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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 10 March 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. G. Herder (German Democratic Republic)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. A. BENYAMINA

Argentina: Mr. F. JIMENEZ DAVILA
Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD

Australia: Mr. R. STEELE
Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium: Mr. A. ONKELINX
Mr. J.M. NOIRFALISSE

Brazil: Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. P. VOUTOV
Mr. R. DEYANOV
Mr. I. SOTIROV
Mr. K. PRAMOV

Burma: U SAW HLAING

Canada: Mr. G. SKINNER

China: Mr. YU Peiwen
Mr. SA Benwang
Mr. YU Mengjia

Cuba: Mrs. V. BOROWDOSKY JACKIEWICH

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. RUZEK
Mr. P. LUKES
Mr. J. JIRUSEK
Mr. J. FRANIK

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN

Ethiopia: Mr. F. YOHANNES

France:

Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE

Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic:

Mr. G. HERDER

Mr. H. THIELICKE

Mr. M. KAULFUSS

Mr. P. BUNTIG

Germany, Federal Republic of:

Mr. G. PFEIFFER

Mr. N. KLINGLER

Mr. H. MULLER

Hungary:

Mr. I. KOMIVES

Mr. C. GYORFFY

India:

Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia:

Mr. E. SOEPRAPTO

Mr. HARYOMATARAM

Mr. F. QASIM

Mr. KARYONO

Iran:

Mr. J. ZAHIRNIA

Italy:

Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO

Mr. A. CIARRAPICO

Mr. B. CABRAS

Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan:

Mr. Y. OKAWA

Mr. M. TAKAHASHI

Mr. R. ISHII

Mr. K. SHIMADA

Kenya:

Mr. S. SHITEMI

Mr. G. MUNIU

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mr. M.A. CACERES

Mongolia:

Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. L. BAYRAT
Mr. S.O. BOLD

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:

Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. H. VAGENMAKERS
Mr. N.H. BIEGMAN

Nigeria:

Mr. M.B. BRIMAH
Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AHMAD
Mr. M. AKRAM
Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru:

Mr. F. VALDIVIESO

Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. K. TOMASZEWSKI
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania:

Mr. T. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA

Sweden:

Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. L. NORBERG
Mr. S. STROMBACH
Mr. G. EKHOLM
Mr. J. LUNDIN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO
Mr. L.A. NAUMOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMTERHAYES
Mr. J.I. LINK

United States of America:

Mr. C.C. FLOWERREE
Mr. F. DESIMONE
Mr. K. CRITTENBERGER
Mr. J.A. MISKEL
Mr. H. WILSON

Venezuela:

Mr. A.R. TAYLHARDAT
Mr. O.A. AGUILAR

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. VRHUNEC
Mr. B. BRANKOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. N'KONGO DONTONI BWANDA

Secretary to the Committee
and Personal Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the
Committee:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

NON-MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES

Norway:

Mr. J. HOLST
Mr. O. VAERNO

The CHAIRMAN: Distinguished delegates, I declare open the 113th plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament. The Committee continues today its consideration of item 6 of its agenda, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament".

Before giving the floor to the representatives inscribed in the list of speakers, I would like to deal with two subjects which require action by the Committee. As the members are aware, we considered at our informal meeting yesterday the communication received from Austria informing us of questions of particular concern to it on the agenda of the Committee. According to previous practice, the Secretariat has circulated the relevant draft decision, which is contained in Working Paper No. 35. ^{1/} If there is no objection, I will consider that the draft decision is adopted.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like now to turn to another subject. Members of the Committee will recall that, at our 106th plenary meeting, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events introduced the progress report on the Group's eleventh session. In accordance with previous practice, I intend now to submit that progress report, contained in document CD/150, for approval by the Committee. Before I proceed, I would like to ask members if they would like to comment on that report.

Mr. FLOWERREE (United States of America): My intervention is simply to ask, since this is the first time I have seen document CD/150 and I have not had a chance to compare it with the one which was circulated informally earlier, if there are any changes in this document from the one the seismic experts presented earlier and, if there are, would you be so good as to point them out to us. If the report is unchanged, I would have no difficulty in approving it.

The CHAIRMAN: I can confirm that this document has not been changed. It is the same as the one circulated earlier.

Mr. LIDGARD (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to recall that, as a matter of fact, I did introduce this paper two weeks ago.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no objections, I will consider the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts, as contained in document CD/150, adopted by the Committee.

It was so decided.

^{1/} "In response to the request of Austria [CD/148 and CD/163] and in accordance with rules 33 to 35 of its rules of procedure, the Committee decides to invite the representative of Austria to participate during 1981 in the meetings of the Ad hoc working groups on chemical weapons and on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons."

Mr. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO (Italy) (translated from French): I should like first, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your accession to the chairmanship of the Committee for the month of March. I am certain that your human and professional qualities and your long experience in multilateral diplomacy will prove most valuable for the progress of our work.

I also wish to say how much we appreciated the masterly way in which your predecessor, Ambassador François de la Gorce, carried out his duties in February. Under his exemplary guidance, the Committee completed an important stage in its work.

My intention today is to discuss item 6 of our agenda, comprehensive programme of disarmament, in accordance with our agreed programme of work. However, in view of the course taken by our discussions and the interconnections between the questions we are to deal with, I should like also to touch on item 2, Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. I will begin with that subject.

My delegation shares with others an awareness of the importance and urgency attaching to the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. It therefore earnestly hopes that there will be progress in this matter in all the forums concerned, those of a multilateral character, such as this Committee, and those of a bilateral character directly involving the two Powers which possess the largest military arsenals.

Although it is clear that there is not, at this stage, a consensus on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the subject of nuclear disarmament problems, that does not mean the end of our efforts in that direction: in an area of such importance and complexity, the Committee itself, at the more strictly political level, constitutes a working group. We are positive that the Committee on Disarmament cannot dissociate itself from the search for solutions to one of the fundamental problems of our time and that it may have a part to play, at the appropriate stages, in the nuclear disarmament process. It has already done so in the past, as is evident from the existence of the non-proliferation Treaty, the Treaty concerning the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the partial test-ban treaty. In those cases, two prior conditions were fulfilled: the purpose of the negotiation had been clearly defined and the role of the Committee clearly identified. We have not yet reached that point as regards item 2 of our agenda, a question that everyone agrees is "complex", that is, one which has many different aspects and is closely connected with other matters that go beyond its limits, touching upon the very foundations of the international system as it at present exists.

Even if we are not at the stage of being able realistically to contemplate the establishment of an ad hoc working group, we ought nevertheless to continue to examine this subject of vital importance for all mankind, with all the attention and urgency it deserves. My delegation notes with satisfaction a general feeling in favour of holding informal meetings of the Committee on this subject during this first part of our annual session, as well as on the question of the total prohibition of nuclear tests. In that connection it supports the draft declaration by the Chair which the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany submitted yesterday, at the Committee's informal meeting. We would regard this as not simply a school exercise or purely theoretical, but rather a preliminary effort related to this Committee's essential function, which is still that of negotiating concrete measures.

(Mr. Cordero Di Montezemolo, Italy)

Some delegations have suggested that such discussions should centre on a well-defined focal point. My delegation in general shares this concern for methodology, but it wonders whether the more appropriate starting point for discussions on matters of substance might not still be the relevant paragraphs of the Programme of Action contained in the Final Document. Those paragraphs, which were the subject of a consensus, reflect the various elements and various standpoints in a balanced, carefully-negotiated whole. If we started from there, we should be going in the right direction. So far as agenda item 2 is concerned, the practical difficulty hampering our efforts is the fact that the Programme of Action constitutes a broad framework of a general character, whereas the Committee's purpose, and the task for which it was set up, are to negotiate specific measures of a multilateral nature. To overcome this contradiction, the Committee should try to analyse in detail the various aspects of a question which objectively is "complex". This would mean seeking to identify, one by one, its constituent elements and to define their correlation with other factors determining the disarmament process: my delegation is thinking in particular of the relationship between nuclear disarmament and the security of States, between nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament, and between measures which could be implemented and the possibilities for their verification.

There is one specific measure that has already been identified and to which we have all attributed the highest priority: the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, which appears as item 1 of our agenda. Other measures could be identified; many valuable contributions have in past years been made towards that end; I would recall, among others, those of the delegations of Canada and Australia.

This brings me back to the points I wanted to make in connection with agenda item 6 entitled, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". Here again, what we must do is to break down the general subject of nuclear disarmament. I would add that the Committee's informal meetings on nuclear disarmament might also be of value for the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group which is concerned with the comprehensive programme.

My delegation has always taken a special interest in the preparation of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. Mr. Speranza, Secretary of State at Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, once again pointed to the basic reasons for this in his speech to this Committee on 3 February 1981.

