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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY--SECOND MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 7 April 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. G. PFEIFFER (Federal Republic of Germany)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. A. SALAH-BEY
Mr. A. ABBA
Mr. M. MATI

Argentina: Miss N. FREYRE PENABAD

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

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

Brazil: Mr. C.A. DE SOUZA E SILVA
Mr. S. DE QUEIROZ DUARTE

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

Burma: U SAW HLAING
U NGWE WIN
U THAN HTUN

Canada: Mr. D.S. McPHAIL
Mr. G. SKINNER

China: Mr. LIANG Yufan
Mr. LIN Chen
Mr. PAN Jusheng

Cuba: Mr. L. SOLA VILA
Mrs. V. BOROWDOSKY JACKIEWICH
Capt. F. CUSPINERA

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. RUZEK
Mr. A. CIMA
Mr. L. STAVIMOHA

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN
Mr. M.B. FAHMY

Ethiopia: Mr. T. TERREFE
Mr. F. YOHANNES

France: Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. KAULFUSS
Mr. P. BUNTIG

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. G. PFEIFFER
Mr. N. KLINGLER
Mr. H. MULLER
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary: Mr. I. KOMIVES
Mr. C. GYORFFY

India: Mr. A.P. VENKATESWARAN
Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia: Mr. S. DARUSMAN
Mr. I. DAMANIK
Mr. S. HADI
Mr. F. QASIM
Mr. KARYONO

Iran: Mr. M. DABIRI

Italy: Mr. V. CORDERO DI MONTEZEMOLO
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan: Mr. Y. OKAWA
Mr. R. ISHII
Mr. K. SHIMADA

Kenya: Mr. S. SHITEMI
Mr. G. MUNIU

Mexico: Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO
Mr. C. HELLER

Mongolia: Mr. D. ERDEMBILEG
Mr. S.-O. BOLD

Morocco: Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. R.H. FEIN
Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS
Mr. A.Y. MEERBURG

Nigeria: Mr. O. ADENIJI
Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan: Mr. M. AHMAD
Mr. M. AKRAM
Mr. T. ALTAF

Peru:

Poland: Mr. B. SUJKA
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania: Mr. N. MALITA
Mr. T. MALESCANU

Sri Lanka: Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA

Sweden: Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. L. NORBERG
Mr. G. EKHOLM
Mr. J. LUNDIN
Mr. H. BESGLUND

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELIAN

Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO

Mr. A.F. KUSNETSOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES

United States of America:

Mr. C.C. FLOWERREE

Mr. F. DESIMONE

Ms. K. CRITTENBERGER

Mr. J.A. MISKEL

Mr. C. PIERCY

Venezuela:

Mr. O.A. AGUILAR

Yugoslavia:

Mr. V. VOIVODIC

Mr. B. BRANKOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. LONGO B. NDAGA

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the
Committee:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee starts today its consideration of item 5 on its agenda: "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons".

Before proceeding with our regular business, I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to Working Paper No. 36, concerning the request submitted by Spain in connection with its participation in meetings of the Committee's 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. This draft decision is substantially identical to other draft decisions adopted by the Committee on the participation of non-members. If there are no observations I shall consider that the draft decision is adopted.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I will inform the permanent representative of Spain accordingly.

Mr. KOHIVES (Hungary): Mr. Chairman, in my statement today I would like to deal with item 5 of the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament for its work in 1981, the question of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

Ever since 1975 when the Soviet Union submitted a proposal and a draft international agreement to the General Assembly of the United Nations effectively to prohibit the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, this aspect of disarmament has been recognized as one of the urgent problems to be solved.

The Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in paragraph 77, stated: "In order to help prevent a qualitative arms race and so that scientific and technological achievements may ultimately be used solely for peaceful purposes, effective measures should be taken to avoid the danger and prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction based on new scientific principles and achievements. Efforts should be appropriately pursued aiming at the prohibition of such new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction".

Since 1976 our Committee has been actively dealing with the task of prohibiting the development of new weapons of mass destruction and accumulating a huge quantity of expertise and valuable material as a result of the useful discussions and exchanges of view in the framework of formal and informal meetings held with experts. The experts participating in the work of the Committee, however, had to take into consideration the fact that the Committee is not composed of scientific, technological or military experts which itself set a limit to the scientific-technological depth of their discussion.

Early in 1978 the delegation of the USSR proposed the establishment of an ad hoc group of qualified governmental experts to consider the question of possible areas of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction which should be included in an initial list of types of such weapons to be prohibited under a comprehensive agreement. This proposal in a renewed form was also discussed during our last year's session in the course of the consideration of this issue, as well as during this year.

