition of nuclear tests, transparency in armaments, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and non-proliferation, an item on which we have taken but a few timid steps and which requires the inputs that can be made from here and the bodies that are traditionally responsible in this area.

Cuba

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The issue of transparency in international arms transfers is of particular importance, but if we analyse this problem without addressing the problem of the production and storage of weaponry, military research and development activities, among other issues, we will overlook the main arms producers, who are also those who possess military power which substantially exceeds their own defence needs. Consequently, it is not only essential to put into practice the Register of Conventional Arms, but also to guarantee that it will be duly extended in the immediate future as stipulated in the United Nations resolution on the subject.

United States

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We call on all States to provide data to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms this April and endorse efforts to stem the destabilizing transfers of conventional weapons. We will support other appropriate efforts to encourage transparency and openness in military matters, including the development of confidence-building measures with specific regional applications.

Brazil

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Another threat to international peace and security mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report refers to the destabilizing accumulation of weapons in certain regions of the world. Here again we share the apprehensions of the Secretary-General. However, we should remark that out of the US\$ 1 trillion spent annually on armaments, 80 per cent corresponds to expenditure by the developed countries. On the other hand, the Secretary-General correctly observes that "production overcapacities and surplus equipment in industrialized States are now increasingly feeding arms markets in parts of the developing world". The Governments of the developed countries have a special responsibility in respect of the need to curb the arms trade and resist pressures from the military-industrial complex.

As regards the Register of Conventional Arms established by resolution 46/36 L, we fully support this initiative. We would like to see all relevant systems of armaments included in the Register, as recommended in that resolution. It must be reiterated that from our point of view also, transparency, though important, as it contributes to greater confidence among nations, is not an end in itself and cannot be conceived as a substitute for reduction in military expenditure.

Kenya

CD/PV.642

11.02.1993

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We consider the decision by the Conference to establish subsidiary bodies on a nuclear test ban, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and transparency in armaments as a response to the new realities. We hope that concrete progress will be achieved in the near future on all or some of these issues.

Egypt

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On the issue of transparency, we once again agree with the Secretary-General when he states that, when properly applied, it can be conducive to confidence-building among States and helpful in alerting the global community to excessive accumulations of armaments. In our view, the expression "properly applied" means applied equally and without discrimination to all States, all regions and all categories of weapon, including weapons of mass destruction. It should also be applied to national production and stockpiles, whether the stockpiles are conventional armaments or weapons of mass destruction. Selectivity in applying transparency would be tantamount to discrimination and would be an exercise in futility.

Mongolia

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Transparency in armaments and the regulation of arms transfers are important issues in facilitating non-proliferation. In this context we welcome the Secretary-General's intention to do everything in the Organization's competence to make the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms an efficient and successful service for Member States.

Venezuela

page : 22

As a consequence of the Gulf crisis it was demonstrated that the excessive build-up of armaments has disruptive effects for international security. The establishment of a United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a positive measure in confidence-building. However, we believe that given the responsibility devolving on the main nuclear Powers, in this process we should also take into account the role played by producers and suppliers as well as the appropriateness of imposing restrictions upon exporters; likewise, in an effort to reflect a criterion of extensiveness, non-discrimination and equity it is vital to incorporate in the Register other categories of weapon such as weapons of mass destruction and other weapons with destabilizing characteristics. Of course, we hope that the developed countries will be the first to transmit the required information and thus set us a good example.

Bulgaria (the President)

CD/PV.643

18.02.1993

page: 5

Several priority areas seem to be of direct relevance to arms control and disarmament nowadays. Prevention of armed conflicts, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related dual-use technologies, measures to promote greater transparency in order to prevent destabilizing and excessive accumulation of armaments are widely considered as urgent issues deserving increased attention. These new emphases have been highlighted by the Security Council, which has the main responsibility, under the United Nations Charter, for determining threats to international peace and security.

The General Assembly has recommended immediate practical steps to enhance security through greater transparency in armaments. Confidence-building measures designed to prevent destabilizing and excessive accumulation of arms could create a qualitatively new international environment contributing to stability in a number of regions.

Finland

pages: 8, 9

Transparency in armaments is another item on the agenda, which is gaining importance. The acquisition and destabilizing accumulation of conventional weapons in areas of regional conflict is a threat of such magnitude that it worries all of us. We note that the need for confidence-building is recognized in the peace processes both in the case of the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia. The benefits of increased transparency and openness are obvious. We agree with those who say that confidence-building measures cannot replace reductions. Yet they do help in preventing undue suspicion and misunderstandings. And they pave the way for disarmament measures. We are convinced that it is possible to be much more open, much more transparent, without endangering the vital and legitimate security interests of anyone. Our experience of the extensive commitments within regional cooperation in the European context is that the assets far exceed the liabilities for all those who are participating in this cooperation.

The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms opens up new prospects which we should try to utilize. Finland will give its data by the established date and we expect others to do likewise.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments should consider new possibilities to strengthen transparency through measures of a confidence-building character. We would like to think in terms of building up - through concrete measures - a framework which could support regional efforts. This framework could contain universal measures promoting transparency and openness. As part of this framework, the Register of Conventional Arms is already there. There is also the standardized reporting system for military expenditure. New measures for the exchange of military data could be developed, perhaps more focused measures. This item would be an appropriate context for dialogue on universal norms or guidelines for international transfers of high technology with military applications, on identification of offensive characteristics of military forces or on measures serving for early-warning purposes.

Norway

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We have noted with pleasure that the Conference has established an agenda for 1993, focusing on various important issues such as the question of a comprehensive nuclear test ban and transparency in armaments. This provides a good basis for meaningful work in the 1993 session.

Hungary

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The creation of comprehensive and global systems of transparency in armaments is certainly an area with great potential. The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a first step which will prove its efficiency and usefulness once the required inputs from the United Nations Member States are provided. The Conference on Disarmament itself started dealing with the issue of transparency a year ago, and this year a subsidiary body was set up to provide a framework for further consideration. We believe that on the basis of principles on objective information on military matters, adopted by consensus at last year's UNDC session, we could explore the possible fields of future activity for the Conference. In our view, one of the follow-on steps could be the examination of possible structures for the assessment of data provided in the framework of the transparency systems, and for the signalling of arms build-ups incompatible with legitimate security needs. The elaboration of guidelines and criteria for such structures could be one of the future tasks of the Conference.

Sri Lanka

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During the last year, the members of the Conference held many rounds of informal consultations under the able and skilful stewardship of Ambassador Zahran of Egypt on the item "Transparency in armaments". The informal consultations which provoked a wide range of views and observations on different aspects of TIA eventually facilitated action by the Conference to include the issue as an agenda item to continue its future work on it. The resolution adopted by the forty-seventh United Nations General Assembly encourages the Conference to address the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field.

In the view of my delegation, transparency in armaments, being a part of the global disarmament process, should essentially be non-discriminatory and comprehensive. Sri Lanka wishes to particularly emphasize the need for equal and balanced rights and responsibilities of States participating in any transparency regime, bearing in mind that such a monitoring regime will not adversely affect the legitimate internal defence procurement of a nation. Any transparency regime envisaged should also incorporate a wide range of other important elements to strengthen and intensify efforts for the expansion of the scope of the arms register which was established in January 1992 in New York. Particularly, it is important that the expansion of the scope of the subject of openness and transparency should include military holdings and procurement through national production as well as production of conventional weapons, transfers of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction as well. Such an expanded United Nations register will help reduce its present discriminatory aspects.

It is also important to bear in mind that one of the main sources of instability and insecurity affecting the smaller countries is the illicit arms

Sri Lanka continued

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trade which continues to sustain a vicious cycle of terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling. At a time when nations are forthcoming to scale down their armament inventories, it is regrettable that the international community has not yet even made an attempt to ascertain the magnitude of the illicit arms trade involving various irregular groups which indulge in violent activities against democratic societies. Therefore, any monitoring regime should necessarily address the destabilizing effects of the illicit arms trade with a view to putting an end to such activities.

Netherlands

CD/PV.644

25.02.1993

pages: 5 - 8

In 1991, the United Nations General Assembly decided with an overwhelming majority of votes to establish the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. By doing so, the United Nations took an important step forward in promoting greater openness and transparency in military matters. As a confidence-building measure, the value of the Register rests in its potential to foster a climate of mutual trust and restraint, leading to greater regional and international peace and security.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was established on 1 January 1992. In order to ensure the effective operation of the Register, the Secretary-General of the United Nations brought together in 1992

a panel of governmental technical experts, on the basis of equitable geographical representation. The panel, which I had the honour to chair, elaborated the technical procedures for the Register. For instance, it developed a practical one-page standardized form for reporting international transfers of conventional weapons. In addition to the technical aspects, the panel looked into the modalities for early expansion of the Register and addressed the resource implications for the maintenance of the Register by the United Nations Secretary-General. The panel produced a consensus report (A/47/342), which was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly, also by consensus.

Netherlands continued

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With the Register having been established and the technical procedures in place, everything is set for the next crucial phase, that is inputs of data and information by United Nations Member States. In anticipation of and preparation for these national inputs, quite a bit of supportive activity is going on. I refer to regional workshops and symposiums undertaken or being undertaken in all five continents of our globe. As for Europe, the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation is close to agreeing to exchange copies of national submissions to the United Nations Register among themselves. The target date for those submissions is quickly approaching. The first registration is to take place by 30 April 1993 in respect of the calendar year 1992. To be reported to the United Nations Secretary-General are data on imports and exports of seven categories of major equipment. For this purpose, Member States are to complete the standardized reporting form. If no imports or exports of any of the seven categories occurred in 1992, a so-called nil return will suffice. In addition to data on imports and exports of arms, Member States are invited to provide the Secretary-General with available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies. The term "available" indicates that no special reports need to be prepared for submission to the Register. The background information referred to contains Government white papers, policy statements and the like. In fact, quite a few United Nations Member States, among them the Netherlands, have already submitted such information to the Secretary-General (A/47/370 and addenda).