I wish today to refer to various aspects of a more general kind, leaving consideration of specific problems to later occasions.

I would emphasize, above all, that my delegation hopes it will be possible to complete the preparation of a draft comprehensive programme within the Committee before the General Assembly's second special session devoted to disarmament. Although it is for the General Assembly to say the final word on the comprehensive programme, my delegation would very much regret any suggestion of the Committee's being unable to agree on a draft programme, for that would undermine its credibility. In order to prevent such a possibility arising, we must all show the utmost flexibility.

(Dr. Cordono Di Montezenclo, Italy)

The Ad Hoc Working Group which is under the chairmanship of Mr. Garcia Robles has identified two points on which there appears to be a consensus: (a) the comprehensive programme should consist of a series of phases; (b) there should be a review at the end of each phase. It seems to me important to stress these two elements, since they serve, inter alia, to distinguish the comprehensive programme from the Programme of Action outlined in the Final Document, and from other documents similar in content. For no one wants the comprehensive programme to be merely one more list of disarmament measures. However, we do not believe that this difference can be created artificially by conferring on the comprehensive programme a legally binding character which is inappropriate to it. While it is true that the task for which the Committee was set up is to negotiate agreed texts, it does not necessarily follow that such texts need be conventions or treaties. In fact, the purpose of the programme, as we pointed out in our working paper CD/155, is to establish "an agreed framework for substantive negotiations in the field of disarmament".

Similar observations are called for with regard to the time-frames which, it is proposed, should accompany each phase or stage of application of the programme: this proposal -- although it springs from a concern which we well understand -- seems to us to reflect a legal rather than a political approach. In law, an obligation is virtually pointless without a time-limit for its fulfilment. But the comprehensive programme can hardly take the form of a legal instrument; it is, rather, a political undertaking. In this context, a pre-determined time-table would not of itself make it more effective.

I would point out that both those who support the idea of fixing time-frames and those who are opposed to that idea agree on the fact that the political will of States is the decisive factor. The first group, however, would like this will to be taken out of the sphere of fluctuations in the international situation and be tied from the outset to a time-table covering every step and every phase leading to general and complete disarmament under effective control.

My delegation is convinced that it would be possible to pursue the same aim, that of giving the comprehensive programme real and lasting effect, by undertaking, side by side with the programme, a sustained political effort to eliminate the sources of tension and injustice in the world and to increase the effectiveness of the international machinery provided, both within and outside the United Nations, for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the promotion of the political, civil, social and economic rights of human beings. Herein lies the value of the so-called collateral measures which are at each stage to form an integral part of the comprehensive programme, alongside the measures specifically concerned with arms control and disarmament: their implementation, and the strengthening of international security and confidence which would follow, would contribute far more to safeguarding that "political will" of States from the vagaries of the international situation than would the setting of a detailed time-table.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Italy for his statement and for the congratulations he addressed to me on the occasion of my assumption of the chairmanship.

Mr. SOEPRAPTO (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, paragraph 11 of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade states that the comprehensive programme for disarmament, recognized as an important element in an international disarmament strategy, "should be elaborated with the utmost urgency". It further states that "the Committee on Disarmament should expedite its work on the elaboration of the programme with a view to its adoption no later than at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1982". Our Committee has acted accordingly by deciding on 12 February that the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, which was established last year, should resume its work, and the Working Group, under the chairmanship of Ambassador García Robles of Mexico, has already engaged in substantive negotiations on the matter.

Now that the working group, the most suitable organ for negotiations, has already started its substantive work, and since my delegation stated the general position of my Government on matters relating to the CPD last year in this Committee, I shall confine myself to the question of the possible form of the instrument elaborating the programme and the question of a time-frame.

With regard to the first question, while the CPD, being a programme, may not take the form of an international instrument of a legally binding character such as a convention or a treaty, it should not, however, be considered as a simple recommendation. It must have a certain degree of binding force which would be higher than that of a mere declaration, although perhaps lower than that of a convention or a treaty. The programme should not be just an expression of intentions by States; it should also clearly set forth commitments by States to implement the programme in good faith.

As to the second question, it is also the view of my delegation that the programme should be conceived within a specific time-frame and, to enable the international community to take stock of the progress of the implementation of the programme, periodic reviews should be foreseen.

Needless to re-emphasize that every proposed measure in the programme should not be considered as an end in itself. It is only one of the steps leading to the ultimate goal of the disarmament process, i.e., general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Even general and complete disarmament under effective international control is not an end in itself either. It is a means to achieve another objective, i.e., a genuine and lasting international peace.

I cannot conclude my brief statement without extending to you, Mr. Chairman, the warmest congratulation of my delegation for your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee for this month. Your task is heavy and difficult but I am confident that you can always count on the co-operation of all the members of the Committee. My delegation is also convinced that the Committee will benefit from your vast experience and that we can continue to move forward in our work to make further progress. I should also like to express the sincere gratitude of my delegation to your predecessor, Ambassador François de la Gorce of France, who presided over our work during the month of February. Thanks to his flexibility and firmness, his patience and efficiency, the Committee was able to deal with procedural matters quickly and to begin negotiations on most of the items on its agenda.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. YU Peiven (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, before I come to the substantive part of my statement, I wish first to extend you my congratulations for your assumption of the Chair during this month. With your vast experience on the subject of disarmament and your great skill, I believe that under your chairmanship good results and progress will be achieved in the work of the Committee on Disarmament. The Chinese delegation pledges its full co-operation with you. At the same time I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Ambassador of France who presided over the meetings of the Committee last month. Like others present here, I admire Ambassador de la Gorce for his diplomatic skill and his devotion to the cause of disarmament. His efforts had a great deal to do with the good beginning we have made in our work this year. I also wish to thank him for his friendship towards all of us and his spirit of co-operation.

Today I would like to state our views on the two agenda items, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament" and "Comprehensive programme of disarmament".

Like many others, the Chinese delegation attaches great importance to the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, because it has a direct bearing on the major issue of eliminating the danger of nuclear war and maintaining international peace and security.

The statements made by many representatives have reflected their apprehension and serious concern over the present situation with regard to world nuclear armaments. Having engaged in testing, development and production over a long period of time, each of the two Superpowers has accumulated an enormous number of nuclear weapons. According to the estimates made in the "Comprehensive study on nuclear weapons" presented by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, these two Superpowers together possess a total of 48,000 nuclear warheads of various kinds which account for 97 per cent of the total number of nuclear warheads in the world, or, in terms of nuclear warhead yield, they have in their hands a total of 19 billion tons or 96 per cent of the world's total nuclear yield. The above figures have made it amply clear that the two Superpowers with the largest nuclear arsenals in the world are posing threats to international peace and the security of all the countries in the world. Only they have the capability to wage a nuclear war.

Moreover, in their contention for nuclear superiority, the two Superpowers are now starting a new round in the nuclear arms race centred on qualitative improvement, which has given cause for added apprehension. Having attained numerical superiority in strategic weapons, that late-coming Superpower is now working feverishly to improve the quality of its nuclear weapons, with particular emphasis being given to the strengthening of its counterforce capabilities so as to achieve across-the-board nuclear superiority. Meanwhile, the other Superpower has also accelerated its pace

(Mr. Yu Peiwen, China)

of nuclear expansion and intensified its efforts to develop new types of strategic weapons. The fierce race between the two Superpowers for nuclear superiority constitutes the key factor which accounts for the lack of substantive progress in disarmament.

Motivated by their desire for the removal of the danger of nuclear war, many small and medium-sized countries have put forward a series of reasonable views and proposals. They call for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, cessation of the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapon systems and cessation of the production of all types of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and drastic reduction of the stockpile of nuclear weapons leading to their ultimate and complete elimination at the earliest possible date. They have called upon the two Superpowers to implement in earnest the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which affirm the special responsibility in the task of achieving nuclear disarmament to be assumed by countries with the most important nuclear arsenals. They have also proposed that appropriate and reliable verification measures be provided for various stages and aspects of the nuclear disarmament process, so as to ensure the implementation of the agreements reached. These views and proposals deserve our serious attention and close study.