My delegation continues to be convinced that a comprehensive approach to the question of the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction is feasible

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

and offers the most effective solution to prevent the emergence of such weapons, supplemented by individual agreements on particular types of weapons, and that the most effective method of handling this question would be the setting up of an ad hoc group of qualified governmental experts.

However, it has to be admitted that there are differing approaches as to the organizational aspects as well as to the basic approach to the substance of the question.

The Hungarian delegation has today circulated a working paper on an informal basis which will shortly be issued by the Secretariat officially in all the languages. In this working paper my delegation proposes the holding of informal meetings of the Committee on Disarmament with the participation of experts during the second part of our 1981 session. My delegation took note of the fact that some of the delegations in the Committee for the time being are reluctant to agree to the establishment of an ad hoc group of qualified governmental experts to be entrusted with the in-depth consideration of the prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction. However, my delegation feels it appropriate to take further concrete steps -- even if intermediate -- to promote the consideration of this issue as contemplated in General Assembly resolution 35/149 in which the Assembly requests the Committee on Disarmament, "in the light of its existing priorities, to continue negotiations, with the assistance of qualified governmental experts, with a view to preparing a draft comprehensive agreement on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, and to draft possible agreements on particular types of such weapons".

The major subjects to be dealt with during the informal meetings are listed in the working paper and therefore I would not like to repeat them in this statement. The Hungarian delegation proposes that the Committee on Disarmament take a decision or at least come to an understanding that preferably during the last week of June 1981, in the course of our summer session, the Committee on Disarmament will hold informal meetings with experts on the prohibition of the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction. The exact number of informal meetings could be decided when the programme of work of the Committee is under discussion early this June, depending also on the number of experts who participate in the meetings. The presence of experts would be of twofold use in the following way:

(1) They could promote with their contributions the substantive consideration of the question of new weapons of mass destruction, the results of which could provide for the Committee a scientifically substantiated basis to give fresh consideration to the issue as a whole, including the possibility of finding a possible mandate for the proposed group acceptable to all.

(2) The informal meetings having been accomplished, the experts could be of incalculable use in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons which will be in a crucial period of its activities at that time.

My delegation would be grateful to hear the views of delegations on the proposal, and expresses its hope that the Committee will agree to conduct such meetings, which would be of double use for our work.

Mr. FLOMERSEE (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, it has been the custom in this Committee to congratulate the new Chairman for the month when a delegation takes the floor for the first time during his chairmanship. I personally think the

(Mr. Flowerree, United States)

more proper sentiment would be an expression of sympathy; for taking the Chair is, after all, an inescapable burden under our rules of procedure. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I would take this opportunity, rather, to wish you well and to pledge to you our full co-operation during the month of April. Your dedicated, serious and thoughtful contributions to the work of our Committee in the past give us confidence that you will discharge your duties efficiently and effectively. We look forward to working under your leadership for the remainder of this part of our 1981 session.

I would also like to add a word of appreciation for the manner in which your two predecessors have carried out the demanding duties of the office of Chairman during the months of February and March. Drawing on his broad experience and consummate diplomatic skills, Ambassador de la Gorce launched us smoothly into the ocean of work that lay before us as our 1981 session began and, as the tide swelled, Ambassador Herder guided the Committee with a sure hand past numerous rocks and shoals to enable us to make considerable progress on both procedural and substantive matters. Both can take satisfaction in having met the most difficult test that our Committee can impose with new lustre added to their reputations.

At the outset, let me say that I am not planning to announce today any new United States policies on the issues with which the Committee on Disarmament deals. The policy review in which the United States Government is engaged, and to which I referred in my brief intervention on 12 February, is broad in scope and detailed, touching all aspects of arms control and related national security and foreign policies. Because of its fundamental nature and the complexity of the issues involved, the review will take some time. Its completion date cannot now be predicted. That does not at all mean that in the meantime the United States delegation will be unable to contribute to the work of the Committee, as I am confident we have made clear by our activity during this session to date, and we will continue whenever possible to participate fully and actively in the advancement of the Committee's work.

My reason for taking the floor today is to give my delegation's views on the vital question of the balance of military power and its relationship to arms control, particularly nuclear arms control, and to deal with some misleading impressions that may have been left by certain representatives who have addressed this subject in previous meetings. We have listened also to a lively exchange in this forum on the subject of the doctrine of deterrence -- or of houses with guard dogs and burglar alarms, in the analogy which seems to have captured the Committee's imagination -- and I would like to address that subject as well.