The importance of participation in the Register by as many States as possible cannot be overstated. The Register can only be effective as a confidence-building measure if States are prepared to use it. The Netherlands Government strongly supports the United Nations Register and its objectives, and will submit its return by the required date of 30 April. It is the fervent hope of my Government that all those present here today, both members of the Conference and non-members participating in the work of the Conference, will do the same. I dare say that the Conference on Disarmament has a special responsibility in keeping up the momentum that has led to the establishment of the Register. We, the CD community, member States and Observer States, should give a positive example to the international community by participating in the Register ourselves and encouraging others to do likewise.

It goes without saying that my delegation welcomes the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. It is a timely recognition of the relevance of this subject in the post-cold-war era. Furthermore, by

establishing the Ad Hoc Committee, the Conference on Disarmament has given proof that it is capable of keeping in step with a changing international environment.

The Conference on Disarmament has been requested by the General Assembly to address a number of aspects of openness and transparency in armaments. One such request pertains to elaborating practical means to increase openness and transparency in areas such as military holdings and procurement of arms through national production. Another request has to do with increasing openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments. The work of the Conference on Disarmament on these issues will be taken into account by the group of governmental experts to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in 1994 to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development. While it is the prerogative of the 1994 group of governmental experts to draw up specific conclusions and recommendations for the continuing operation and possible expansion of the Register, the Conference on Disarmament can usefully prepare the groundwork by providing the Group with substantive ideas. This requires, however, that the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments focus in 1993 on those areas where progress is possible.

In the view of my delegation, tangible progress can be made in 1993 with regard to the so-called interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. The General Assembly has requested the Conference to address this question as soon as possible and elaborate practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field. The Ad Hoc Committee should heed this request by giving priority attention to the discussion of this question. The urgency of the CD handling this matter, in an adequate and timely manner, stems from the fact that the United Nations Secretary-General will in all likelihood establish the 1994 group of governmental experts as early as January next, after which the Group is expected to begin its deliberations expeditiously. The expert group will have at its disposal inter alia the United Nations Secretary-General's consolidated report of national submissions on the calendar year 1992. Later on, in the course of 1994, the United Nations Secretary-General's consolidated report on the calendar year 1993 will also become available. Further guidance for the 1994 governmental expert group consists of views submitted by Member States on the operation of the Register and its further development.

The 1994 Group will review the Register, and its function in the transparency process, in both practical and conceptual terms. It is a fair guess that the Group will look into such matters as the level of participation in the Register; possible improvements to the standardized reporting form; definitional problems; possible modifications of the existing parameters of the seven categories of equipment; possible inclusion of new categories of equipment; and possible inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. It is evident that the 1994 governmental expert group could use a push from the CD in Geneva.

Netherlands continued

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Things are moving, and they are moving fast. I wish strongly to underline the importance of the CD providing its contributions, adequately and on time. That means we should start our work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments without further delay.

As for weapons of mass destruction and transfers of high technology with military applications, previous discussions within the CD have indicated a considerable divergence of views as to how these issues relate to increased openness and transparency. On weapons of mass destruction, my Government holds the view that the existing legal instruments dealing with these types of weapons constitute, between them, a coherent interlocking network of provisions which are directly relevant to the question at hand. Taking these legal instruments as the basis, the Netherlands is of course willing to discuss practical means of increasing openness and transparency that would help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, as well as their delivery systems. As to developing practical measures related to transfers of high technology with military applications, my delegation looks forward to continuing the exchange of views on these issues both in the CD Ad Hoc Committee and in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Very interesting proposals have been put on the table.

Mr. President, in conclusion, allow me to address the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms one more time. As I stated earlier, the Register is about to enter its next crucial phase - inputs of data and information by Governments. It is of the utmost importance that States participate in the Register, right from the start. For only then can the Register develop into an essential building block in a family of efforts that will help to bring about a new political and security relationship between States, a relationship characterized by transparency, trust and partnership.

Spain

pages: 13 - 14

In any case, and as a foretaste of what in my delegation's view would be the agenda of our future Conference on Disarmament, we should highlight such chapters as regional measures, confidence-building measures, a big chapter which could cover nuclear aspects, and finally subjects concerning conventional weapons, with a view to transparency in transfers, a subject referred to recently by Ambassador Schallenberg and Ambassador Wagenmakers. All these major chapters have specific aspects on which, in our view, it would be possible to start the work of an Ad Hoc Committee.

Hungary

CD/PV.645

04.03.1993
pages: 4, 5-6

We are also of the view that international consultative mechanisms aimed at preventing the diversion of dual-use materials, equipment and technologies relating to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems still have an important role to play. We support and are ready to contribute to the activities of the respective international consultative mechanisms. Our cooperation with them has helped us a great deal in shaping Hungarian non-proliferation policy. Having in mind the challenges we face, we attach particular significance to the Missile Technology Control Regime, which we hope to be able to join in the near future.

Along with the priority given to weapons of mass destruction, Hungary attaches the greatest importance to the issues of controlling conventional weapons. Current events in different parts of the world, including unfortunately Europe, provide once again clear evidence of the consequences of unconstrained, excessive build-ups of conventional weapons. While recognizing the inherent right of all States to self-defence as embodied in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, it should be admitted that the excessive accumulation of conventional arms may create grave situations like the one in the Gulf region and elsewhere. Such arms build-ups are fuelled, inter alia, by misperceptions and suspicion resulting from the lack of information on arms acquisition as well as by uncontrolled arms transfers.

Hungary is therefore firmly convinced that this situation can be rectified and the best way to do so is in the framework of the United Nations. Accordingly, Hungary fully endorsed the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly which requested the Secretary-General to establish and maintain a universal and non-discriminatory register of conventional arms that includes data on international arms transfers as well as other information on military holdings and procurement through national production and relevant policies. Hungary is ready to furnish the requested data and give complete background information for the first registration which is to take place by 30 April 1993. Hungary is also ready to consider and then take further steps on this road.

Japan

pages: 6-7

Today, I would like to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, in particular the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Last week we heard the interesting speech on this issue by Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in which he stressed the importance of gaining the widest possible participation in the Register. He thus appealed to all CD members and observers to provide data and information in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. My delegation wishes to echo his appeal for the submission of data and information for the first phase of the registration process. Having been involved, from the very start, in the establishment of the Register, Japan strongly supports its primary objective, which is to build confidence among States. Japan will certainly submit its data in a timely manner, and fervently hopes that as many States as possible, especially CD members, will do likewise. I believe that achieving the widest possible participation will add momentum to the process already initiated by the General Assembly and that the Register will serve as a foundation for our further collective endeavours to increase openness and transparency in armaments.

Japan holds the view that regional initiatives have a useful role to play in facilitating the national input of data in the Register. As a matter of fact, in January this year Japan had the privilege to host, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, a "Regional Workshop on

the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms for the Asia-Oceania Region" in Tokyo in an effort to deepen understanding and to enhance the process of achieving greater transparency in armaments throughout the region. This was the second workshop held in Japan on this subject. A report on the Tokyo workshop of last year has, I believe, been circulated by my delegation to CD members and observers.

I am aware of the dissatisfaction of many States with the present relatively simple Register system, but I have to point out that, as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 46/36L, the system is but one element in a stage-by-stage process toward our ultimate goal. The process is still in its early stage and it is the hope of my delegation that the momentum achieved so far will be maintained.

Japan continued

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My delegation, like many others, is pleased to see that an early decision was made on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA. We hope that the Committee will commence its work without delay and that it will submit a truly substantive report to the United Nations. The international community has entrusted us with the task of addressing a wide range of issues concerning openness and transparency in armaments. My delegation, for its part, places particular importance on the complex issue of the excessive accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. This is an issue which has important implications for regional stability and is one which the General Assembly has requested the Conference to address as soon as possible. Indeed, it is one of the key issues that the group of governmental experts will work on when it is established early next year under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.

As Ambassador Wagenmakers so convincingly argued, it is an area in which we can expect to achieve tangible results in a relatively short time-frame, depending, of course, upon the contributions we make to the work of the 1994 expert group.

Last year, at the informal meetings on questions relating to weapons of mass destruction and transfer of advanced technology with military applications, we heard a wide range of opinions and concerns. Indeed, these are very complicated issues, since they involve strategic, technical and political questions, and sometimes touch upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests. For this reason, my delegation believes that further in-depth study and exchanges of views are needed in order to find practical ways and means to increase openness and transparency of activities in these areas. My delegation is ready to participate constructively in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee that has been established to address these subjects.

United States

pages: 8-10

Today I too will address the United Nations Register on conventional arms. Our colleague from the Netherlands spoke on the same topic last week, and we just heard today Ambassador Gyarmati of Hungary and Ambassador Tanaka of Japan also speak on the topic of the United Nations Register. I congratulate them both on their timely and thoughtful interventions.

As my colleagues noted, a little over a year ago the United Nations agreed to the concept of a Register of Conventional Arms. United Nations resolution 46/36L was adopted without a dissenting vote. The Register was further elaborated by the United Nations Secretary-General in his 1992 report entitled "Report on the Register of Conventional Arms"; the conclusions of this report were adopted by consensus last fall.

United States continued

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I believe all Governments represented around this table attach great importance to ensuring that the Register is a successful endeavour. The deadline for national submissions, 30 April, is fast approaching. My Government is busily preparing data on conventional imports and exports, along with available background information regarding our military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies.

The United States, along with many others, sees great value in establishing a global confidence-building measure which highlights transparency and openness with regard to conventional arms. Such a global measure can have a positive impact on regional relationships. The Register will enhance confidence, provide stability, help States to exercise restraint, ease tensions, and in the end, strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Ambassador Wagenmakers said last week that "The importance of participation in the Register by as many States as possible cannot be overstated." The United States agrees. The Register will not serve its overall objectives if it turns into an exercise where only a few developed countries participate. The closer we can come to full disclosure by all nations, sharing data on imports and exports of conventional arms in a given year, the greater will be the Register's success.