China has consistently stood for nuclear disarmament and resolutely opposes nuclear war. We are ready to work with other countries in our common search for practical measures to halt the nuclear arms race and to attain nuclear disarmament. In our view, when exploring in a concrete manner how to attain our common goal, we should identify approaches effective for the resolution of disarmament problems based on the salient features of world balance, or rather the world imbalance in matters of armaments. As I mentioned earlier, the two Superpowers at present have the largest nuclear arsenals. Added together, their nuclear warheads are at least 50 times the total warheads of the rest of the nuclear countries combined. The overwhelming majority of countries in the world have no nuclear weapons. Under such circumstances, it is impossible to talk about equal security among the countries of the world. Consequently, in order to remove the very real threats to world peace and to assure all the countries of equal security, it is necessary for the countries with the largest nuclear arsenals to take actions in advance of other countries by halting the nuclear arms race, ceasing the testing, production and development of all types of nuclear weapons and drastically reducing their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. To take such steps is their unshirkable responsibility. Here also lies the litmus test as to whether they are willing to reduce the danger of nuclear war by taking concrete actions. It goes without saying that on the question of nuclear disarmament, the other nuclear-weapon countries must bear their share of the responsibility. At a certain stage of the nuclear disarmament process, they should also take actions. But in our view, it is neither practical nor fair to make the same demands on the other nuclear-weapon countries as on the two Superpowers. This can only help the latter countries maintain and increase their immense military superiority and hegemonic threats.

(Mr. Yu Peiwen, China)

The goal of nuclear disarmament should be the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons. Pending the attainment of this lofty goal, partial measures are obviously necessary. Here it should be pointed out that the mere cessation of the testing development and production of nuclear weapons could only curb their quantitative increase and qualitative improvement, but it alone would not remove the danger of a nuclear war, because there would remain the serious threats posed by the enormous nuclear arsenals of the Superpowers. As a result, a number of small and medium-sized countries have called for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons pending the achievement of nuclear disarmament. This represents a reasonable demand which, in our view, merits our serious attention in the course of our consideration of the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race.

The cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament is a very broad and complex issue which involves many specific questions requiring study and effective actions. We will join the other delegations in an exploration of this complex issue. In view of the existing difference of views on various aspects of this issue, we are in favour of the proposal made by the non-aligned and the neutral countries at this session of the Committee that an ad hoc working group on nuclear disarmament be formed to discuss various stages of nuclear disarmament as envisaged in paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and other related issues. It remains the sincere hope of this delegation that progress conducive to nuclear disarmament can be made through serious discussions and negotiations.

I would like now to turn briefly to the question of a comprehensive programme of disarmament. The Chinese delegation has always attached great importance to the formulation of the programme. China submitted to the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its first session in May 1979 the "Proposal on the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament" (A/CN.10/5). In July 1980, we again put forward a working paper containing "Proposals on the main principles of a comprehensive programme of disarmament" (CD/CPD/WP.3). We will continue our efforts at this session and we stand ready to co-operate with other delegations.

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 35/46 states: "The Committee on Disarmament should expedite its work on the elaboration of the programme with a view to its adoption no later than at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, scheduled for 1982". There is not much time left, and the Committee on Disarmament will have to intensify its work on this item. We earnestly hope that this session of our Committee will succeed in formulating a draft programme acceptable to all countries so as to contribute to the success of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

(Mr. Yu Peiwen, China)

We are of the view that in order to enable the programme to guide the future disarmament process in a positive way, its formulation must constantly take into account the present international realities marked by a world-wide arms race and particularly the Superpowers' intensified arms expansion and war preparations. Both the principles guiding the disarmament process and the priority order of the various disarmament measures should be determined on the basis of international realities. Only thus can future disarmament negotiations be propelled forward in the right direction.

In view of the continuous exacerbation of international tension, the programme should clearly stress that the objective of disarmament is to oppose by effective means all acts of armed aggression and in particular the outbreak of a new world war, and to maintain international peace and security. All the disarmament measures must be evaluated and determined on the basis of this fundamental objective. While pursuing this basic objective we share the view that the practical results of the disarmament process should be conducive to the economic and social development of the various countries concerned; and it is in line with the basic interests and pressing demands of the developing countries to specify that the promotion of the New International Economic Order is also one of the important objectives of the disarmament process.

As a nuclear war poses serious threats to mankind, the importance of effective measures for the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament undoubtedly need to be fully reflected in the programme. At the same time, we should attach the importance they deserve to the questions of reducing conventional armaments and the prohibition and destruction of biological and chemical weapons. In the post-war period, conventional wars have been waged year in and year out in some parts of the world, a fact we must bear in mind when formulating the programme.

We are also of the view that while formulating comprehensive disarmament measures we need also to give serious attention to partial measures, including regional measures. To exclude any form of foreign military presence from the zones of peace or the nuclear-free zones and to do away with all forms of armed aggression and military threats would contribute greatly to international peace and security.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament is to define the orientation and stages of future disarmament activities. It would give impetus to future disarmament work. The programme is not equivalent to a convention or a treaty; nonetheless, it is to be formulated by way of serious negotiations. All the countries should make their efforts for its implementation and realization, and in this sense, all the countries are to make full commitments to the programme. Our work on the programme is very important and it is our hope that good results will be achieved through the joint efforts of all the delegations here.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of China for his statement and the words of welcome he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. VRIHUNEC (Yugoslavia) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, the entire complex of questions relating to disarmament that are on our Committee's agenda have a single fundamental goal, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control. In this connection it is our Committee's duty to reach agreement, before the next special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, on a comprehensive programme of disarmament which should make possible the attainment of this goal.

Beginning last year, the Committee has undertaken intensive work on this task and an ad hoc working group with a precise mandate was established for this purpose. Nevertheless, the work has been proceeding fairly slowly and the results achieved have not been such as to give cause for satisfaction. It is clear, however, that progress is being made, even if many questions are still open. It is important to have a constructive basis for the specific negotiations which are to follow. It remains to be seen whether we are prepared to complete the task entrusted to us by the Final Document of the tenth special session.

In my delegation's view, we must all, at this time, make maximum efforts to succeed in completing these negotiations by the next special session and thus to create the basis and the framework for the conduct of the disarmament process, in which everyone will assume his share of responsibility. Since it is in the vital interests of all the peoples in the world to ensure the success of the disarmament negotiations, it goes without saying that each country also has the obligation to play as active a role in this process as it can. This will be possible only if the political will exists to initiate the disarmament process on the basis of this programme and to establish the principle of equitable participation, taking into account the requirements of all countries, regardless of their size, level of development or military power. It must be borne in mind by all countries and, in particular, by those which possess nuclear weapons, that the arms race has direct negative effects on the security of all and on the possibility of economic development. It is also true that no one will escape the consequences of a possible outbreak of nuclear war. Despite the fact that this is the responsibility of all countries, the nuclear-weapon Powers have by far the greatest responsibility for the immediate initiation of the process of disarmament and in particular, nuclear disarmament. It is therefore essential that those countries should participate as actively as possible in the work of our Committee on all the agenda items before it -- something which is not always the case. All this applies also, of course, to the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

On the basis of the decisions taken at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission defined the main elements which now serve as the starting-point for the Committee's negotiations. This means that all the States Members of the United Nations have made their contributions. In view of all the statements that have been made, my delegation considers that the time has now come to prepare the text of the programme so that it might be ready for the next special session.

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

My delegation's views on this matter have been expressed on various occasions in the United Nations Disarmament Commission and in this Committee. At this time, I would merely like to list some of the main elements on which, in our view, the programme should be based. First, we shall continue to regard as a valid approach the elements of the programme specified in the working paper which was submitted to the United Nations Disarmament Commission by Sri Lanka on behalf of all the non-aligned countries and which is contained in document A/CN.10/6. It is not necessary to point out that Yugoslavia supports this proposal, which reflects the joint positions of the non-aligned countries on this matter.

The comprehensive programme of disarmament must, above all, fully reflect its title. In other words it must, in substance, be a complex, well-planned and action-oriented document covering all the measures and phases necessary to ensure the strict implementation of actions designed to lead gradually to the achievement of the ultimate objective, namely, general and complete disarmament under effective international control. This presupposes a series of elements which we will have to negotiate and determine. The adoption of such a comprehensive programme of action would provide ample proof of the existence of the political will to implement it. Without that, in our view, there will be no question of organized, conscious and lasting international action to halt the arms race. Thus, the programme will be an important means of overcoming existing "realities", which are not adequate and which we would all like to see changed.

A very important aspect of the programme is the urgent need to take specific measures. There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament is a matter of the highest priority. We have all agreed on this, although the other disarmament measures are also, up to a point, priority matters. For each of the priorities established, within the framework of disarmament measures, there should be stages for the application and practical implementation of disarmament. The implementation of disarmament measures by stages should permit a more general review of the implementation process at each stage and the appropriate adjustment of subsequent stages, in conformity with the programme adopted.

Another matter of particular importance is that of establishing the framework for the programme, which should be as flexible as possible and should take account of the actual situation and of the possibilities for the effective implementation of the measures contemplated, so that the agreement reached on the over-all time-table for, and stages in, the implementation of the programme can be carried out without hitch. In so doing, we must be very clear about the wording of the programme because any ambiguity in that respect and any arbitrary interpretation of the application of the measures, both as regards their content and as regards a given time-limit, might lead to misunderstanding and distortion, as has, unfortunately, occurred in the application of some of the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament.