Reflecting on what has been said about the dangers of relying on a balance of nuclear power to maintain the peace, I would be the first to admit that the world could breathe more easily if there were no nuclear weapons in existence, although the dangers from modern conventional weapons, which are themselves appalling enough, would still be with us. But nuclear weapons do exist. Until we can find and agree upon a sure means of eliminating them, without jeopardizing the security of any State or group of States, they will continue to be a fact of life, and nuclear deterrence must remain a key element in maintaining stability and peace.

What are the alternatives? One course that has been advocated from time to time is unilateral disarmament. If the United States alone were to undertake nuclear disarmament, the result would almost certainly be a major military imbalance. We would all need to ask ourselves whose interests would then be served? In this regard I would draw your attention to certain remarks in a recent article on Soviet

(Mr. Flowerree, United States)

military thought by Professor Major-General A.S. Milovidov of the Lenin Military Academy. In the article he stated:

"The Soviet Union cannot undertake the unilateral destruction of its nuclear weapons and indeed has no right to do so, as it is responsible to the peoples of the whole world for peace and progress. Marxist-Leninists decisively reject the assertions of certain bourgeois theoreticians who consider nuclear missile war unjust from any point of view."

These views on unilateral nuclear disarmament and the role that nuclear weapons play in Soviet military thinking are in stark contrast to some comments on those subjects that have been presented to us here in this Committee. They serve to reinforce our grave doubts about the wisdom of unilateral disarmament.

If unilateral disarmament is out, what about unilateral restraint in nuclear armaments? Well, we tried that and the results were not encouraging. In the early post-World War II period the United States was the only nuclear Power, and for a long time after that helped to achieve stability and peace by virtue of its nuclear superiority. As the Soviet Union eventually brought its nuclear arsenal to a position of approximate parity, the United States decided that in the long-term interests of a stable peace, we should not attempt to maintain superiority. Our hope was that this exercise of restraint would persuade the Soviet Union to follow suit. In this hope we were disappointed. When we curbed and even cancelled significant armament programmes, the USSR continued to build up in all spheres.

Some examples:

- The Soviet Union has continued to strengthen its ground and air forces in Europe. In the last 15 years, Soviet military manpower has increased by about 1 million men. Some 25 divisions have been added to Soviet ground forces, and all divisions have been upgraded in capability and fire-power. During the same period, the tanks in the numerous Soviet divisions in eastern Europe and the western part of the USSR have been replaced with new, modernized and improved, tanks -- in most cases more than once. Some 1,400 aircraft have been added to the inventory of Soviet frontal aviation. Many of these new aircraft are designed for deep strike missions, bringing more of western Europe into the range of Soviet tactical aviation.

- The Soviet Union has also in recent years deployed the Backfire bomber, which carries more weapons than older bombers, and which, because of its greater range, can reach all of western Europe, vital sea-lanes, and even the continental United States.

- Soviet naval capabilities have also been expanding rapidly on a global basis; new warships have been built and deployed at an unprecedented pace during recent years.

- The USSR has continued to build up its nuclear missile forces in Europe. Some years ago, the Soviet Union began deployment of the SS-20 intermediate-range nuclear missile. In the past year alone, some 80 new SS-20 launchers have been deployed. This missile is qualitatively superior to its predecessors: it is mobile; it has greater range, and it carries not one, but three accurate warheads.

- In the last 15 years, the USSR has more than quintupled the number of its strategic nuclear delivery vehicles. In recent years, primarily through the

(Mr. Flowerree, United States)

deployment of three new ICBM systems, the Soviet Union has expanded the number of weapons these vehicles can carry by a factor of 11.

All of these programmes, along with other examples I have not included, have naturally caused the Soviet military budget to swell. It is a measure of the different emphasis on military efforts in the Soviet Union and the United States during the past decade that the costs of Soviet military activities, measured in dollar terms, were some 40 per cent higher than those of the United States; in 1980 Soviet outlays were some 50 per cent higher.

Those of you who read the Western press reports beginning in late 1979 surely know that it was only after it became clear that there were no alternative means of maintaining the balance that preserves the peace that plans for a NATO military response to these developments were decided upon and announced. Even now, more than a year later, the programmes contemplated in the NATO plans to strengthen its nuclear posture in Europe will not come to fruition for some years hence. When the Soviet Union attempts to justify, retrospectively, its own arms build-up on the basis of this necessary defensive response on the part of the NATO countries, it is a hollow and unbelievable justification. The NATO plans are a response to a Soviet build-up which in large measure has already taken place, such as the development to which I referred earlier -- the deployment of more than 180 nuclear-tipped SS-20 missiles, many of which can reach this very room within a matter of minutes. The NATO alliance has no equivalent systems to match the land-based, long-range theatre nuclear missile systems of the Soviet Union. Why should the Soviet Union not be delighted to freeze the situation with regard to theatre nuclear weapons where it stands now, as proposed by President Brezhnev? In contrast, the offer of the United States, on behalf of the NATO alliance, to negotiate on the limitation of land-based, long-range theatre nuclear weapons before Western deployments take place, is an eminently fair approach to halting the further build-up in nuclear weaponry on both sides.