The United Nations Register is rightly receiving much attention on a regional basis, and the United States compliments this activity. As an example, as was noted by our Japanese colleague, several weeks ago Japan hosted a conference, where the Register was a major topic, attended by several of our colleagues from the CD. In Vienna, the Forum for Security Cooperation has adopted a decision which commits CSCE States to meeting the deadline for submitting Register data to the United Nations Secretary-General. Moreover, the Forum for Security Cooperation has taken the additional step of agreeing to exchange copies of national submissions among themselves.

At the end of March, Italy, in cooperation with the United Nations, is hosting a conference in Florence where again the United Nations Register and conventional arms are major elements. I understand there may be other important regional activity including conferences to be hosted in Warsaw and Buenos Aires. These are all welcome steps to get the Register up and running. Shouldn't the CD do at least as much as is being done on a regional basis, whether in Vienna, Tokyo, Florence, or elsewhere?

While the CD will be pursuing distinct issues related to transparency in armaments, the United States thinks this Conference could also usefully undertake efforts to give the "New York" track - the Register, a boost. In fact, individually and collectively, members of this Conference should take the lead in promoting the United Nations Register and ensuring its effective operation. But how should the Conference do this? What measures should the CD embark upon with regard to the Register? As a starting-point, I suggest that the CD could do two things. First, the member States could agree collectively that they will provide the Register's requested data and information to the United Nations Secretary-General on time, complying with the Register's 30 April deadline. Second, the CD could agree that we will encourage others to do the same, beginning with non-member participant States of the Conference. As a separate initiative, and noting what our friends in Vienna are doing, I believe that the Conference could also agree that on or about 30 April, when we submit data to the Register we will also exchange informally, among ourselves, here in Geneva, copies of our national submissions.

United States continued

pages: 9-10

Now, how could we, the CD, express the view, in a corporate way, that the Register is important and that all members - and non-member participants - should participate? Maybe the CD could adopt a decision. Alternatively, maybe our President could send a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General to express our views, including what the CD is doing on transparency in armaments and what member States intend also to do in support of the Register. There may be other ideas. My delegation would be interested in hearing the views of others. Whatever the CD decides, however, and regardless of the form of our action, we feel the Conference should do something, and should do it soon.

Mr. President, my delegation encourages you to address this issue, either through Presidential consultations, by working with the group coordinators, or otherwise sounding out delegations. We hope that you might undertake to develop a plan or proposal in a timely way which would show the Conference's willingness to support the Register and ensure its effective operation. I offer the full cooperation of my delegation.

In sum, the Register's deadline is almost upon us. The conference on disarmament, as the sole multilateral global negotiating body on disarmament, should pursue not only its own transparency-in-armaments objectives but also take the lead in supporting and promoting the United Nations Register. What better way for this body to show the international community its resolve of openness and transparency in the area of conventional arms?

China

page: 13

China joined the consensus last year on the United Nations General Assembly resolution concerning transparency in armaments. We welcome the inclusion of this issue in our agenda and favour the establishment of a relevant ad hoc committee. We appreciate the efforts made by Ambassador Zahran of Egypt and Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in promoting consultations in this area. In order to facilitate deliberations the Chinese delegation will submit to the Conference a document on China's position concerning the issue of transparency in armaments. We are also ready to exchange views in depth on this topic with all other delegations. China attaches importance to the issue of transparency in armaments and addresses it with an earnest and responsible attitude. We believe that the purpose of TIA should be to enhance the peace, security and stability of various countries and regions and the whole world. Appropriate and practical TIA measures should serve to promote international trust, reduce tension and help various countries determine their adequate armament levels. China holds that TIA should be pursued on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all countries. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, all countries enjoy the right of individual or collective self-defence. TIA measures should in no way compromise the right of self-defence and the legitimate defence capabilities of all countries. Naturally, countries should for their part refrain from seeking armaments in excess of their security requirements.

China continued

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China is of the view that TIA measures should be appropriate and practical and formulated by all countries through consultations on an equal basis. We also wish to point out that as different countries and regions are subject to diverse political, military and security conditions, the same TIA measures may produce different effects on them. Therefore, it is not advisable to seek artificial uniformity in the implementation of TIA measures. Bilateral and regional measures for exchanges of military information and for TIA should be encouraged.

Ireland

pages: 15-16

In another important area, the uncontrolled spread of conventional armaments is aggravating many regional and local conflicts and generating instability on a scale not seen for many years. The European Council has already expressed alarm at the stockpiling of conventional weapons in certain regions, and the EC member States have made clear their support for the United Nations Register of arms transfers. The CSCE Council of Ministers has also expressed concern about the threat posed by excessive accumulation of conventional weapons. These situations point to what my delegation believes is a new dimension in dealing with issues of disarmament and arms control. Many of the issues which CD is now called on to address - non-proliferation and transparency in transfers, in particular - will of their very nature concern and involve a great number of countries. The desire so often expressed here that the chemical weapons Convention should quickly become a universal instrument does not, in the view of my delegation, simply give expression to something seen as politically desirable; what is involved is ensuring the ultimate effectiveness of the Convention itself by making its provisions on industry verification and transfers universally binding. The same concern will inevitably arise in relation to non-proliferation in other areas and in relation to arms transfers. The world economy operates more and more openly, and countries which do not have major military establishments or industries can have significant potential to be agents or accessories in proliferation.

I should also like to draw attention to the proposal put forward by Ireland in the First Committee on the United Nations General Assembly last year for a code of conduct on arms transfers. We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and we hope that all States will submit their returns to the Register by the due date of 30 April. However, while transparency in armaments is very important, we believe that more far-reaching action is needed to prevent excessive accumulations of conventional weapons that can threaten regional and international stability and security.

Ireland continued

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We do not believe that the time is ripe for agreement on binding legal commitments on force levels and arms holdings. We do however believe that the dangers of the current situation would be greatly reduced if there were acceptance by arms producers and purchasers of a set of politically binding principles and criteria. The principles on which such a code could be based might include transparency in arms transfers, maintaining armed forces only at a level dictated by legitimate security needs, the exercise of responsibility and restraint in transfers, consultation with other States as appropriate and controlling the activities of arms dealers and suppliers. Criteria for transfers would have regard to the situation in purchasing countries and their commitment to respect international norms and standards. Appropriate mechanisms might be elaborated to enable States concerned by large accumulations of weapons by others to raise these concerns at the international level and ultimately with the Security Council. Models for action of this kind already exist. In our view the adoption of such a code would be a very valuable step towards averting situations where unmonitored accumulation of weapons leads to regional conflict. We hope that the proposal for a code will receive serious attention and we believe that it can be a useful element in the debate on this issue in CD or elsewhere.

Colombia

page: 18

The subject of transparency in armaments is a subject of special interest to my country. Without overlooking the threat presented by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, we think that the real threat to international peace and security is posed by conventional weapons. For several years now in other forums Colombia has addressed the problem of the continued trade in weapons that fuels and perpetuates regional conflicts and the illicit traffic in weapons that exacerbates phenomena such as terrorism, drug trafficking and subversion. In this context, we have promoted the consideration and treatment of the problems inherent in the stockpiling, transfers and production of and illicit traffic in conventional weapons, and we were the sponsors of resolution 43/75 I. Colombia participated in the group of 18 governmental experts that prepared the United Nations study on the transparency in international transfers of arms, which was called for by that resolution. The study points to the importance of transparency in the field of armaments in the context of the peaceful solution of conflicts and recommends that all States should attach high priority to the eradication of the illicit traffic in weapons and take action towards that end. The recommendations of this study were taken up in resolutions 46/36 L and 46/36 H, the first of which led to the addition of the subject of transparency in armaments to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

Colombia continued

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The Register of arms transfers established in 1991 by the United Nations is a confidence-building measure that imposes no obligation whatsoever, except the moral obligation on the State that agrees to participate in this exercise. In the initial phase the Register will cover information on transfers of certain conventional weapons whose stockpiling and transfer might be considered dangerous for the maintenance of international peace and security. At a later stage that will start in 1994 a group of governmental experts will study the operation of the first phase of the Register and provide the necessary guidance for its expansion to include information on national production and weapons stocks in the arsenals of those countries that provide information. Although this will not eliminate illicit transfers of weapons, it could have a deterrent effect. The Register could provide an analytical basis to pursue the more ambitious phase of real verification and the establishment of an international code of conduct on arms transfers. Although we think that work on these subjects is of the greatest interest, we must not lose sight of the fact that confidence-building measures such as transparency in the transfer of weapons is not a valid alternative to a focus on genuine and real disarmament.

Chile

page: 20

We would like to take the floor briefly to express our support for the remarks made by the delegation of Colombia, especially in this presentation on behalf of its Vice-Minister, and welcome the fact that we listened very carefully to those words and also those spoken by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Ledogar, as far as transparency in transfers in armaments is concerned. As you know, Chile fully supports this process of transparency and we are prepared to participate very actively in the work on this topic. We think that the American proposal has very valuable elements in it that should prompt us to give it detailed consideration, for instance the exchange of information here in this Conference, both between member States and non-member States of the Conference on Disarmament. Also on this matter, we favour all steps that lead to the strengthening of the Conference on Disarmament and these initiatives, like the one just indicated, as well as the promotion of meetings and seminars on the creation of a climate of confidence, are activities which will lead to this strengthening that we seek. Finally, I would also like to remind you of the intention and the aim declared by the Chilean authorities to hold meetings in my country during this year and next year on confidence-building measures to contribute to this process, and finally to say that, in the same way, we are prepared to cooperate and participate actively in the various meetings that have already been scheduled and the others that the Ambassador of the United States was so good as to propose.

Canada

CD/PV.646

18.03.1993

pages: 5-6

The third substantial issue I wish to address is transparency in armaments and the arms Register. With the passing of the cold war has come a move away from a singular preoccupation with the threat posed by nuclear weapons and increased attention on the need to control the unrestrained transfer of conventional arms, particularly to regions of chronic instability and conflict. In the wake of the Gulf war, the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was an important step forward in removing the veil on the international trade arms trade. By enhancing transparency, the Register offers the hope of building confidence and reducing perceptions of military vulnerabilities which can serve in turn to stem dangerous levels of regional arms accumulations.