I would like to stress that particular attention should be given to the legal aspect of the programme. A number of proposals have been submitted on the possible international legal obligations to be embodied in the programme. In this connection, we consider that the programme should contain some essential elements of obligation. First, there is the political will clearly expressed in what has been adopted, and the will to work as actively as possible for its consistent implementation. Secondly, we should establish rules of conduct for the implementation process, with specific responsibilities for each country. There should also be appropriate machinery for monitoring implementation. It will have to be decided during the negotiations whether this will take the form of an

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instrument creating obligations for the international community or whether it will be in a form setting out specific obligations for all countries. In any event, it is very important to define responsibilities, so that they may be unconditionally accepted by all countries and fully assumed in accordance with an appropriate procedure.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the Committee's responsibility to the international community to establish the comprehensive programme of disarmament is a challenge to all of us and that we should respond in a positive manner, sparing no effort to reach agreement on this programme so that it may be submitted for adoption at the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament.

Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman, may I begin by saying that the Pakistan delegation is happy to see you preside over the Committee on Disarmament during the month of March. We have no doubt that your vast experience and special acumen in the diplomacy of disarmament will guide the work of the CD towards the constructive path of concrete negotiations on important items on our agenda.

With respect to your predecessor, Ambassador de la Gorce of France, I cannot but express deep admiration for the skill and serenity with which he conducted the proceedings of the CD in the difficult opening phase of its 1981 session and in dealing with the organizational and other questions which were resolved so speedily under his guidance. This has established a solid foundation upon which we can endeavour to construct substantive agreements during the current year's negotiations.

My delegation has requested the floor today to express some thoughts on two of the most important items on the CD's agenda, the nuclear test ban and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. My intervention on those items is delayed, for which I ask the Committee's indulgence.

Almost five years have elapsed since multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty were interrupted by the agreement of three of the nuclear-weapon Powers to conduct separate talks on the subject. The trilateral negotiations have as yet to produce a nuclear test-ban treaty; indeed, the prospects for an early conclusion of the trilateral negotiations have, if anything, receded since last year. Even more distressing, from the admittedly limited information provided to this Committee about the trilateral negotiations in the progress report submitted last July, is the indication that the treaty which is under formulation will be substantially different in conception and scope from the comprehensive test-ban treaty which the international community has called for year after year. For one thing, the treaty will accept a distinction between nuclear-weapon tests and peaceful nuclear explosions, with all the attendant problems for nuclear non-proliferation and verification of the test ban. From all accounts, even nuclear-weapon tests would not be prohibited for all time but merely placed under a moratorium for a relatively brief period. Furthermore, the expected provisions of the treaty would in several respects entail unequal treatment of the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States and discriminate even among the nuclear-weapon States.

Such an arrangement is not likely to attract the wide adherence which was one of the expected features of the test-ban treaty according to the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Under the circumstances, the most that can be expected of the

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trilateral negotiations is an agreement for a moratorium on nuclear testing by the three negotiating parties. However regrettable this may be, even such a limited agreement would provide some measure of satisfaction since those States which have been responsible for over 90 per cent of nuclear tests would have undertaken to halt these tests, albeit for a limited period of time. If they prove sincere in this undertaking, it could prove possible during this time to evolve a test-ban treaty which is both comprehensive and equitable. We do not think it is a great concession for any of the three negotiating parties to agree to abide by the temporary ban which they have themselves suggested even if at present one or both of the other nuclear-weapon Powers do not find themselves in a position to join this trilateral arrangement.

Such a commitment by the three negotiating parties to the concept of a nuclear test-ban is necessary when one adds up the cost of the delay in the conclusion of a test-ban treaty as a result of the protracted tripartite talks. For one thing, the hundreds of nuclear tests which have been conducted during the past five years have greatly enhanced the sophistication of the nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the major nuclear-weapon Powers. It is as yet not even certain whether the trilateral treaty will effectively prevent the continued qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons possible through laboratory tests and simulation techniques. As a consequence of the delay, the quantity of unsafeguarded fissionable material at the disposal of a number of States has increased manifold, eroding the impact of any test-ban treaty on the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Besides, during this time, nuclear explosions have been conducted by two non-nuclear-weapon States, either for declared "peaceful purposes" or clandestinely, raising further questions about the eventual prospects and effectiveness of a nuclear test-ban treaty.

Despite these difficulties, the Pakistan delegation remains prepared to engage in multilateral negotiations on a nuclear test ban and to make every effort to overcome the difficulties in the way of an equitable and genuine agreement to ban nuclear testing. We do not believe that the continuation or otherwise of the trilateral negotiations is any reason to prevent the CD from making an attempt to negotiate a comprehensive test-ban treaty, since the outcome of those negotiations is not likely to provide a useful basis for a multilateral agreement on the question.

The Pakistan delegation therefore continues to hope that agreement will be reached in the near future for the establishment of an ad hoc working group of the Committee to open negotiations on a nuclear-test-ban treaty. Further delay in initiating such negotiations will increase the complexities surrounding the test ban and may well render the task, which is now admittedly difficult, well nigh impossible to accomplish. The creation of an ad hoc working group of the CD would provide every State member of this Committee with the opportunity to participate in its work. The manner in which each State chooses to do so, and the intensity of its involvement in the negotiations, is something which must be left to the State concerned and cannot be dictated by others as a precondition for their own participation in the negotiations.

Pakistan shares the general view expressed in our Committee and elsewhere, that the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament is the most

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important and most urgent task in the field of disarmament. The Committee on Disarmament has an important contribution to make to the success of this objective. It is, of course, obvious that given the present state of international relations and differences among the nuclear-weapon States, the CD is not in a position actually to negotiate concrete agreements on nuclear disarmament, apart from such measures as the CTB, control over fissionable materials and security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Nor would my delegation wish in any way to pre-empt or obstruct the bilateral and restricted negotiations on nuclear issues between the two Superpowers. These negotiations, we hope, will be resumed as soon as possible and will be accompanied by measures to resolve outstanding political disputes and sources of tension. We also hope that they will lead to genuine control over the nuclear arms race between the Superpowers and early and substantial reductions in their nuclear arsenals.

However, there are two distinct reasons why we believe that the CD should be enabled at this session to undertake at least exploratory talks on the subject of nuclear disarmament. In the first instance, we believe that such exploratory talks in the Committee could provide very useful clarifications of concepts and issues which could materially assist the conduct of bilateral or restrictive negotiations between the Superpowers and their alliances, especially at this time when one of these Powers is reviewing its policy and the other has advanced a number of proposals pertaining to nuclear disarmament. Secondly, such an examination could help to elaborate a useful framework for nuclear disarmament on the basis of paragraph 50 of the Final Document. It will be necessary in any case to attempt such an elaboration in the context of the comprehensive programme on disarmament which will not be meaningful without greater precision in regard to nuclear disarmament. Such an approach would also contribute to the success of the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

In the statements made in the Committee, many interesting ideas have been put forward regarding the purpose of the examination of nuclear issues. In the view of the Pakistan delegation, there are at least four broad issues which need to be addressed in some depth.

The first area of interest concerns the implications of the concepts and doctrines relating to the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. For instance, there has been a most interesting exchange of views between the distinguished representatives of India and the United Kingdom on the concepts of "mutual deterrence" and "strategic equivalence" between the two Superpowers and their respective alliances. The Pakistan delegation shares the view that it is most dangerous to extrapolate the doctrine of deterrence, evolved from the experience of a past era, to the qualitatively new situation created by the development and deployment of nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence may or may not have prevented a general conflict during the last three decades, which is but a minute in history. We have yet to disprove the dictum that a weapon, once it is developed and deployed, will be used sooner or later.

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Similarly, there are certain implications of the concept of "strategic parity" or equivalence between the Superpowers which require closer consideration. First, experience indicates -- and the debate about the SALT II agreement is the most recent example -- that it is extremely difficult for even the two major nuclear-weapon Powers to reach agreement on what precisely constitutes such "parity" or "equivalence". The combination of mutual distrust, technical innovation and bureaucratic inertia continues to push the balance of power to ever higher levels. Secondly the search for strategic parity between the Superpowers results in a significant disparity of power between them and the other States of the world. It is reasonable to expect that the latter will, sooner or later, attempt to reduce the growing asymmetry in military capability vis-à-vis the Superpowers through whatever means are available to them. The calculation of a "strategic equivalence" between three or more centres of power will be a difficult if not an impossible task. To place absolute reliance on nuclear deterrence in such circumstances, is to play Russian roulette with the future of mankind.