I must point out here that, despite the clearly documented reasons for the NATO decisions, the distinguished representative of the USSR, in his statement during our meeting on 26 March, asserted that, like all the actions of the Soviet Union in its build-up of offensive military capability, those relating to Europe were purely and completely defensive responses to actions taken by others. But I wonder what he had in mind when, for example, he stated that while the Soviet Union admittedly has a large number of tanks, NATO has a large number of anti-tank weapons. Perhaps he wanted us to believe that the Soviet Union had to build and deploy all those tanks to defend itself against all those anti-tank weapons.

We have heard much during our debates here about the malign effects of international tension on arms control and disarmament efforts, as though international tension were an epidemic for whose spread all militarily significant nations were equally responsible. But would the level of international tension be so high if the build-up in Soviet military strength which I have briefly touched upon had not occurred, or if it had been more moderate? Or if there had been no invasion and suppression of Afghanistan? Or if surrogate forces encouraged by Moscow had not been at work in other parts of the world to thwart the desires of free people for true political self-determination and independence? We cannot be unmindful of the impact of such developments on the prospects for arms limitations. As United States Secretary of Defense Weinberger said in London on 5 April, just two nights ago, part of our response to a Soviet intervention in Poland would affect such things as further summit meetings or further discussion on limitations of arms.

(Mr. Flowerree, United States)

While we are on the subject of military build-ups and the causes of tension, I would like to note another element of asymmetry between the two main military groupings that has been largely ignored in our debates. Many speakers have regaled us with quotations from the International Herald Tribune and other American journals concerning military programmes that are under consideration -- or even simply advocated by individuals -- in the United States or in the NATO alliance. In contrast, we know nothing from the media in the Soviet Union or from statements by political leaders about Soviet military planning until the missiles, aircraft and ships begin to be deployed, or other action is taken. We Americans cherish our free press dearly, and I hope that the rest of my colleagues here appreciate the unique opportunity they have to follow the debates within our nation that illuminate the rationale for proceeding or not proceeding with specific military programmes. If the day were ever to come when we could read similar open discussions in Pravda or Izvestia, the climate of confidence would improve immensely.

Now let me return to the question of whether nuclear deterrence serves the interest of world peace and security. In the current international situation there are simply no good alternatives. This does not mean, however, that we necessarily expect deterrence to serve for ever. An arms race is not to our interest nor to the interest of the Soviet society. The United States, in conjunction with its allies, has undertaken serious efforts to find negotiated solutions to the dangerous and regrettable build-up of armaments. I have already made reference to the United States offer to negotiate equal and verifiable limits on long-range, land-based theatre nuclear forces.

With regard to strategic nuclear weapons, there has been much criticism in this forum of United States failure to ratify the SALT II agreement. As is well known, that development was due to a combination of factors, not the least of which was the wanton Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, an act which called into question the Soviet Union's willingness to abide by the norms of international behaviour and to live up to its commitments to international agreements. For its part, the United States, while undertaking its review of arms control and security policies, is continuing to act in a restrained and responsible manner, conscious of its commitment to peace and stability. In this regard, I would like to quote from a statement by the official spokesman of the United States Department of State, who said on 3 March of this year:

"While we are reviewing our SALT policy, we will take no action that would undercut existing agreements so long as the Soviet Union exercises the same restraint."

(Mr. Flowerree, United States)

As the new Administration in my country has made clear, the United States is not prepared to freeze through agreement a situation in which there is an imbalance favouring the Soviet Union; at the same time, the United States continues to wish to pursue a SALT process that brings about meaningful reductions in nuclear weapons.

President Reagan, in an interview with Walter Cronkite on 3 March, included in his response to a question about conditions for a summit meeting the following reference to reductions in strategic nuclear weapons:

"I have said I will sit down and negotiate with them [the Soviet leadership] for a reduction in strategic nuclear weapons to lower the threshold of danger that exists in the world today."

He went on to say:

"So far, previous presidents, including my predecessor, tried to bring negotiations to the point of actual reductions and the Soviets refused to discuss that."

He concluded by saying that the United States would have to know that the Soviet Union is willing to join in this approach. Secretary Weinberger also spoke about the SALT process in a television interview on 29 March. He said:

"... the attempt to reach an effective limitation of strategic arms is an extremely valuable and vital one, and we are perfectly ready to engage in it if the Soviets do not demonstrate by their behaviour that it's perfectly useless to engage in it."