For our part, Canada will submit its report to the Register in full and by the 30 April 1993 deadline and we strongly urge others to do the same. In addition to the required information on imports and exports the Canadian report will also contain a breakdown on our military holdings of the seven major weapons systems enumerated in the Register. This reflects not only our commitment to the Register but also our view that it is essential that it be expanded at an early date to include military holdings and procurement through national production.

It is important to remember that the Register is not an end in itself, nor is the transparency which it is meant to promote. It is only useful if it serves to alter the behaviour of States and contributes to a reduction of the arms trade. Canada supports the suggestions made by the Netherlands, the United States and others that members of the Conference on Disarmament take a lead role in supporting the Register by submitting their reports in full and on time and in urging other Member States to do the same. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament can energize movement on the issue of transparency in armaments and that the current session will provide productive debate on this issue.

Argentina

pages: 12-15

Today I would like to address an item that is of special importance for the Argentine Republic: transparency in armaments and in particular the process which has as one of its principal instruments the Register of transfers of conventional weapons. Argentina has been stressing the need to adapt and update the agenda of this and other bodies with competence in disarmament matters. Today's topic will allow me to expand on some of the ideas which have led my Government to take this position.

Argentina continued

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Last year we welcomed the addition to the annual programme of work of the CD of item 9, dealing with this very topic of transparency in armaments. As we all know, 1992 found us all embarked on the demanding task of concluding the convention on chemical weapons, which undoubtedly prevented us from giving this item all the attention it deserves. The informal deliberations we carried out under the skilful guidance of Ambassador Mounir Zahran of Egypt were useful in making us aware of the magnitude and the diversity of approaches to this item that exist in the Conference. This was inevitable if we recall that resolution 46/36 L from which this whole process stems in the final analysis is a text which from the doctrinal viewpoint defines a number of facets on which we will have to work. These include aspects ranging from the definition of what constitutes an "excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms" to practical measures to increase openness and transparency related to transfers of high technology with military applications without overlooking weapons of mass destruction.

The task ahead, as can be seen, is not easy. However, we cannot delay the commencement of practical action any longer. We welcome the prompt establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the item. The informal structure which we had last year was perhaps an indispensable but not sufficient step to comply with the request which the General Assembly addressed to us and which the CD, as an autonomous body, endorsed. The task must start by setting up a clear programme of work, derived from the mandate that has been conferred on the Committee. The two main avenues proposed are respectively the one on "interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production", on the one hand, and on the other, the subject of "transfers of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments". On both of these subjects we will have to elaborate practical measures to increase openness and transparency. In the view of the Argentine delegation, we must approach this mandate in a practical frame of mind, seeking to define in terms of concrete measures the main headings proposed in resolution 46/36 L. As a technical and negotiating body it falls to the CD to flesh out these ideas.

We will now propose some possible alternatives. First, excessive and destabilizing accumulation; weapons of mass destruction. The topic undoubtedly falls within the very origin of this subject and the register of arms transfers. Naturally, any attempt to define what would be "excessive" or "destabilizing" in the military field is a complex task. However, I would venture to say that this makes us run the risk of becoming ensnared in an endless rhetorical tangle. Obviously these notions subsume concepts that are central to State policy, such as the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, or that of due account being taken of regional circumstances, which are constantly changing. It is because of this that we feel that the treatment of the chapter on the accumulation of arms should not lead us to a debate which is limited to the theoretical plane. At the same time, we must remember that in just a few more months the second group of government experts responsible for the analysis of the operation of the Register of arms will have to consider its expansion, precisely through the inclusion of military holdings and procurement through national production. This group will undoubtedly have to look at matters of a terminological nature and try to provide practical answers, as was done by the panel that was so successfully led by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Hendrik Wagenmakers. For the moment it is our view that the work of the Conference in this phase of our work cannot produce immediate results, in so far as it depends to a large extent on developments elsewhere, such as in the 1994 group and the conclusions on the operation of the Register in the present start-up phase.

Argentina continued

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Second, weapons of mass destruction and transfers of high technology with military applications. These are the subjects covered in paragraph 13 of resolution 46/36 L. Here, we believe, the ground is more promising for concrete work. Let us first address the question of what might be done in practice with weapons of mass destruction. Fortunately, the nuclear arms race has ended, at least in quantitative terms, and the almost self-sustained tendency to grow that arsenals displayed until recently has been reversed, as is proved by the Treaty for the elimination of intermediate-range missiles (INF), START I and II. We agree with those who consider that these treaties in themselves supply information on the level of existing stockpiles. This is inevitable since very precise thresholds for the different weapons systems are set by means of their provisions. Nevertheless, we think that an interesting practical contribution might be included here: the establishment of supplementary registers for the comparison of the information obtained from the implementation of the various treaties.

As is well known, because of their complexity and the costs involved in their implementation, these agreements often set targets for compliance which are staggered in time. To mention just one, the START II Treaty sets the year 2003 for its full implementation. The chemical weapons convention which we negotiated here stipulates a 10-year period for the destruction of existing stockpiles. Nevertheless, the implementation of these agreements of such importance for all can be delayed or be affected by circumstances as yet unforeseen. In this regard, a parallel register kept by the United Nations and, like the present register of conventional weapons, supplied with information by interested States, would be a practical instrument for transparency and openness. It would be a kind of logbook which would tell us exactly what stage we have reached and how far we have yet to go. Such a register would also have the advantage of being voluntary and composed of information which is essentially publicly available. No-one would be required to provide more information than that contained in public commitments. It could be argued that if the information is publicly available there would be no need to create this parallel register. To this objection we would answer very simply: in the first place this argument could have been raised to discredit the Register of Conventional Arms, and yet we all regard it as a useful and necessary instrument. Secondly, it is one thing to say that information is publicly obtained and a very different thing to have access to it in a rapid and organized way. In this dilemma lies the difference between transparency as an abstract goal and the effective availability of the information. Fragmented, partial and outdated information, however public it may be, is not transparent. We believe that the Conference could easily set out certain guidelines for the compilation of this register on the status of existing arsenals of weapons of mass destruction.

Another concrete idea which the Conference might perhaps start looking at would be the elaboration of a code of conduct on conventional arms transfers. The item is complex and also linked to the efforts that have been made under resolution 46/36 H on illicit trade. Work in this area could start in the first place with an analysis of national policies with regard to transfers. As is well known, the Register of Conventional Arms will include existing information on relevant national legislation and procedures (para. 18 of resolution 46/36 L). Once we are in possession of a sufficient quantity of information - and it is clear that many countries are responding positively to this request from the General Assembly - a comparative analysis of the legislation could be carried out in order to determine possible common and convergent areas, with a view to the elaboration and later the adoption of universal criteria.

Argentina continued

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There is another specific point on which the Conference could make a positive contribution. The question of transfers of high technology with military applications is undoubtedly one of the indispensable components of the security agenda for the coming years. As we mentioned at the beginning of our reflections on excessive and destabilizing accumulations, I think we should also make an effort to avoid a repetition of highly familiar exchanges. No-one now challenges certain premises: that technology in itself is neutral, that there is in principle a right to have access to high technology which is necessary for development, and that this should be governed by well-defined

rules in order to avoid a situation where, under the justification of technological advances for civilian purposes, for example, proliferators acquire the means to shorten the process leading to weapons of mass destruction. On all these ideas much has been said and written. Now is the time for the less attractive and tougher task of shaping the principles into practical means as all of us without exception indicated when we agreed the terms of resolution 46/36 L. The existing regimes applicable to different fields (nuclear, chemical, biological and missiles) are a first important link. Each country has adopted a specific position on these in accordance with its own perceptions. As far as Argentina is concerned, in the post-cold-war world they are useful tools for the preservation of stability. However, we are convinced that we can aspire to more. In this connection the Conference could get down to the task of identifying possible areas for harmonization between what is already in place (the Australia Group, the MTCR, the chemical weapons Convention, the Nuclear Suppliers' Group) and national legislations, seeking to bear in mind the interests of as many States as possible in the area of access to technology and defining machinery which does not call into question the principle of preventing the proliferation of weapons with a mass destruction capability. For this exercise there is a need to coordinate the similar initiatives from various directions, for instance the consultations on non-proliferation being carried out by Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, or the work in the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

We have attempted today to present some ideas so as to give specific content to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee which on item 9 of our agenda has been established without having yet been able to begin its substantive work. For the Argentine Republic, transparency in armaments is an essential prerequisite for the shaping of a stable and equitable international order. In this context, and under the auspices of the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, the regional seminar on the register of transfers of conventional arms is being held in Buenos Aires. Technical experts, military officers and diplomats from many countries of the American continent, from north to south, have met in the capital of my country to facilitate the task of participating in the Register. In this sense, this is an exercise which is essentially technical. However, I should like to emphasize that while the arrangements for filling in forms for the Register are technical matters, the profound meaning of its existence is not. Hence we deem it essential for the necessary support to be lent to the Register from every region so that this time the effort is really representative and global in scope. The meeting in Buenos Aires aims at fulfilling that objective within the American context.

Transparency, as has been said, is not an end in itself. It is simply an instrument which helps to avoid misunderstandings and the accumulation of misjudgements as to the intentions of States. Recent history proves that ambiguity and confusion in military matters pave the way which sooner or later leads to suspicion, threats, risk and often war.

Russian Federation

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A month and a half ago, in this room, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia G. Berdennikov dwelt in general terms on our country's approach to the issue of transparency in armaments. As he pointed out, we view transparency in armaments as an important confidence-building measure, a means to strengthen security and remove mutual concerns and misunderstandings, and in that regard we intend to participate actively in discussing the transparency problem here in the Conference on Disarmament. This is all the more important because the Conference, along with the United Nations General Assembly, is a major forum for discussing the issue of transparency. This is borne out first of all by the fact that the Conference has broad representation of the main suppliers and producers of arms as well as their recipients, and secondly, by the presence here of the required expertise. Against this background, we believe the discussion of the transparency issue in the Conference on Disarmament should become essentially a standing item.