Another area which requires close examination and further elaboration is the process of nuclear disarmament, which is defined in rather elliptical terms in paragraph 50 of the Final Document. We have agreed in that paragraph that the first step in nuclear disarmament would be to "halt the nuclear arms race". What does this phrase imply? Does it mean that all programmes related to nuclear weapons should be simultaneously halted by all nuclear-weapon Powers? But this would not eliminate the existing disparities which are an important motive for the continued development of nuclear weapons. Would it imply a halt in the current programmes of the major nuclear-weapon Powers for the development and deployment of new nuclear weapons and weapons systems? In this case also, the perceptions about existing or potential disparities and vulnerabilities would have to be taken into account. The second stage of nuclear disarmament, as defined in paragraph 50 of the Final Document, calls for a reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-weapon Powers. There are at least two ways in which such reductions could be sought. One way would be to ask the major nuclear-weapon Powers to achieve significant reductions to reduce asymmetries with other nuclear States before the latter join in the process of such reductions. Alternatively, it could be prescribed that each nuclear-weapon Power undertake a proportional reduction by stages of its nuclear weapons arsenal. Similar questions arise with regard to the third and final stage of the process of nuclear disarmament outlined in paragraph 50 of the Final Document entailing a phased and time-bound programme for the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

Some principles and guidelines are available to provide answers to the kinds of questions which I have raised. For instance, the Final Document refers to the primary responsibility of the two major nuclear-weapon Powers in the context of nuclear disarmament. It is evident from their quantitative and qualitative superiority in nuclear armaments that they must assume the lead in promoting the process of nuclear disarmament. Indeed, they have acknowledged this responsibility in undertaking the negotiations on strategic nuclear armaments and, more recently,

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on medium-range nuclear weapons as well. Yet the present level of agreement on these issues is ambiguous at best and is manifested quite often in lack of understanding between the nuclear-weapon Powers, and between them and non-nuclear-weapon States, thus contributing to the climate of mutual distrust and suspicion.

A third and important area which the Committee should address is the relationship between nuclear and conventional weapons. From all accounts, the current assessment of the western alliance about its alleged inferiority in conventional weapons in Europe has led it to place extraordinary reliance on nuclear weapons as a deterrent. This has produced difficulties in promoting nuclear disarmament as well as an agreement on the non-first-use of nuclear weapons. On the other hand, the members of the Warsaw Treaty contend that there is no imbalance in conventional forces in Europe. The best answer to the problem would be, of course, for the two sides to reach an agreement which could establish a mutual balance at a lower level of conventional armaments. But such an agreement has proved difficult because of different perceptions of the present situation. A more in-depth explanation of these different perceptions about the balance of forces in Europe could produce a fuller understanding of the difficulties which confront the Vienna talks and assist in the evolution of more precise guidelines regarding the relationship between nuclear and conventional disarmament. In this context, further examination of the proposals presented to the Madrid Conference, e.g., extending confidence-building measures, could provide some ways and means of modifying the threat perceptions which are at the root of the hesitation to negotiate measures for nuclear disarmament.

Finally, the question of verification will assume special importance in the context of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. At present, reasonably effective measures of verification are available to only two or three advanced States. For instance, the SALT II agreement provides for some novel techniques to ensure compliance, such as non-interference with national means of verification. The question arises as to how such measures for effective verification can be developed at the international level. In this context, the proposals for the International Satellite Monitoring Agency and the seismic monitoring system envisaged assume special importance.

The Pakistan delegation is disappointed that certain members of the Committee on Disarmament are as yet not prepared to accept the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Because of this situation, my delegation is prepared to accept a more flexible modality for exploratory talks on nuclear disarmament and could go along with the view that these talks be conducted in informal meetings of the Committee, as was done at the Committee's 1979 session. However, this time the discussions on the subject should be more structured and should address in depth some of the specific points I have mentioned. A few meetings of the Committee could also be devoted to the consideration of important parts of the United Nations study on nuclear weapons.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Pakistan, Ambassador Ahmad, for his statement and for the words of welcome he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): Allow me to begin my statement by offering you our sincere congratulations on your assumption of the Chair during the month of March. We are acquainted with your personal and professional qualities and we know they are a guarantee for the good progress and successful development of the Committee's work. You can fully rely on the modest co-operation of my delegation in everything that may help you to discharge your delicate task as Chairman, in which we predict you will be completely successful.

In my statement today I wish to refer to two of the items on our agenda. In the first place, availing myself of the provision in paragraph 30 of the rules of procedure, I will touch on the subject of a nuclear test ban. I shall then turn to the item which appears on the agenda for today, a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

With regard to the former subject, I wish to begin by expressing my delegation's satisfaction at the fact that the Committee is close to reaching a consensus on the idea of devoting a series of informal meetings to a consideration of substantive aspects related to a nuclear test ban and nuclear disarmament.

It is not my intention to claim a right of authorship, but I think it would be useful to recall that the idea of holding informal meetings on these two subjects originated in a statement I made at the informal meeting held in the afternoon of 19 February last. On that occasion and as a reaction to the announcement made on the morning of that same day and repeated at the afternoon meeting by the representative of the United Kingdom to the effect that his delegation did not support the establishment of a working group on a nuclear-test-ban treaty, I said that in our opinion the Committee could not fail to discharge its responsibility as a negotiating body because there was opposition to the setting up of a working group. I stated that in view of the impossibility of setting up working groups in connection with agenda items 1 and 2, the Committee should consider the advisability of itself undertaking the task of negotiation and that to that end the Committee should allot itself in its programme of work the time necessary for the conduct of substantive negotiations on the two agenda items at informal meetings.

We are gratified to observe that Venezuela's idea inspired the formulation of various specific proposals such as those submitted by India, Brazil, the socialist countries and the Federal Republic of Germany. We trust that the Committee will very soon reach a consensus on this idea.

However, these informal meetings must not become a monologue in which only one sector of the Committee takes part. For them to be really fruitful, it is essential that the largest possible number of countries should participate in them, and especially those possessing nuclear weapons, and that the latter should make their contribution and reply to the questions and arguments which may be put forward on the two items.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

Along this line of thinking, I should like to take the occasion to formulate some observations on the question of a nuclear test ban, on which we would like to have the reactions of the Powers participating in the tripartite negotiations. These reactions could be given at one of the informal meetings.

As you know, my delegation is among those which maintain that the treaty to be negotiated should have the objective of banning all nuclear tests, of any magnitude, in all environments and for all time. In other words, the ban on testing, on nuclear tests, should be comprehensive and global. In our opinion, a partial ban would make it difficult to achieve the goal of a general and universal acceptance of the treaty which should clearly be aimed at.

This position of ours is based on the fact that any test allegedly or ostensibly carried out for peaceful purposes will always make it possible to obtain information for military purposes. In this connection I would like to quote a paragraph from the book by Alva Myrdal entitled The Game of Disarmament (Pantheon Books, New York, 1976, p.213):

"The truth, to be kept firmly in mind, is that there is no distinction possible between nuclear explosive devices for military or for civilian purposes, one for bombing some place on earth and one for engineering work to mine or excavate it. All nuclear devices are potential bombs, and of a destructive force way beyond conventional explosives. The sole difference that can be claimed is the doubtful one of intent."

To all this should be added that it is precisely at the testing stage that a nuclear explosive device can demonstrate its potential in the military sphere.

We therefore consider that the ban on tests should be absolute and should cover all experimental nuclear explosions.

This does not mean that we are opposed to the peaceful use of nuclear explosions. As far as such use is concerned, our view is that in very special circumstances and under very strict control by an international authority, a State could be authorized to explode a nuclear device when the purpose of the explosion is demonstrably peaceful and if appropriate measures are taken to prevent such an explosion being used to secure benefits or information of a military nature.

On this issue, the tripartite report submitted last year by the nuclear-weapon Powers which are conducting negotiations on a nuclear-test-ban treaty states in its paragraph 10 that these countries have agreed that the treaty will be accompanied by a protocol on nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and that this protocol will be an integral part of the treaty.

We understand this to mean that the treaty that is being negotiated is in fact a comprehensive treaty, that it will ban any type of test including those that are ostensibly for peaceful purposes, and that the possibility of conducting, not indeed tests, but peaceful nuclear explosions will be regulated by the protocol. If this interpretation is correct, we are pleased to state that this way of dealing with the matter is satisfactory to us since it corresponds with the Venezuelan position outlined earlier.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

We would, however, like to receive from the Powers participating in the trilateral negotiations fuller and more comprehensive information about the protocol. The tripartite report, in the same paragraph from which I have just quoted, says that the protocol will take into account the provisions of article V of the non-proliferation Treaty. Can we take it that this means that the protocol will serve as the special international agreement to which article V of the NPT refers and that it will regulate all the issues referred to in this article? If the reply is in the affirmative, has due account been taken of the need to ensure non-discriminatory treatment for the non-nuclear-weapon countries and of the need to keep the promise that such countries will benefit free of charge from the results of research and the development of technology derived from peaceful nuclear explosions?