The approach of the United States with regard to strategic arms limitations is clearly on the record.

The discussions we have been having in this Committee on the doctrine of deterrence and related matters, both in plenary and in informal meetings during this session, have been serious and useful to our work. A little over a year ago when I first took my seat as the United States representative in this important international body, I stated that I would do my utmost to interpret accurately my Government's position to the other members of the Committee and, whether we agree or disagree, I pledged faithfully to convey to my Government the views of other countries. In this spirit I ask that you ponder the statement I have made today as a serious and candid exposition of United States views on the vital topic of the interrelationship of the international climate, the military balance and the reduction of nuclear armaments.

Mr. VRHUNEC (Yugoslavia): Mr. Chairman, we assess the work done so far by the Working Group on Radiological Weapons as very intensive and the negotiations that are under way as constructive and going in the right direction. It is our desire to arrive, as soon as possible, at a definite text of the international instrument in order that we may ban these dangerous weapons. The adoption of an international convention on radiological weapons will undoubtedly also give additional impetus to the taking of other concrete disarmament measures, nuclear in particular, and will encourage the further process of negotiation within our Committee for which this is, after all, the most important task.

In my statement, I would like to refer to two problems that I consider as fundamental. In saying this I would not like to imply that the other issues are not of corresponding significance. However, my delegation has been and will express its positions with respect to them during the process of negotiations in the Working Group.

Undoubtedly one of the most important questions concerning the further work on the convention is the problem of the definition of radiological weapons. As is known, my delegation has submitted its own draft definition to the Committee for consideration, and I would like to take this opportunity to offer some observations that have to do with our fundamental concept with regard to this question.

The definition of radiological weapons must contain the basic characteristics of this type of weapon of mass destruction and must clearly differentiate between this and other types of weapons of similar characteristics. We consider that it is possible to formulate a clear definition which describes radiological weapons and which must specifically refer only to these weapons. A very important circumstance is that radiological weapons in a concrete, operative and physical form are unknown. This was the reason why we focused our definition on specific characteristics of radiological weapons. Numerous scientifically-founded facts indisputably confirm that the basic characteristic of a radiological weapon is that it inflicts injury on living beings by its ionizing radiation. Other forms of energy can completely be neglected. When we say that radiological weapons act through their ionizing radiation, we consider that this radiation has been created during the process of natural radioactive decay, that the content of radiation in the physical sense is changeable while its ionizing trait remains constant. Being different from nuclear weapons which free large quantities of other forms of energy as well, such as mechanical energy, thermal energy and visible light, radiological weapons act on living matter through their ionizing radiation from the beginning to the end of their application as weapons. Once radiological weapons start to go into effect, the process of radioactive decay cannot be either stopped or accelerated. The acceptable and controlled risk of professional exposure in the peaceful application of radioactive material is transformed into an uncontrolled exposure of the largest segments of population with effects which are very numerous, when it is used as a weapon. On the basis of the above reasons we think that the definition which links the essential characteristic of radiological weapons to ionizing radiation and does not in any way imply the direct or indirect legitimization of nuclear weapons might be the most acceptable one.

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

Permit me to dwell on yet another of the very important problems to which the convention on radiological weapons should devote special attention. This is the peaceful application of nuclear energy and, respectively, radioactive isotopes. The research and achievements registered in this field so far have attained an enviable level by which the application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes creates great possibilities for the solving not only of energy problems but also of development throughout the world and particularly in the developing countries. There is a need to regulate this question within the system of international economic relations in such a manner that nuclear energy may really be used for peaceful purposes and development and not for the destruction of mankind. The non-aligned and other developing countries have for a long time been saying that it is indispensable to approach as boldly as possible the settlement of the economic and political situation in the world on the basis of equity, sovereign equality and justice aimed at creating optimal conditions for the utilization of all available resources for the further unhindered development of all and particularly for a more rapid development of the developing countries. A particular role is played by the adoption and implementation of those United Nations decisions which strive for the establishment of the New International Economic Order. The use of nuclear energy plays an especially significant role in this process and, therefore, poses the question of the establishment of international instruments that will accord corresponding attention and offer adequate solutions to this problem. One such international instrument should by all means be the convention on radiological weapons that we are trying to agree upon.

In the opinion of the Yugoslav delegation, the convention that we are trying to elaborate must secure the conditions for an unhindered use of all the potential possibilities of nuclear energy for development purposes on a non-discriminatory basis and with the full recognition of the interests of all. The recent Ministerial Meeting of non-aligned countries held in New Delhi accorded, inter alia, particular attention to these problems. In this connection, the Final document of the non-aligned countries contains the following statement: "They particularly stressed the right of each nation to establish its peaceful nuclear programmes in accordance with its own priorities and requirements, as well as the need for free and non-discriminatory access to nuclear materials and technology for peaceful purposes".