Today, I would like to set out in greater detail our approach to the issues of transparency and to outline our view of their prospective consideration in the Conference. This issue has been under discussion in the United Nations and in other forums for a number of years. Although extensive work has been carried out during this period - General Assembly resolutions have been adopted on the subject, an experts' report on the issue of

transparency in arms supplies has been prepared, and finally the Register has been developed - we must not fail to recognize that in this area, we are just at the beginning of our work. Statements made during both the previous and the current sessions have already illustrated differences in the approaches to the issues of transparency in armaments by member States of the Conference, sometimes major ones. We are not inclined to dramatize this circumstance; these differences are in our view perfectly natural. After all, on the one hand this concerns a highly sensitive area directly related to countries' national security interests. On the other hand, the solution to the problem of transparency turns on a difficulty, so to speak, of a technical nature: differences in national legislation, difficulties which result from the fact that the statistical methods and estimates existing in various countries are not comparable or not sufficiently comparable. However, all these problems should not overshadow what is most important - our common readiness to discuss transparency issues, to look for points of convergence, as well as our common support of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. Taking the above into account, we are in favour of a phased and sequential expansion of the area of transparency in armaments on an agreed basis which does not jeopardize the security of States.

I should say that for a whole host of reasons it is not easy for Russia to move forward on the path of transparency, bearing in mind the closed nature of our society in the past and the realities of the present day. I would like to note that some months ago Russia made public for the first time general data on exports of arms from the USSR for 1991 both in value and in volume terms - in other words it did what the Soviet Union had not done for over 60 years, since the time when it presented data on Soviet armed forces to the League of Nations for the last time. Now we are completing the preparation of data for the United Nations Register, which we consider at this stage as a basis for resolving transparency issues. We support the idea of expanding and improving the Register in the light of experience with its operation, and including in it additional mutually agreed categories of arms. I would also like to inform you of the positive attitude of the Russian delegation to the proposals on joint efforts in support of the Register put forward at the last plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament by Ambassador S. Ledogar.

Russian Federation continued

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One of the key items on the agenda of our Ad Hoc Committee on this topic is the issue of interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. In our view, the prospects for achieving real results in this area may become clear in a year or two, inter alia once States submit relevant information on a voluntary basis. It would be desirable in this context to consider here at the Conference first and foremost such practical issues as fact-finding relating to the excessive accumulation of arms, illicit arms transfers and also the comparability of statistics and criteria of nationality of arms production and storage facilities as a preliminary step before the mandatory extension of transparency measures to the area of military holdings and procurement through national production. There is also a need for a detailed and comprehensive discussion of issues related to transparency measures in the area of research and development, arms storage conditions and military budgets. Such an approach might provide a good basis for further development and improvement of the Register.

A few words on transparency issues with respect to transfers of high technology with military applications, and also on weapons of mass destruction. We agree with the distinguished representative of Japan, Mr. Tanaka, that consideration of this question is important, though it is a very complicated and delicate issue since it involves "strategic, technical and political questions and sometimes [touches] upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests". It is precisely for this reason that we are in favour of thorough and comprehensive consideration of this subject, for which the required expertise must be brought in. The Conference on Disarmament might well also become a forum for considering national regulations and legislation governing the activities of participants in the relevant control regimes, and also comparing export control procedures.

The problem of extending transparency to weapons of mass destruction also requires a well-considered approach. Of course, it would be wrong to place this very dangerous area of disarmament outside the framework of openness, limiting openness to conventional armaments, all the more so as the corresponding United Nations General Assembly resolution calls upon us to discuss transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction. However, at a time when the Register approved by the United Nations has not even come into operation, hasty actions and simplified solutions in this respect would in our opinion be premature. The question of how to approach the problem of subjecting weapons of mass destruction to transparency measures doubtless deserves the most serious discussion right now, specifically within the framework of the Conference of Disarmament. Obviously, the mechanical inclusion of weapons of mass destruction in the Register of Conventional Arms is hardly possible because, while the transfer of conventional weapons in principle does not run counter to international legal norms, the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and the corresponding technologies is prohibited by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on biological weapons and the recently agreed Convention on chemical weapons.

Russian Federation continued

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For that reason we support the view contained in the French working paper circulated at the previous session (CD/TIA/WP.2 of 28 July 1992) that measures to increase transparency in the area of weapons of mass destruction should form a separate procedure rather than supplementing the registration of data on arms deliveries. In this respect transparency in respect of weapons of mass destruction could probably be considered within the context of the issue of including States' armed forces and armaments as a whole into the scope of transparency measures. It is also essential to point out - and not just to point out, but also to bear in mind - that some transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction is already provided for under existing bilateral and multilateral treaties such as START II, the Convention on chemical weapons, etc. In order to increase transparency in the field of nuclear disarmament it might already be possible to reach agreement on the exchange of data on the quantities of fissionable materials released as a result of the destruction of nuclear weapons following reductions, and on their storage facilities.

In our view it is also important to remember that the scope for further extending openness in the field of weapons of mass destruction and high technology will to a great extent depend on the stability and universality of the non-proliferation regimes concerned, particularly in the nuclear area. In the meantime, we are seriously concerned by the fact that accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is sometimes hedged about with additional conditions, and presented as a sort of "concession" to the international community for which it should pay a price. The Russian Federation believes that such an approach should receive an appropriate reaction on the part of the United Nations in the spirit of the decisions adopted during the Security Council meeting with the participation of senior State leaders in January 1992.

Poland

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It is my intention to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, including the interrelated question of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. These issues - in our view - constitute a high-priority item of our agenda this year. Our tasks in this regard are set out in no uncertain terms in General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. We are expected to address as soon as possible and elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in military matters.

Let me state at the outset that my delegation fully shares the sense of disappointment transpiring from some of the previous interventions over the apparent inability of the Conference on Disarmament and its subsidiary bodies thus far to proceed to a structured and result-oriented consideration of the item. The Ad Hoc Committee cannot afford to lose any more time if the Conference is to heed the General Assembly's request.

Poland attaches major importance to openness and transparency in armaments and in the military sphere in general. This goes also for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We strongly believe that a scrupulous pursuit of these objectives should prejudice neither the legitimate needs of self-defence nor the recognized principle of undiminished security of all States. The experience Poland and other CSCE participating States have of the practical application of principles and structures of cooperative security in Europe is to us an eloquent proof that openness in the military sphere is conducive to regional peace and security. It may be likewise conducive to enhanced security perceptions on a broader scale. I would say more - openness and transparency, including the United Nations Register, have confidence- and security-building potential that needs to be explored also in regions beyond this continent.

In our view, a conventional arms transfer register covering import and export data, the relevant information on military holdings, procurement through national production and the specific policies in that regard could well become the mainstay of a global confidence- and security-building measure. Obviously, the confidence-building impact of such a measure will be directly proportional to its scope, both substantive and geographical. Incomplete disclosure, or one limited to only some countries, would certainly fall far short of the expectations which the international community rightly associates with efforts to check excessive and destabilizing accumulations of arms, especially in conflict-prone areas of the world. It is for this reason that the Polish delegation gladly lends its support to the timely suggestions made by Ambassador Wagenmakers and Ambassador Ledogar that the CD members and non-member participants undertake - as the CSCE States have already undertaken - to submit register data to the United Nations Secretary-General by the set deadline of 30 April of this year.

My delegation also finds interesting the idea of mutual, informal exchange of such national submissions among delegations involved in the Conference on Disarmament. We, furthermore, believe that in so far as documents and ideas relevant to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms are concerned, it might be worthwhile for accounts of the United Nations-sponsored regional seminars on the subject, which are or will be hosted by Argentina, Italy, Japan and Poland, to be informally circulated by the secretariat for the information of this body.

Poland continued

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In his intervention on 4 March, the distinguished representative of Ireland, a non-member participating State, referred to an interesting proposal for a code of conduct on arms transfers which his country made at the United Nations General Assembly last year. This idea should not be left unexamined by the Ad Hoc Committee. Nor, for that matter, should a similar and I believe relevant concept of a code of conduct in the field of security which Poland submitted to the Vienna CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation late last year. While developed for the specific European context, some of the ideas of the draft code may well commend themselves to a broader community of nations.

Indeed, who can quarrel with such concepts of the draft which assert, for instance, that "the participating States recognize that security is indivisible and the security of every participating State is inseparably linked to that of all others"; that "while strengthening common security and stability, the participating States will ensure that the security of each of them is not adversely affected. No State will seek to strengthen its own security at the expense of others"; that "the participating States will keep the levels of their armed forces to the minimum commensurate with legitimate common or individual security needs within Europe and beyond"; and that "the participating States will follow a responsible approach to international arms transfers and will cooperate in strengthening multilateral non-proliferation regimes. Above all, they will prevent, through appropriate legislation and enforcement procedures, illegal arms transfers"?

My extensive quote of some of the relevant language of the draft code of conduct in the field of security has not been meant to tax the patience of the distinguished representatives around this table. The intention behind it was only to demonstrate that ideas abound and that momentum is gaining in the international community's search for effective and credible measures in the field of peace and international security. In the considered view of my delegation, the Conference on Disarmament should not miss this "window of opportunity" for its productive efforts in that respect. We must act without further delay.

Cuba (on behalf of the Group of 21) CD/PV.654

17.06.1993 1/
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The Group held a brief meeting today during the short break, to focus on the matters before us. It is the position of the members of the G.21 that given the importance of the proposal just made, the Group needs time to reflect upon the matter.

1/ Statement made originally by Sri Lanka in the Ad hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments on 22.3.1993 regarding the United States proposal made on 4 March 1993.

Brazil

CD/PV.647

23.03.1993

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My intention today is to refer to the question of "Transparency in armaments" and I note also with satisfaction that even before we got transparent in armaments, we are already transparent in subjects, and we are somehow pre-announcing what we are going to discuss here. I think that is an improvement.

In 1991 the Conference on Disarmament was called upon, by United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, to address a number of issues related to transparency in armaments. The absence of an ad hoc committee during the 1992 session did not prevent us from dealing with the general aspects of the subject, under the coordination and guidance of Ambassador Mounir Zahran, of Egypt. We reported to the General Assembly about our first discussions, which may not have progressed as fast as we wished, because of the priority accorded last year to the conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention.