It would also interest my delegation to know how it is proposed to approach in the protocol the question of procedures and mechanisms designed to ensure that peaceful explosions are in fact peaceful. In this connection, I should like to recall that the Treaty of Tlatelolco contains in article 13 fairly full provisions which could serve as a basis for working out an appropriate system to regulate the use, exclusively for peaceful purposes, of nuclear explosions.

To sum up, we would like to receive from the Powers participating in the trilateral negotiations full and, if possible, detailed information on the proposed protocol relating to peaceful nuclear explosions.

So far my delegation has not expressed its views as regards the comprehensive programme of disarmament the elaboration of which has been entrusted to us by the General Assembly. We should like to take advantage of the fact that the Committee has put this item on its schedule of plenary meetings to make a few comments and to give our views on some of the issues which arise in connection with the comprehensive programme.

In the first place, we wish to state our agreement with, and support of, the recommendations on this subject which the Disarmament Commission formulated in chapter IV of its report submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (document A/34/42). In its proposals on the elements of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, the Commission has offered a very full preliminary sketch of what the programme should be.

In the second place, we wish to place on record that my delegation attributes particular importance and priority to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group which is responsible for negotiations on this subject since, as we know, the results are to be submitted for consideration and approval by the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament, which is to be held next year. Last year the Group did a great deal of work under the chairmanship of Ambassador Adeniji. This year, with Ambassador García Robles in the chair, it is steadily advancing towards the fulfilment of its mandate.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

As proposed by the Disarmament Commission, the comprehensive programme should provide the necessary framework for substantive negotiations in the field of disarmament. That is to say that it should serve as a framework and guide for the substantive negotiations on disarmament so as to ensure that they lead to the emergence of a balanced and orderly set-- the largest number possible-- of concrete disarmament measures within the shortest possible time.

My delegation also understands this set of measures must of necessity observe a reciprocal interrelationship and is to be achieved through a gradual but sustained process of negotiation that will guarantee security to all States. The programme should be carried out in such a way that instead of decreasing the security of States, it progressively strengthens that security as its implementation proceeds. That is to say, the programme must contain as one of its intrinsic elements the objective of security through disarmament.

Furthermore, the programme must be designed in such a way that it is not exposed to the uncertainties of the international situation. Its implementation must not be subject to the changes that relations between States frequently undergo and that often lead to the interruption, suspension or deferment of ongoing negotiating processes. To that end, the participating States must agree that once the negotiation of a certain issue, among those provided for under the programme, has begun, they will make all necessary efforts to ensure that external events do not affect the conduct, rhythm or results of such negotiations.

With regard to the nature of the instrument in which the programme should be cast, we would prefer, like the majority of the members of the Committee, that it should be a legally binding instrument. We understand, however, that this will not be accepted by some countries. For that reason we hope that the programme will take the form of a document whose nature is such that it imposes a solemn undertaking that is as binding as possible. One way of achieving this, as Ambassador Adeniji has suggested, might be for the programme to be incorporated in, or preceded by, a declaration which would be adopted during the second special session of the General Assembly. This declaration should contain a clause which embodies an undertaking to conduct in good faith the negotiations provided for in the programme and to contribute to the implementation of all the disarmament measures established therein.

With regard to the measures that should be included in the programme, we note, with other delegations, that the Final Document on the first special session of the General Assembly and the report of the Disarmament Commission contain a list of measures in respect of which there is a consensus. The comprehensive programme should include at least all these measures. As one of our colleagues has said, the programme cannot involve any retreat from what has already been adopted in the Final Document and what also has been accepted by the Disarmament Commission. The same criterion applies to the question of priorities. The priorities set in the programme should be the same as those set out in paragraph 45 of the Final Document without that preventing the conduct of negotiations simultaneously on a number of priority measures or on all of them.

(Mr. Taylhardat, Venezuela)

In this connection we wish to reiterate our support of the view expressed in paragraph 11 of the report of the Disarmament Commission to the effect that from the very beginning of the implementation of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, special attention should be given to the immediate cessation of the nuclear arms race and the removal of the threat of a nuclear war.

With regard to the time-frame of the programme, it is clear that no one expects a rigid schedule to be established or arbitrary dates to be set for the implementation of the disarmament measures envisaged. On the other hand, we have maintained and we continue to think that any programme, by its very nature, must be related to some period of time. A programme and time are two virtually inseparable concepts. For that reason, we think that the comprehensive disarmament programme must have a time reference even if it is merely indicative of what constitutes the common hope of countries about the period within which they wish to see it completed. On this subject various suggestions have been made: 25 years, the end of the century, etc. Any of them is acceptable. Let us bear in mind that the time factor, even when it is only an indicative element, always plays an important role as a psychological stimulus. The job we have to do on this very subject is itself a demonstration of this. We must complete the elaboration of the draft programme in time for it to be considered by the second special session of the General Assembly. This circumstance puts pressure on us which is beneficial for the completion of our task.

Although we maintain a flexible position as regards the time-frame, we consider it essential that the programme should envisage various phases or stages of execution. The number of phases or stages will have to be determined in relation to the measures, priorities and time-frame, although each stage should be planned in such a way as to ensure an appropriate balance and harmony between the measures it covers. We also consider it essential that each phase should be subject to an evaluation and review process that would make it possible to check the rate of implementation so that the necessary decisions could be taken to speed up the process where delays were detected or to introduce the necessary corrective measures when cases of non-fulfilment were identified. The review process could, as has been suggested, be carried out at special sessions of the General Assembly convened for that purpose. We therefore share the view of the Disarmament Commission that the programme must establish an adequate procedure for its implementation and for the constant monitoring of that implementation, and that for that purpose the United Nations should play a central role.

In conclusion, we wish to place on record our readiness to co-operate with the Working Group responsible for preparing the draft programme, and to promise our support to its Chairman, Ambassador García Robles, in the efforts he is making to ensure that the Group fully discharges the mandate it has been given so that the Committee may submit in due time the comprehensive programme of disarmament the elaboration of which has been entrusted to it.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Venezuela, Ambassador Taylhardat, for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. SUMNERHAYES (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, before making a few brief remarks about the comprehensive programme of disarmament, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the chair for the month of March. I am sure that the Committee will be well served by your practised and capable direction. I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador de la Gorce, who gave us such a good start along the road this year. I should like to offer him my delegation's sincere thanks for his skilful and impartial chairmanship.

I shall now turn to item 6 of our agenda, which is the subject of our discussions in plenary this week, the comprehensive programme on disarmament. As I mentioned in my opening statement of the session, it is not my intention to spend a great deal of time in discussing in plenary those items which are the subject of negotiation in the working groups and in fact my delegation has already made a contribution to the discussions of detail in our CPD Working Group. I nevertheless take the opportunity of our Plenary meeting to set out my delegation's general approach to this subject.

We are all aware that the drawing up of a CPD was a task entrusted to this Committee by the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament in 1978. We are requested to submit our final version to the second special session in just over a year's time. Given this relatively short time-table, my delegation welcomes the brisk and business-like approach taken by Ambassador García Robles in the CPD Working Group. We think a completed comprehensive programme would be a useful contribution from this Committee to the second special session. It will act as a spur to progress in arms control negotiations at all levels and in all spheres, by setting out a clear pattern for us to follow.

It is not, however, in our view feasible for the programme to be legally binding, as has been suggested in the past by some delegations. Nor can we see how States can expect us to predict, at this stage, the time it will take to complete such a far-reaching and complicated programme. I have said in the paper I submitted on this point in the Working Group that there is no purpose in trying to set unrealistic and artificial deadlines. By this, of course, I mean that the setting of any specific deadline is unrealistic and artificial. The requirements and complexities of the arms control negotiations which we are listing in our programme are such that we cannot predict at this time how soon we could complete even some of the tasks we have already begun, let alone the measures for which no preparations have as yet been made. Nevertheless, it will, I feel sure, be possible to reach agreement on the drawing up of a series of interrelated phases or stages in which to organize the fulfilment of the tasks already identified by the United Nations General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament and by the Disarmament Commission.

The programme will help us to see the often difficult path ahead of us and to raise our eyes to our ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. It will also demonstrate the sincere political commitment of the world community to the pursuit of serious and verifiable measures of arms control. We should not belittle

(Mr. Summerhayes, United Kingdom)

the importance of such a demonstration at a time when international confidence needs to be restored. For this reason my delegation will play an active and constructive part in the negotiations in the Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. We hope that the programme which the Committee produces will be a practical and flexible guide, so that it will not fall by the wayside as earlier exercises of this nature have done. We should aim to prepare a programme which will be of lasting value to future negotiators, until our final objective is achieved.