In this context, we consider that the convention we are trying to work out must reflect the aspirations and needs of all countries, especially the developing ones, by respecting the inalienable right to development and prosperity through the use of contemporary scientific achievements on the basis of a corresponding equitable co-operation between countries that possess the know-how and technology and those who do not have them but have a great need for them.

Mr. MALITA (Romania) (translated from French): I am happy to welcome you as the Chairman of the Committee for the month of April. I am sure that the valuable qualities of competence, patience and tact that you have acquired as a result of long acquaintance with the difficult topics before us, as well as your ability to combine the official part of our work with sincere and thorough informal discussions will make this month a fruitful one.

I should also like to congratulate the out-going Chairman, Dr. Herder, for the excellent way in which he performed the task entrusted to him, so that we were able to make definite progress.

(Mr. Malita, Romania)

The debate in the Committee on Disarmament on the agenda item relating to new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons leads us to make the following remarks:

It cannot be said that weapons of mass destruction are not a well-defined category. They are weapons the effects of which are not confined to the area of a military conflict or war -- weapons which, owing to their monstrous destructive power, make no distinction between combatants and civilians. They are, in fact, weapons which represent a danger for the entire human race. These are weapons against which there is no defence, the only answer to them being the use of the same type of weapons, thereby multiplying destruction up to the limit of total annihilation.

Repugnance at the odious and degrading character of such weapons is unanimous. No one in public life has been heard to defend their legitimacy. It would be impossible to find any politician or military man who would openly declare that the use of such weapons is permissible for political and military purposes. The argument employed to defend their existence is that weapons of mass destruction are possessed, not to be used but to discourage others from using them. We shall return to this argument, which leaves the responsibility with those whose task it is -- as it is that of this Committee -- to find satisfactory solutions taking into account security conditions and the need to prohibit such weapons -- so far without success. The important point is that there is unanimous international recognition of the need to continue the process of outlawing weapons of mass destruction.

Quite clearly there is evidence that this is not only desirable but also possible. In the greatest military conflagration in history -- the Second World War -- chemical weapons were not used. A recently adopted Convention prohibited the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons. It was signed by 124 States and has been ratified by 81. The Committee has been solemnly called upon by the General Assembly to draft conventions on the abolition and prohibition of nuclear, chemical and radiological weapons. This is to some extent a proof that the premises for fruitful activity exist. Nor can we doubt the active support of public opinion, which has shown itself many times to be against environmental pollution and will not hesitate to express itself on the much more important question of survival.

We have not succeeded in finding solutions to the problems posed by weapons of mass destruction like nuclear, chemical and radiological weapons, and we already know that there is a possibility of still others being invented. The Romanian delegation wishes to draw attention to the contradiction, the opposition and the abyss that exist between the pace of disarmament negotiations and the pace at which science is perfecting existing weapons and creating others.

The effect of the concentration of creative scientific resources on military purposes (over 50 per cent of research expenditure is devoted to weapons, and 40 per cent of the world's scientists are engaged in the same sphere) is that weapons systems become obsolete so quickly that many of the subjects of our negotiations may soon be out of date. At the same time the complexity of the problems engendered by the new weapons will be greater, and new obstacles will thus block the way to the prohibition and control of a new golem.

(Mr. Malita, Romania)

Nowhere is the rate of modern scientific and technological progress more apparent than in the micro-electronics revolution. Operating speeds have increased and dimensions and costs have fallen in proportions varying from 1,000 to 1 million times over the past 20 years. No instrument or machine designed by man has been perfected at such a rate. The direct consequence is the improvement of the accuracy and reliability of missiles. Even more serious is the fact that the huge process of improvement merely increases the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons -- of all weapons of mass destruction -- which are more and more considered as instruments of war and not of deterrence.

I should like now to make a few remarks about the relationship between the rate at which weapons research and development laboratories are working and the pace of our negotiations.

With regard to nuclear weapons, the Romanian delegation is one of those which urged that the Committee should start some structured work on this subject, even if only in the form of informal consultations. We should therefore like to express our satisfaction at the initiation of these consultations. At the same time we must stress that the holding of informal consultations is not an end in itself. In our view the goal we must all pursue is to ensure that the activities undertaken constitute a step forward towards the beginning of real negotiations for the elaboration of nuclear disarmament agreements. We therefore support the proposals put forward by the delegations of Brazil and India to that effect. Unless it leads to that goal, the praiseworthy effort made by holding informal consultations will be devoid of any practical purpose.