We were encouraged to see the early establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments this year and that the attention of member States is rapidly turning to concrete issues, under the able chairmanship of the Ambassador of Egypt. One of the concrete issues the Committee can take up was already referred to in our last plenary by Ambassador Lanús of Argentina. The question was mentioned in paragraph 13 of resolution 46/36 L, which requested the Conference on Disarmament to elaborate practical means to increase openness and transparency in relation to the transfer of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction. We agree with the concepts enunciated by Ambassador Lanús that technology in itself is neutral, that there is a right of access to high technologies which are necessary for socio-economic development and that international transfers in this field have to be conducted under well-defined, multilaterally agreed rules. I note with satisfaction that mention of this important question was made in the report of the CD to the resumed session of the First Committee of the General Assembly.

The view of my Government is that transparency in relation to the transfer of high technology cannot be achieved through unilateral controls. An effort should be made in order to allow a wide participation of countries in the elaboration of rules governing transfers and controls of dual-use technology. Participation in the decision-making process related to the verification regimes established by multilateral rules is also of utmost importance.

Resolution 47/52 L calls upon Member States to provide the requested data on imports and exports of arms to the Secretary-General annually, beginning in 1993. I am pleased to inform that my Government is compiling data and will take the necessary steps to comply with the request before the deadline of 30 April. In this connection I would like to express my Government's support for the proposal made by the United States Ambassador at the plenary session of 4 March. We agree to the commitment proposed by him with regard to the timely provision of information to the United Nations Secretariat, as requested in resolution 47/52 L. We can also support the suggestion of exchange of information among Member States, as an exercise of a voluntary character. All data exchanged have to be properly transmitted to the United Nations Secretariat too, where it will be made available for consultation by Member States, in accordance with resolution 46/36 L.

Brazil continued

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My Government intends to continue its cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat in providing all relevant information to increase transparency in the area of arms transfers. In July 1992, information related to the Brazilian controls of materials of military application was transmitted to the Secretariat. The Secretariat was also informed that since 1936 formal controls were established in Brazil on production, trade, industrial use, transit, import and export of military and what we now call dual-use material. Information was also provided on the development of national regulations over the years, together with a description of our "General guidelines for the national policy on export of military-use material".

My Government welcomed with appreciation the approval by consensus of the report of governmental experts on the Register of Conventional Arms, whose work was concluded in July 1992, under the able guidance of Ambassador Wagenmakers, of the Netherlands, to whom I want to pay special tribute. Mr. Antonino Lisboa, of Brazil, took an active part in the expert group. We were glad to see that the Secretary-General made full use of the experts' conclusions in presenting his report on the technical procedures and adjustments to the annex of resolution 46/36 L and that the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the recommendations made by the Secretary-General.

In 1993 and 1994 we will face new challenges in assessing the operation of the United Nations Register and considering ways to develop it further. We agree with the Secretary-General that successful development and operation of the Register could in the final analysis provide the United Nations with an effective instrument in preventive diplomacy.

Mexico

CD/PV.648

25.03.1993

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Allow me before I begin my statement, to refer to the suggestion you have just made to us. The proposal that there should be a joint statement from the Conference on Disarmament about the Register of Conventional Arms in New York is highly interesting and as all the delegates who attended the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments this week will know, I repeat, as they will know, unfortunately many delegations, I emphasize, many delegations, are not in a position to agree to such a joint statement at this stage of our work. I hope that you will take this situation into account if - as I hope you will not - you convene us in informal session at the end of this meeting.

In this first part of our annual meeting, we have heard a good number of statements partially or entirely given over to the question of transparency in armaments. The delegation of Mexico would like to offer a few remarks on this topic, which, as we all know, is provisionally on our agenda. In accordance with resolution 46/36 L of 1991, the General Assembly requested the Conference on Disarmament to address the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field. The General Assembly also requested the Conference to address the problems of, and also the elaboration of practical means to increase, openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments. The foregoing is part of a much broader endeavour that the General Assembly decided to carry out over time and following various avenues. Ours is just one of them.

Last year, under the direction of Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands, saw a first stage consisting of the elaboration of the technical procedures necessary for the effective operation of the Register of Conventional Arms, set up at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, together with the modalities for early expansion of the scope of the Register by the addition of further categories of equipment and inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. The General Assembly called upon Member States to make available information on imports and exports of armaments annually, as of this year, in accordance with the procedures mentioned above. By the middle of next year the Member States of the United Nations will also have to communicate their views on the operation of the Register and the addition of further categories of equipment and the elaboration of the Register to include military holdings and procurement through national production. In that year - next year - the Secretary-General will have to draw up a report on these topics to be considered during the forty-ninth General Assembly. Among other things, the Secretary-General's report will have to take into consideration the results of the review of these issues which, in turn, will be put forward by the CD. Hence the provisional inclusion of this topic on the Conference's agenda.

Mexico continued

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What is the purpose of all these efforts within the United Nations system with regard to what is known as transparency in armaments? Resolution 46/36 L gives us a few elements to respond to that question. We read that "excessive and destabilizing arms build-ups pose a threat to national, regional and international peace and security". and in the second operative paragraph the General Assembly "declares its determination" to prevent this "excessive/and destabilizing" accumulation "of arms, including conventional arms". It is obvious that, in the lengthy negotiations on the text of the resolution in question, it was not possible to reach agreement on which weapons would be covered by the Register beyond conventional weapons. An agreement for the inclusion in the Register of weapons of mass destruction, among other things, was simply overlooked. This is the origin of part of the task entrusted to us by the General Assembly.

When the General Assembly talks about the "excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms", my delegation considers that reference is being made to all arms. We would put nuclear weapons in place first. It may be thought that the production of a few atomic bombs in 1945 in what was until then a nuclear-free world was not only "excessive" but also "destabilizing", since it gave rise to unbridled competition in this sphere. The growing militarization of outer space could also be described as an "excessive" and doubtless "destabilizing" activity. And who is to decide that a given country or region is accumulating an excessive quantity of armaments? Could it be the main producers and exporters of arms who will take that decision? How can we justify a situation where, in their desire to find and/or keep their arms markets, some Governments, even at the highest level, agree to act as sales agents?

Many countries, including certainly some of the advocates of the issue of transparency in armaments and enthusiastic supporters of the Register, should feel very uncomfortable. On the one hand, they appear resolute in wanting to curb this "excessive accumulation" of conventional weapons, and on the other they insist on placing their own arms in any market open to them. In this room we have been told that the uncontrolled proliferation of conventional armaments is exacerbating many regional and local conflicts and causing instability on a scale not seen for many years. We have also been told that the Council of Europe has already expressed alarm at the accumulation of conventional weapons in certain regions and that the member States of the European Community have supported the United Nations Register. The key words seem to be "uncontrolled proliferation", "conventional weapons" and "certain regions". All of this without a doubt will give rise to discussion which we can already say will be lively in the Ad Hoc Committee chaired by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt.

Mexico continued

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Another aspect of the question is that of the transfer of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction, which has been taken up recently by the distinguished representatives of Argentina and Brazil. For too many years some scientifically advanced countries have unsuccessfully sought to monopolize scientific knowledge and its technological applications. It has been a chimerical exercise, the results of which are obvious: the proliferation of knowledge, even in such fields as the nuclear sphere, and the multitude of proof that ideas do not respect frontiers and that any technology, however sensitive, has a price that some, though not all, can pay and are ready to pay. My Government is persuaded that, despite some doubts about the Register as it now stands, the topic of transparency in armaments deserves careful analysis to serve as a basis to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this sphere. The Register is a very modest step in that direction, but we nurture the hope that the members of the CD can reach agreement to ensure success and its early expansion. Certainly we will not achieve this if, as we have heard here, our focus is based on what has been described as "pragmatic principles". Almost all of us are in favour of pragmatism and many of us have principles, but we do not believe that our pragmatism could lead us to defend "pragmatic principles".

In concluding I should like to offer a few thoughts that we shared a few days ago with the members of the Trade and Development Board when considering the subject of the possible establishment within UNCTAD of an ad hoc working group to explore the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament. After four decades of an unbridled arms race, the international community is moving towards détente and a reversal of that trend. How to demilitarize the economy - at the worldwide and national level - is one of the biggest challenges we face today. For years, some of us have been emphasizing the imperative need to put an end to the arms race, underlining the close relationship between disarmament and development, proposing and supporting practical measures. For example, we advocated a reduction in the military budgets of all countries, particularly the main military Powers. We have also examined on many occasions the economic benefits that could flow from general demilitarization. Now that a new era seems to be dawning in international relations, many countries, including almost all those that took part most enthusiastically in the arms race, are falling over themselves to reduce the economic burden of the arms build-up. Chemical weapons have been abolished, the nuclear arsenals of the two main military Powers are going to be reduced, nuclear tests have been temporarily suspended in three nations, the Register already mentioned has been established within the United Nations, as I have already said, the nuclear-weapon-free zones are being consolidated, some military bases are being closed, military budgets are being reduced, and a new atmosphere is already being felt in the multilateral disarmament forums.

Despite these encouraging signs, many countries are discovering that disarmament will not be easy or cheap.

The destruction of chemical arsenals calls for a major investment if they are to be destroyed without affecting the environment. Something similar is

Mexico continued

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happening with the measures necessary to stockpile the enormous quantities of nuclear material, including plutonium, that were accumulated over several decades. What is more, in countries such as those of the former Warsaw Pact, the prevailing situation encompasses a tragic paradox: in their transition towards a market economy, there is an ever-increasing need for a massive injection of financial resources - resources that are slow in arriving because of the sad state of their economic structures - to develop, among other things, their exporting sectors so as to earn foreign currency. But one of the few forms of high technology that those countries possess - particularly the Russian Federation and Slovakia - is precisely military technology. Hence in their transition towards a market economy they have to maintain their military industries and seek new markets for their armaments. This will surely not be to anybody's benefit in the long-term: those who export weapons will not be able to break the circle of militarization of their economies; those who import them will continue to squander their money. Fortunately this does not affect Mexico, whose military expenditure is among the lowest in the world. But for years we have been taking an interest in the size of military expenditure internationally because this affects the development of the world economy, the state of which has a direct impact on almost all countries, including the economically less advanced ones. Hence our interest in the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament.