Before concluding, I should like just to add that I listened with much interest to the arguments put forward in the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Italy earlier on at this morning's meeting. He explained much better than I had done, the vital connection between the CPD and wider collateral measures designed to establish the international climate in which a CPD could succeed.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Summerhayes, for his statement and for the kind words of welcome addressed to the Chair.

Distinguished representatives, in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee at its 104th plenary meeting, I take pleasure in calling on the distinguished representative of Norway, H.E. the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Johan Jorgen Holst. Mr. Holst was appointed Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1979. In the period between 1976 and 1979 he held the position of Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defence. Until 1976 he was Director of Research at the Norwegian Institute of International Relations. Mr. Holst is one of Norway's most prominent experts on disarmament.

Mr. HOLST (Norway): Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure and privilege to be the first Norwegian representative to address the Committee on Disarmament in our new role as an active observer in this important negotiating forum. We are pleased that agreed procedures enable interested non-members to participate in the work of the Committee on Disarmament. Small nations like Norway are hampered by limited resources. We nevertheless have an important stake in the negotiating process here in Geneva, and shall attempt in our role as an observer State to make a useful contribution to the work of the Committee. I sincerely hope that this will be but a beginning and that Norway will in due course become a full member of the Committee on Disarmament.

Allow me also, Mr. Chairman, to pay tribute to you, the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic, in the responsible post of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of March, and I want to thank you most sincerely for the kind and warm words of welcome which you addressed to me concerning my personal qualifications. I hope that upon the completion of my remarks, you will not be accused of misleading advertising.

There are two issues of special concern on the CD agenda to which I want to address myself in some detail: a complete nuclear test ban, and a chemical weapons convention.

These agenda items, in addition to that of a comprehensive programme of disarmament, have been given highest priority by the General Assembly for the period leading up to the second special session on disarmament next year.

(Mr. Holst, (Norway))

Since a comprehensive programme on disarmament is on our agenda this morning, I want to offer a few remarks and observations concerning the purposes and contents of such a programme.

It is generally recognized, I believe, that disarmament is of central importance to the future of international society and that it will not be accomplished in the immediate future. Progress has to come in concrete and limited fields establishing specific ceilings and constraints with respect to particular weapons or military activities. In actual fact the accomplishments during the last two decades have not been unimpressive, when compared for example to what was done during the between-the-war years. I make this point not because progress has been satisfactory. Far from it. But it is important to maintain public credibility -- belief in the proposition that disarmament and arms control constitute realistic and practical objectives, and not just rhetorical reference points in diplomatic discourse.

While we must focus negotiating efforts inside and outside this Committee on specific and limited issues, it is at the same time important to create a framework for assessing priorities, linkages and progression. This is important from the point of view of preserving coherence for the total negotiating effort. Even more important is the political task of preserving and projecting a vision of the ultimate goal and the roads to be travelled to reach it, and obtaining commitments on behalf of the major Powers to pursue the goals and travel the roads.

The arms race in its many aspects and dimensions amounts to an enormous misallocation of resources in a world replete with poverty and inequity. It contains dangers also of miscalculation, accelerated competition and accident. We must introduce greater certainty and predictability into a dangerously competitive situation. This will necessitate greater openness with respect to military programmes and budgetary allocations. Secrecy has become to a large extent an anachronism in the era of satellite photography and observation. But satellites can only register the results of budgetary decisions made several years ago. Budgetary secrecy is dangerous because it breeds uncertainty, stimulates anticipatory reactions and reduces predictability.

A comprehensive programme of disarmament must include confidence-building measures, commitments to specific reductions and abstention from specific activities, agreed procedures of implementation, verification and appropriate security arrangements

The threat from nuclear weapons constitutes the primary challenge. It has to receive priority attention in negotiations on arms control and disarmament.

Let me offer a few remarks on some of the elements of the comprehensive programme to which my Government attaches particular importance.

The nuclear-weapon States carry not only the responsibility but a true obligation to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their strategies and arsenals. The time has come to break the spiral of upward trends and re-establish confidence in the will and ability of man to break the nuclear bondage.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

Experience suggests that the convertibility of nuclear-weapon power into politically useful currency is very limited indeed. The nuclear-weapon States must refrain from attempting to increase their convertibility and from incorporating nuclear threats into their diplomatic conduct. Experience suggests, furthermore, that any advantage which may be attained in the nuclear weapons competition is at best of incremental utility and always short-lived. It is incumbent upon the nuclear-weapon States to arrive at agreements and arrangements between them which can dampen the incentives and propensities to strive for unilateral advantage.

Disarmament efforts, in my view, should be undertaken also with the aim of contributing to the establishment of the new international economic order through the reallocation of scarce human and material resources from military purposes to social and economic development, particularly for the benefit of the developing nations.

A complete test ban in my view is a cardinal measure for halting the nuclear arms race. A comprehensive test-ban agreement would constitute a non-discriminatory instrument of essential relevance to the promotion of non-proliferation. By concluding such a treaty, the nuclear-weapon States would take a significant step in the direction of meeting their obligations under article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

Progress towards a CTB agreement has been all too slow, but I want to join those who welcome the joint progress report which was submitted in Geneva on 30 July 1980 by the participants in the tripartite negotiations.

That report, of course, is no substitute for an agreement. Testing continues; during the 1970s, more than 400 nuclear explosions were reported.

The technical issues are complex, especially those which relate to verification. However, the benefits of an agreement and the risks involved in violating such an agreement should in my view now outweigh the technical obstacles to an agreement.

An adequate verification system is a necessary component in a total test-ban regime, both in order to ensure compliance and to build confidence. It is precisely in that area, concerning the question of an adequate verification system, that my country is making its contribution through the expertise and instrumentation provided by the Norwegian seismic array (NORSAR).

A major part of such a verification system will be an effective international exchange of seismic data. In recent years most important progress has been made towards the establishment of a system for international seismic data exchange by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. This Group was originally established by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in July 1976 following a Swedish initiative, and later maintained by the Committee on Disarmament. Norwegian scientists have participated actively in the work of the Ad Hoc Group which, in its reports CCD/558 and CD/43, recommended the establishment of a global seismological system in order to facilitate verification of a CTB. As the scientific secretary of the Ad Hoc Group, a Norwegian scientist has been responsible for co-ordinating the technical activities of the Group. Another Norwegian expert is currently heading one of five study groups set up by the Ad Hoc Group with special responsibility for co-ordination of the groups' efforts to achieve a flexible and efficient international exchange of seismic waveform data.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

The seismological observatory NORSAR, which comprises more than 50 seismometers distributed over the south-eastern part of Norway, has for more than 10 years been recording signals from earthquakes and underground nuclear explosions. Experts from many countries have participated in the research activities at NORSAR. These have resulted in improved methods for distinguishing the signals of explosions from those of earthquakes. This work has contributed to the technical feasibility of verifying a comprehensive test-ban agreement. In my view Norway is in a position to make significant contributions to the control system associated with such a treaty, by making NORSAR data available for a global seismological system, and by assisting in the scientific evaluation of the recorded data in order to verify adherence to the treaty.

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly's first special session on disarmament in 1978, the Norwegian Foreign Minister stated Norway's willingness to make NORSAR available as one of the stations in a global seismic verification system to monitor adherence to a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban agreement. NORSAR's detection capability for several important areas of the world is superior to that of any other of the seismic stations listed in document CCD/558.

During the past 10 years, Norwegian scientists have conducted extensive studies and completed large-scale research projects relevant to the problem of the detection, location and identification of underground nuclear explosions. Results from the most recent research have been presented to the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts on Seismic Events for inclusion in the Group's report.

Under the Ad Hoc Group's current mandate the following technical contributions have been presented by Norwegian experts:

- (1) Magnitude estimates of earthquakes and underground explosions. This study was undertaken to obtain improved magnitude estimates at stations close to a given seismic event. It is recommended that the currently used magnitude-correction factors should be revised in order to obtain uniform determination of magnitude for earthquakes and explosions.
- (2) Identification of seismic phases from regional events. This study is based on data from an experimental small array which has been in operation at NORSAR since 1979. It is shown that seismic phases can be identified with high reliability from such an array, by use of specially developed signal processing techniques.
- (3) Location procedures for regional seismic events. This study describes a location procedure for a small array that can provide location estimates for regional seismic events with an error of less than 30 km. Such location data, although preliminary in character, would be most useful for event definition when reported to the international data centres of a global surveillance network.
- (4) Options for high-speed exchange of seismic waveform data. This study aims at evaluating the possibilities of using modern data communication technology to achieve fast and reliable exchange of seismic waveform data in digital form. The study recommends that practical experiments be carried out in this connection. Norway is willing to co-ordinate such experiments.