The Romanian delegation considers that, taking as a starting point the provisions of paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, it is necessary to elaborate the principles which are to govern the nuclear disarmament negotiations and to identify the concrete measures which are to be negotiated within the Committee. The establishment, during the second part of the Committee's current session, of an ad hoc negotiating group or any other subsidiary body with this as its mandate seems to us to be the necessary logical continuation of the action taken so far.

The prohibition of chemical weapons is one of the subjects on which our delegation has already had the opportunity to state its position and views. At this stage of our work we should like to present the following observations for the Committee's consideration.

First, the Romanian delegation considers that the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons have reached a delicate point of which we should all be aware. It is clear that if, after more than 10 years of negotiations, we are not in a position to begin work on drafting the text of an international instrument, it is possible that this will cause some State, given the present international situation, to decide to develop their arsenals of chemical weapons. The Committee's inability

(Mr. Malita, Romania)

to outlaw chemical weapons will thus be, not merely the failure of a series of efforts spreading over a long period of time but in fact a powerful stimulus towards the renewal of the arms race in one of the important areas of weapons of mass destruction.

The second observation concerns the preparations of a technical nature made in the Committee with the participation of experts. Our delegation appreciates the usefulness of this work, which has enabled us to gain an insight into some important and complex questions relating to the prohibition of chemical weapons. It is now necessary to move on to negotiations to solve these problems. It is for this reason that it should be one of the Committee's priority tasks at the beginning of the second part of its session this year, to reconsider the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons with a view to bringing it into line with the present stage of our work.

Lastly, we should like to refer to the question of verification, which has been the subject of many statements. The Romanian delegation is in favour of establishing an effective system for verifying compliance with the provisions of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. At the same time we are of the view that the machinery agreed upon, however perfect it may be, will not be able to guarantee absolutely that all the provisions of the convention will be respected. That is why the Romanian delegation considers that it is in the interests of all States to supplement the specific verification provisions contained in the convention by a set of measures designed to increase confidence among all the parties in the implementation of this international instrument. We are thinking of provisions for the development of co-operation with regard to protective equipment, antidotes, alert and decontamination systems, etc. It is in that light too, that we should study the proposal of Sweden regarding the scope of the prohibition and that of Brazil concerning the title of the convention itself.

As you know, the Romanian delegation has expressed its support for the idea that the Committee should begin to consider measures designed to stop scientific and technological discoveries from being used for the production of weapons of mass destruction. In our delegation's view, the decision to establish an ad hoc group of scientific experts to study the technical implications in this field will constitute a practical and significant step forward by the Committee on Disarmament.

The work initiated in the Committee on the subject of the prohibition of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons should be supplemented by a decision by all States which have a substantial military research and development potential to take the necessary measures at the national level to prevent scientific and technological discoveries from being used for military purposes.

With regard to the conclusion of an international convention prohibiting radiological weapons, the Romanian delegation would like to draw attention to the constructive way in which the negotiations are proceeding and the need to take action towards the preparation of the text of an international agreement. In our opinion,

(Mr. Malita, Romania)

at the present stage we should try to solve three fundamental problems on which the success of the convention depends, namely: the definition of radiological weapons, the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, and the relationship between the convention and the nuclear disarmament process. At the same time we should like to stress the importance which some States, including Romania, attach to a solution which could increase the protection of nuclear power plants during armed conflicts, a proposal put forward by the delegation of Sweden.

By way of conclusion I should like to say that we are constantly being told that weapons of mass destruction in general, and nuclear weapons in particular, are produced solely in order to deter aggression. If this is the real reason for the possession of weapons of mass destruction, is it not much simpler and more economical, as well as safer, to seek to attain that result through disarmament negotiations rather than by ceaselessly accelerating the arms race in order to increase the deterrent effect of these weapons, a process which contains in itself the seed of the destruction of the existing balance?

The Romanian delegation emphasizes the need to take action, with all due sense of responsibility, not only to eliminate the danger of a devastating conflict but also to adopt measures which will protect future generations from this danger.

A few days ago Nicolae Ceausescu, the President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, expressed the hope that all States would understand the need to halt the arms race, and especially the nuclear arms race, promoting to that end a policy of contacts and negotiations conducive to improving mutual confidence and to finding the best solutions for the purposes of détente, disarmament and the strengthening of international co-operation and peace. In our opinion this is the only course to take, especially in view of the more difficult and complicated conditions now prevailing in the world.

New weapons are not mere exercises in futurology. The deadlock encountered in the regulation of existing weapons, as well as the fact that they are being qualitatively perfected as the result of scientific and technological discoveries, means that every day it is more likely that they will become a practical reality. The fact that the qualitative gap remains open-ended as far as weapons of mass destruction are concerned leads not only to the perfecting of existing weapons but also to discoveries having vast military implications.