To close, the question of the conversion of military capacity to civilian uses is highly complicated and a start must be made on studying it in a multidisciplinary manner, ranging from the merely arithmetical aspects of the military and industrial sections of national budgets to the concepts of national and international security, via the military doctrines of various countries and the perceptions each has of its own security. And here emphasis must be placed on transparency with regard to military arsenals and the transfer of armaments. The development and expansion of the Register established by the United Nations on these topics will be a fundamental element in this regard.

Switzerland

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Switzerland also participates actively in all international efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and will not fail to join in addition in the exchanges of information for the establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms.

It is along these lines that my delegation could follow the draft decision presented by the delegation of the United States on 22 March concerning "transparency in armaments". And since today we are going to receive the report of the Group of Scientific Experts, I wish to point out that Switzerland actively supports the efforts being made by this group and is in favour of an expansion of the activities of this very group.

Greece

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As I said earlier, peace and security are global issues covering soldiers and weapons including technology related thereto. As far as the latter are concerned the global element is to be considered at the production and at the transfer level. Both should be limited to the point where essential security measures are met, of either the producer or the purchaser, but not beyond. Therefore ample and precise information is required, which is to be verifiable. Wherever that verification leads to negative conclusions, further action should be envisaged. This is an elementary scheme for transparency as we conceive it. Some very helpful ideas in this connection have been aired by Ambassadors Wagenmakers and Swift, to which my country can fully subscribe. In fact, the transparency issue is all the more important for my country as we witness next door to us, let alone a little farther away, a formidable proliferation of all kinds of weapons, not least conventional ones. Faced for half a century with an apparent immobility, Europe is now the focal point of a turmoil that has shattered several countries, threatened as many others, and whose tremendous consequences are there to stay. Our close proximity to the region under fire explains our concern and our willingness to be involved in a peaceful procedure of the settlement of the conflict, to put an end to present bloodshed and distress and set the foundations for a lasting solution. Transparency, when properly applied, is the most appropriate confidence-building measure. But once again, one should not discriminate by taking out what he does not like, for that would be a virtual distortion of the matter.

Cuba

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Before starting my statement, I wish to take this opportunity to endorse expressly, one by one, detail by detail, the views put forward at the beginning of his statement by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Miguel Marín Bosch, concerning initiatives associated with the topic of transparency in armaments, and with regard to which many delegations actually, almost 50 per cent of the membership of this Conference, expressed profound reservations about their content in the course of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. I associate myself fully with the procedural proposal made by Ambassador Marín Bosch. That proposal by Mexico, and now by Mexico and Cuba deserves to be taken into account by you, as our rules of procedure stipulate.

As has been emphasized several times, the subject of transparency in armaments has been described as important by almost all delegations present here at one time or another. Our delegation also considers it important. However, to say that the item is important does not imply - still less is it tantamount to saying - that it constitutes a priority among the objectives presented to this Conference. Unfortunately we do not see the same willingness to take up other items, and for that reason it might be useful to dwell on this topic, if only for a moment. In so doing the first thing that strikes one is that the underlying arguments, between one case and another, are not necessarily the same. Some people feel the topic of transparency, and more particularly that of the register of information on conventional weapons, is important because it is a confidence-building measure, because it is a topic that is "ripe" for negotiation and because it is of regional importance.

Cuba continued

pages: 11-12

For others, who consider that confidence-building measures are not an end in themselves, that participation in the Register of Conventional Arms is a voluntary matter, that the basic mandate of this Conference is to negotiate and conclude disarmament agreements, especially in the nuclear sphere, the item is important, not because of its own inherent content, nor because of the contribution it will make to international - including of course regional - peace and security, but precisely because its relevance should not be over-inflated and take up most of the substantive endeavours of this body.

It is clear then that although we all may agree that this a matter of importance, the reasons that prompt us to say so may be as different as day and night or what is superficial from what is profound. That is why it may be a necessary condition for our work to recognize the general understanding on the importance of the item, but not a sufficient condition so that in this regard we should take for granted that there is a binding unanimity of views which might prove misleading when it comes to interpreting what are the truly priority tasks for this Conference. We hope that other areas in our sights will soon have prospects for progress as good as those enjoyed today by the item on transparency in armaments.

In analysing the relevance of the item on transparency, we do so taking into account all the elements of the General Assembly resolutions (resolution 46/36L, including paragraph 11 (b), and resolution 47/52). We hope that the Conference, when it concludes its work this year, and makes reference to the results of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee - whose Chairman, Ambassador M. Zahran of Egypt, we congratulate - will be in a position to forward to the General Assembly considerations on all the aspects of the topic, including the expansion of the Register of Conventional Arms.

We wish to place on record our satisfaction at the fact that the mandate of the Committee is that provided for in the resolution in question. Although we regret the unnecessary upsets that delayed the establishment of this body this year. We are pleased to see the prospects opened up to us by the agreed programme of work regarding the elaboration of definitions of terms that need to be elucidated such as those of: excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, military holdings and procurement through national production and practical measures to increase openness and transparency in these fields. The appointment of a Friend of the Chair on this item of the programme of work, together with the second entitled review of the problem and elaboration of practical measures to increase openness and transparency according to legal instruments in force related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and that of weapons of mass destruction, could be an initiative which will help the Committee to be successful in its work.

Cuba continued

pages: 12-13

A great deal of emphasis has been placed on the importance for regions of the initiative in the field of transparency in armaments, but at least to our mind, it is clear that it is not enough to resolve the problems in these areas - it is necessary to draw up a set of political, economic, social and military measures, and to have the political will of all parties that have any part to play in the region in order to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions. An effective step in this direction would be for the main countries that supply arms to adopt effective measures of self-determination, including those of bringing about considerable reductions in their programmes for weapons research, development, improvement and production and their export as a step towards the creation of conditions favourable for resolving regional conflicts by peaceful means. The criterion of defensive sufficiency is relevant to reflection since it would not seem logical or right that the arms-producing countries should maintain an advantageous position in the military sphere vis-à-vis those who are obliged to import weaponry essential to ensure their self-defence, still less that they should use that profit by various means to try and impose their military and political interests.

The question of openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications is a matter that we shall analyse in detail in the Ad Hoc Committee and which we shall deal with fully at that time. Suffice it to say today, that as a matter of principle, we favour the idea that any agreement on this topic should be reached through multilateral negotiations that are as universal as possible, because this will help to avoid discriminatory features in the final outcome that adversely affect the rightful interests of countries that do not have specific types of technology, whose dual use is crucial to the social and economic development of some nations. Unilateral controls are not the way to achieve transparency related to the transfer of high technology.

The question of openness and transparency related to weapons of mass destruction, we consider, is a matter on which this Conference must be in a position to make practical recommendations at the end of this session. It would also be useful for the legislation in force to be studied by its members so that measures can be adopted to enable accession to it by States which for the time being are not parties to it.

In document CD/TIA/WP.1, submitted by Cuba last year, paragraph 8 contains a proposal that the information supplied to the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms should immediately be made available to all the other participating States, for example through a permanently accessible database. The same paragraph suggests that the United Nations as a whole, and according to the mandate applicable to it, could issue periodical publications containing the information supplied by States. In paragraph 9 of the same document, in the part relating to regional participation in the Register, it is suggested that States could help in the process of dissemination by publishing full information on their legislation and administrative procedures with regard to arms transfers and supplying this information not only to the United Nations but also to interested States. These suggestions from my country, made as early as 21 July 1992, presupposed a positive response to participation by Cuba in the exchange of information in the Register on Conventional Arms, and I can confirm this on this occasion.

Cuba (on behalf of the Group of 21) CD/PV.654

17.06.1993 2/
page 5

Mr. President, as Coordinator of G.21, I think it is my duty to report to this informal meeting the position of the G.21 on the matter under reference.

Immediately after the matter was taken up in the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA last Monday (22 March 1993), the G.21 held a brief meeting to focus on many other matters including the proposal made by the United States.

Subsequently my Ambassador, as mandated by the G.21, informed the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA that given the importance of this matter, members of the G.21 concluded that they need time to reflect upon it. I conveyed this position to the Presidential consultations yesterday (24 March 1993). Since then, there is no change to the position of members of the G.21.

United States

CD/PV. 648

25.03.1993
pages 17-18

All of this reflects, in my eyes, potential for progress, a new spirit, a new outlook, and a bright future for this body ... so what happened with the draft decision on the United Nations Register?

The United States is disappointed but not surprised that we are unable to take what we would have thought was a simple decision endorsing the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Three weeks ago, on 4 March, I proposed in plenary that the CD, as a corporate body, and a body that is autonomous from the United Nations, take action related to ensuring the success of the Register. It is true that there have been two consecutive United Nations resolutions, in 1991 and 1992, dealing with the Register. But in my proposal, I was suggesting that the CD find some way to complement what has been done already in the United Nations.

2/ Statement made originally by Sri Lanka at the informal open-ended consultations held on 25.3.1993.

United States continued

pages: 17-18

Others are doing the same on a regional basis. There have been conferences in Buenos Aires, Warsaw, Tokyo, and next week, a conference in Florence. A decision also was adopted in Vienna at the CSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation several weeks ago supporting the United Nations Register. Moreover, TIA is on the CD's agenda. This is the first item the CD has added to its agenda in almost 10 years. The CD has been requested to examine questions related to military holdings, procurement, technology transfers, etc. These issues cannot be separated from the overall rubric of transparency in armaments and the United Nations Register. Therefore, wouldn't it have been only natural for the CD to take action similar to that which is being done by others regarding the Register?

I regret that one or two delegations have decided to block this modest proposal using the technique of a pocket veto. More troubling, however, is the apparent indication that some countries represented at this table are truly against and obviously afraid of transparency, openness, and measures that build confidence, both regionally and globally.