I understand that in its efforts to design a global surveillance system most of the work of the Ad Hoc Group has been based on currently available technology. In the coming years we hope to participate actively in upgrading such a global system to include the most advanced communications and computer systems available.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

Let me reiterate that we will make every effort, politically as well as through our technical expertise and instruments, to facilitate agreement on an international verification system for a treaty banning all nuclear tests.

Let me turn to a few other measures relating to the challenge from nuclear weapons.

Top priority must be given to preventing the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. If we do not succeed in dissuading the emergence of new nuclear-weapon States, we may face the risk of nuclear anarchy. It is fundamentally in the interest of all States to prevent a further spread of nuclear weapons. But all States face security problems. In order to refrain from exercising the nuclear option they have to be given reasonable assurances that States which figure in their security calculus will exhibit similar restraint. The NPT contributes to such reassurance, as would nuclear-weapon-free zones in the proper circumstances and configurations. But perceptions of the utility of a nuclear option will be influenced very largely by the policies pursued by the nuclear-weapon States and the role which nuclear weapons play in their conduct and postures.

Linkages at this level were clearly demonstrated when the second Review Conference of the Parties to the non-proliferation Treaty ended in Geneva last September without reaching agreement on a final declaration. Norway regrets this failure, especially since in fact general agreement was attained in many significant areas of concern.

The Conference, however, did accomplish what it set out to do, namely, review the operation of the Treaty during the last five years. Virtually every delegation maintained that this important arms control Treaty, designed to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, represents a unique accomplishment in the arms control field, and that it continues to serve the security interests of every party to the Treaty.

The basic disagreements during the Review Conference related to the ability and determination of the nuclear-weapon States to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in the process of international relations by negotiating real reductions in their arsenals. A large number of States felt that the nuclear-weapon States had not fulfilled their obligations under the non-proliferation Treaty to pursue negotiations aimed at nuclear reductions with sufficient determination and vigour.

In this connection I want to emphasize the importance of a vigorous continuation of the SALT process aiming at agreements which will result in substantial reduction in the arsenals and deployments of strategic nuclear arms. The ground has been prepared for such breakthroughs and the two major nuclear-weapon Powers now have the responsibility for reaching beyond the incremental approaches of the past. Norway attaches particular importance to a rapid and determined reopening of the negotiations with the aim of averting a new arms race on the continent of Europe with competitive deployments of theatre nuclear forces. An increased nuclear emphasis in the management of the security order in Europe is in my view largely incompatible with the consolidation of a non-proliferation regime in the global context.

My Government would like also to see the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes halted altogether.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

A ban on the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes would place nuclear-weapon States on a more equal basis with non-nuclear-weapon States than has been the case till now. The nuclear-weapon States would then have to accept much the same IAEA safeguards as are required of non-nuclear-weapon States, thereby eliminating one element of apparent discrimination between the two categories of States.

The question of assuring the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States has so far not received a satisfactory solution. Norway accepts the arguments of those States which hold that Security Council resolution 255 of 19 June 1968 does not provide sufficient guarantees to non-aligned States.

Those States that are not parties to alliance security systems involving nuclear security guarantees and which have been asked to renounce their option to acquire nuclear weapons have a legitimate claim to guarantees against being attacked or threatened by attack with nuclear weapons.

Therefore the nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility for finding a solution to this problem, which indeed is of crucial significance to the entire non-proliferation regime. The recipients of assurances on their part should be prepared to consider constructively alternative options for promoting an internationally acceptable non-nuclear-weapons regime.

Norway considers that on the subject of negative security assurances some significant progress has been achieved by the declarations on the subject by the nuclear-weapon States at the United Nations General Assembly's first special session on disarmament held in 1978. They could be further strengthened and formalized.

Let me turn now to the problem of a chemical weapons convention. Progress is urgently needed in this matter. The potential for chemical warfare is spreading. We have seen reports that such weapons may have been used in recent conflicts. It is important to build obstacles against a broader acceptability of the use of such weapons. The most useful instrument in this connection would be a chemical weapons convention. The reports tabled by the United States and the Soviet Union on their bilateral negotiations in 1979 and 1980 (documents CD/48 and CD/112) provide a constructive basis for further efforts.

Inspiration may be drawn from last year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention banning the development, manufacture and storage of bacteriological (biological) weapons and their destruction. This Conference was chaired by Norway. In my view it is encouraging to note that by the time of the Review Conference, 81 States had ratified the Convention, six new States had acceded to it and 37 other States had signed the Convention but still not completed the process of ratification. In the final consensus declaration, the States Parties to the Convention reaffirmed their strong determination to exclude completely the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins as weapons.

A similar convention concerning chemical weapons is of very high urgency at the present time. Hopefully, the Ad Hoc Working Group set up on that subject by the Committee on Disarmament will be able to present positive results to that end in the near future. My Government is in strong support of such endeavours, and hopes to contribute constructively to the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

We recognize the paramount importance of the issue of verification. In spite of the technical complexities, the task must be one of designing around the obstacles, and also of defining the commitments in ways which are compatible with technical solutions to the problem of verification of compliance. Political will is needed in order to establish the proper designs. It is necessary also in order to produce a balanced assessment of the risks of cheating, with the dangers of an uncontrolled situation for the future of international relations.

The first objective must be the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and the destruction of existing stocks. We do recognize, however, that an effective abolition of chemical weapons and chemical warfare will require in addition the prohibition of activities, facilities, organization and planning intended for the use of chemical weapons. A convention must take this matter into account. We are inclined, therefore, to favour a comprehensive approach.

In this connection we consider the definitions of "chemical warfare capability" as presented by Sweden and outlined in documents CD/97 and CD/142 a useful conceptualization of the issues.

A comprehensive solution is important and urgent. Binary components may be more generally available in future, thus drastically reducing the lead-times involved in the acquisition of chemical warfare agents. The concept does, however, raise some problems of definition regarding "preparation for warfare" on the one hand and "protection against such warfare" on the other.

Let me mention that in April 1980 it was announced that Norway will not allow the stationing or storage of chemical weapons on its territory. This policy parallels Norway's policy banning the stationing and storage of nuclear weapons on its territory.

We are now approaching the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament. The outcome of the next session will in great measure depend on the extent to which by that time effective steps have been taken to implement the Programme of Action adopted at the first special session.

An important factor in this connection is the comprehensive programme of disarmament which is the subject matter of one of the four working groups of this committee. We are confident that in this area as well as in other areas of relevance for the success of the next special session this Committee will take those initiatives which are most urgent with respect to the follow-up of the Programme of Action.

In addition to the great number of highly important matters which need to be dealt with at the second special session, my Government wishes attention to be paid to a proposal which we put forward at the first special session and which was in part reflected in the Final Document (paragraph 125 (q)). This concerns the proposal that countries adopt procedures for assessing the impact of major weapons procurements and military programmes on arms control and disarmament. The idea of restricting the arms race in its genesis was reflected to some extent in the Final Document of the first special session by a recommendation that States assess the possible implications of their military research and development for existing agreements.

(Mr. Holst, Norway)

Norway has drawn attention to a general management problem and does not want to suggest the imposition of particular solutions. The approach must be the flexible one of aligning commitments with the decision procedures of the States involved. The goal of building arms control considerations and their explicit evaluation into national decisions on arms procurement is, we believe, an important one. Conversely, arms control and disarmament proposals should be assessed through a similar process in order to provide the basis for a coherent over-all policy on national security.

Indeed, the perspective should be broadened beyond that perspective as well. No State can assess such matters only in terms of national interest. We have to develop a concept of and commitment to international security. In this context my Government considers the work of the Committee on Disarmament of paramount importance.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in extending my thanks to you for granting me this opportunity to address the Committee, I want to offer my best wishes for a successful outcome of the deliberations in the Committee on Disarmament in the months to come.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Norway, Mr. Holst, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for his statement and the kind words addressed to the Chair. I am convinced that the members of the Committee on Disarmament have listened with great interest to the explanations of his country's position on certain disarmament items which are now being considered by this body.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Comrade Chairman, I have a question to ask. A week ago -- last Tuesday, that is -- we handed the Secretariat a document with the request that it should be circulated. I should like to know why the process of circulating documents takes so long. Furthermore, last Thursday -- five days ago -- a document was submitted on behalf of a group of socialist countries which we unfortunately have not received. In the two cases, both Russian and English texts of the documents were handed to the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN: I have taken note of the request of Ambassador Issraelyan and will check this with the Secretariat. I will do my best to ensure the circulation of these documents as soon as possible.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 12 March 1981, at 10.30 a.m. The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.