The future of the CD is in our hands. This body can become more active, and more relevant, or it can atrophy. If the former is to be our future, we certainly need to become more action-oriented. The draft CD decision proposed by the United States was an example of something that was action-oriented. The draft decision would not have obligated anyone. It simply stated the obvious by encouraging participation by CD members and CD non-member participants. The Register after all will only be successful if participation is great. In addition, the United States proposed that we exchange national submissions to the Register among ourselves here in Geneva. Those data would have already been public in New York.

My delegation therefore is saddened at this turn of events. Is this the same body which looks to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty? Is this the same body that wants to achieve some progress in negative security assurances or outer space arms control? In Washington and elsewhere, people will draw their own conclusions about the utility of the CD when worthwhile goals like the United Nations Register, a measure which, as has been pointed out, was approved without a single negative vote by the United Nations, and one which seeks to build confidence and openness among States worldwide, cannot be endorsed by the CD.

China (the President)

CD/PV.650

25.05.1993

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The CD this year for the first time set up an ad hoc committee on the issue of transparency in armaments which is chaired by His Excellency, Mr. Zahran, Ambassador of Egypt; we appreciate the efforts made by the Chairman and wish him success. China joined the consensus on the relevant resolution of the General Assembly and actively participates in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. Appropriate and practicable TIA measures would be conducive to international confidence-building, the relaxation of tension and establishment of reasonable levels of armaments for all States. The purpose of practising TIA should be to enhance peace, security and stability of all countries, regions and the world. China has put forward its positions on this issue in a working paper. We wish to work with other delegations to produce results acceptable to all.

Norway

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A renewed effort should now be devoted to implementing a global agenda of arms control for the post-cold-war era. We need to fix and operationalize new rules, norms and standards which could stimulate the growth of a sustainable international security order. What are the basic norms which should sustain that order? I think there are five: first, commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes; second, commitment to the norm of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; third, commitment to a system of effective control designed to prevent the proliferation of ballistic missiles; fourth, commitment to instituting equitable and cooperative systems for managing the transfer of sensitive technologies; and fifth, guidelines in regard to the transfer of conventional weapons in order to prevent local arms races, instability and aggression.

Senegal

pages: 18-19

Naturally, Senegal, which attaches priority to the question of weapons of mass destruction, ascribes just as much importance to the control of conventional weapons. The distressing events occurring in various parts of the world, notably Africa, demonstrate in the clearest possible manner the consequences of unbridled and excessive accumulation of conventional weapons, how it aggravates local and regional conflicts. That is why, in his report entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", (document A/C.1/47/7), the United Nations Secretary-General has underscored that transparency can be conducive to confidence-building among States and eliminating risks of suspicion, misunderstanding, tension or threats of war. In that connection the Register of Conventional Weapons established by the United Nations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/36/L should help to create conditions of transparency and confidence, responsibility and stability for the strengthening of regional and international peace and security. Essentially the Register should institute an international code of conduct for the purposes of controlling arms transfers and the activities of weapons suppliers and dealers in accordance with universally applicable rules and standards. It is also a question of putting an end to the nefarious effects of the illicit

Senegal continued

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arms trade connected with the vicious cycle of terrorism, drug trafficking and smuggling engaged in by irregular groups that are destabilizing modern societies.

It is to be hoped that, after four decades of the arms race, we are moving towards the demilitarization of economies, the conversion of military-industrial complexes to peaceful purposes. But the end of this process is not, of course, around the corner. Still waiting in the background are the many problems connected with the close relationship which my country has always held to exist between disarmament and development. The time has perhaps come to monitor arms deals, breaking the infernal cycle of illicit exports, and to diminish their impact on the world economy in order to achieve the better, transparent management of arsenals. I am convinced that the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency under the enlightened leadership of the Ambassador of Egypt, my friend, Mounir Zahran will be able to take account of all these factors, in a global approach to these very important aspects of disarmament.

Canada

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Finally, I would like to comment briefly on the work regarding transparency in armaments. The Register of Conventional Arms is now in place and Canada submitted its report by the April 30 deadline. This reflects our commitment to the Register. We would like to assume that either all CD members have submitted their voluntary data and background information to the Register, or, if they have not done so, that they plan to do so imminently.

You will recall that a group of governmental experts is due to convene in 1994 with a view to preparing for the Secretary-General at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly a report on the operation of the Register. Furthermore, this report will take into account the work of the CD as outlined in paragraphs 12 to 15 of resolution 46/36 L.

Time is marching on. If we are to meet our commitments, and make a useful contribution to the group of governmental experts, the ad hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments will need to accelerate its work.

Netherlands

CD/PV.651

03.06.1993

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For its part, the General Assembly has set out important objectives for the arms control and disarmament agenda of the 1990s under the heading "Transparency in armaments". These two examples are an expression of the increasing consensus of opinion within the international community on what constitutes acceptable behaviour among its members. By shaping such normative values, the Security Council and the General Assembly respectively have provided criteria by which the action of all States can be evaluated.

The foregoing may help to conceptualize the way the CD should carry out the important task under its agenda item "Transparency in armaments". Next to non-proliferation with regard to weapons of mass destruction, transparency in armaments has been pushed to the forefront of our concerns. It is through conventional weapons that most suffering comes about. As such, I consider it a priority item. This "transparency" exercise in the CD should eventually make it easier to achieve proper regulation of the conventional arms trade. I take note in this respect of the interesting idea, suggested by Ireland and Poland for instance, which involved the development of an international code of conduct on arms transfers. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is an important component of "transparency in armaments". Some 50 States have now submitted data on their imports and exports of conventional arms and have, in most cases, also provided available background information. This is a most promising start indeed, although broader participation in the Register does of course remain essential. I would like to emphasize that the Register exercise should not be seen as directed against one State or the other. Its function is not to harm anyone, but to increase the security of all. The Netherlands will maintain its efforts to carry this important confidence-building initiative further.

Argentina

CD/PV.652

08.06.1993

pages: 3, 5

We wish to establish a regional security framework banning weapons of mass destruction, and set up an effective system of verification of compliance therewith, and to foster the consideration of a monitoring system for conventional armaments in the region, properly and adequately taking care of legitimate national defence requirements and stimulating a regional context of confidence, transparency and detente.

Second, we also know that without transparency there will be no confidence. One of the most promising trends in the field of security and disarmament diplomacy is the growing importance of confidence-building measures. The establishment of an international register of arms transfers and other similar mechanisms for confidence-building must be consolidated through their implementation and gradual improvement. This strengthens the principle of self-defence in the face of any surreptitious attempt to prepare surprise attacks. Argentina has resolutely joined this process, and we are working with Latin American Governments to make military transparency a common principle in our region. We support the initiative for the convening of a regional conference on the confidence-building measures in Latin America. We must evaluate their possible adaptation to our regional circumstances and shoulder our responsibilities in the area of defence and security.

Argentina continued

page: 5

The post-cold-war order is in the process of construction, and each of us on this planet bears a responsibility in its design. Argentina has entered into international commitments at both regional and global levels, as a positive contribution to creating stability in international relations based on these principles. My Government proposes as the main objective of its security policy to seek - through dialogue - a greater degree of confidence among nations by means of the creation of transparent forms of cooperation that will foster a stable and democratic international order which will preserve international peace and security.

Peru

page: 8

Peru supports all the efforts made in this Conference and elsewhere to give transparency to the acquisition and production of armaments as an important confidence-building measure. We have supported all United Nations resolutions in this field and we hope soon to convey the information requested to the Secretary-General.

Romania

CD/PV.653

16.06.1993

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Several items on the Conference agenda retain your attention, that seem to be among the more promising for negotiation and action at this stage. I would only refer to one of growing interest for the international community, namely "Transparency in armaments". It is of increasing concern for the United Nations, towards which the Geneva Conference on Disarmament cannot remain silent. Conventional arms are the ones used in the "hot spots" of our planet. Arms transfers often represent the main destabilizing factor in many regions of the world. Moreover, the balance of forces established over time or by international agreements in various sensitive regions and zones can be undermined through preferential conventional arms transfer policies. Under these circumstances, we believe that transparency in armaments, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, should rightfully hold an important place in the overall future activities of the Geneva Conference. In our view, the overall aspects regarding transparency in armaments could be regulated through an international treaty of universal vocation, which would set standards and procedures, as well as appropriate implementation mechanisms. In order to break the ground for such a comprehensive and complex work, the first stage could be aimed at agreed guidelines to serve as an international code of conduct. The experience of the five permanent members of the Security Council in this field could represent a starting-point and a useful contribution for the future efforts of the Geneva Conference, as well as those of the United Nations, the CSCE and various regional bodies.

Malta

CD/PV.654

17.06.1993
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The third issue I wish to address is transparency in armaments and the arms register. With the ending of the cold war, increased importance had to be made on the need to control the transfer of conventional arms, particularly for those regions of tension and instability. At last year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, a new item was introduced as part of the agenda of the Conference on transparency in armaments, and this year we have rightly established an Ad Hoc Committee on this issue.

The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, of which Malta in the 1960s was the original initiator at the United Nations General Assembly, was an important step to control international arms trade. In conformity with my Government's policy and objectives, at the forty-seventh United Nations General Assembly, Malta was co-sponsor of the resolution on transparency in armaments, which was adopted without a vote. In accordance with the provisions of this resolution, Malta has submitted its report. We urge others who have not yet done so to submit their reports. We need to build confidence to enhance transparency and, as stated by other delegations, hope that the Conference on Disarmament at its current session will provide a stimulus on this item. My delegation looks forward to further deliberations on this item. Although this item has been discussed recently within the Conference on Disarmament, it will be further examined in the future prior to the 1994 expert group which will have the task of studying the operation of the first phase of the Register and provide guidance for its expansion and further development. Needless to say, the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments is a timely and encouraging measure which will create the right ambiance for effective and concrete advancement in this specific area.

New challenges and opportunities are presenting themselves. Transparency in armaments is one of the most important items in which this year the Conference on Disarmament has an important role to play. Transparency in armaments would complement other discussions and negotiations taking place in other forums, including CSCE. My delegation hopes that the political will shown in the establishment of this and other measures will be enhanced and strengthened.