That is why the Romanian delegation considers that, while attaching the highest priority to the outlawing of those weapons of mass destruction which already exist in the arsenals of States, the Committee should not overlook the subject of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Romania for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. DE SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil): Mr. Chairman, may I express my best wishes for your successful term of office as Chairman of the CD and pledge the co-operation of my delegation in the discharging of your duties.

Before I start the main section of my statement today, which will be devoted to radiological weapons, may I be allowed to dwell briefly on a point raised by your own delegation, at our plenary meeting of 26 March, regarding chemical weapons. On that occasion, speaking as head of the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, you mentioned the experience acquired by your Government in the field of the destruction of toxic agents remaining from the first and second world wars. The delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany has also touched on that question in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons. As members of this Committee are aware, my own delegation and several others attach the utmost importance both to the destruction of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons as well as to the dismantling of production facilities, in connection with the negotiations currently under way in the Working Group chaired by Ambassador Lidgard. My delegation would be most grateful if your delegation would find it possible to provide the Committee with additional information on the work carried out in this field in your country, with particular emphasis on the aspects of cost and environmental protection mentioned in your statement. We believe that such data would help many delegations to better understand the technical aspects of the issues involved, particularly with regard to the delays needed to comply with the obligation, to be embodied in the chemical weapons convention, to destroy the existing arsenals of chemical weapons.

May I turn now to the main subject of my statement today. Our Committee is examining this week item 5 of our agenda, namely, radiological weapons, according to our programme of work. In my statement of 12 February of this year, I have already had the occasion to share with the Committee my Government's general position on this matter. Brazil believes that the Committee on Disarmament should concentrate its efforts on issues to which a much higher priority has been assigned by the General Assembly, rather than devote the scarce time available to measures which are, at best, lateral to the main problems of disarmament. So far, the Committee has been unable to agree even on the organizational aspects of the substantive negotiations on nuclear disarmament or the comprehensive test ban, the urgency of which has been unanimously recognized in the Final Document and in countless United Nations resolutions. It should not be difficult to imagine the dismay of the membership of the United Nations if the Committee on Disarmament cannot go beyond presenting the international community, at the forthcoming General Assembly, with a draft text on weapons that do not exist, and which according to some expert opinion do not stand even the chance of ever existing, and reporting at the same time that no progress has been accomplished on measures deemed vitally urgent by the higher forum on repeated occasions. My delegation sincerely hopes that the earnest desire displayed in some quarters for the speedy conclusion of a text on radiological weapons be matched by a corresponding willingness to arrive at a workable arrangement that will enable the Committee also to tackle the urgent questions to which the highest priority was assigned.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

Nevertheless, we believe that a convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons might be useful in two main directions. First, it should contain explicit provisions that spell out the commitment of the parties to concrete measures of nuclear disarmament; secondly, it should be conceived as an effective tool to promote international co-operation on the peaceful utilization of radioactive materials for peaceful purposes.

One of the main difficulties to which the Ad Hoc Working Group has been addressing its attention is the formulation of an acceptable definition for the kind of weapon that would be the object of the prohibition. My delegation favours the suggestions that have been made in the Committee and in the Working Group, according to which it would be advisable to define radiological weapons by their characteristics, rather than by explicitly excluding nuclear weapons from the purview of the convention. There seems to be little point in adopting a definition that amounts to a legitimization of nuclear weapons only to have the following article disclaim that fact by stating that nothing in the convention can be interpreted as legitimizing nuclear weapons. Such a disclaimer would, in fact, only underline the assumption that the very real nuclear weapons are, indeed, considered as a viable option, while the non-existent radiological weapons are prohibited. The exclusion clause, as it has been described, is, for those reasons, unacceptable to my delegation.

As we have already pointed out, the proposed convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons provides the international community with an opportunity to give formal expression, in an internationally binding instrument, to the commitment to nuclear disarmament. We believe, therefore, that the convention should contain an explicit provision to that effect, and not merely a vague preambular reference to nuclear disarmament. In the history of international agreements in the field of disarmament, a provision of this kind would mark a significant step forward.

In 1968, the predecessor of this Committee was called upon to approve an international treaty that contains, in its article VI, explicit provisions regarding nuclear disarmament. The Parties to which the Treaty accords a special status seem, however, to have interpreted that provision in a diametrically opposite sense. The second review Conference of the Parties to that Treaty, celebrated last year, showed the growing concern of the vast majority of its Parties, who have scrupulously adhered to the obligations entered into and are still waiting for a better understanding, by those same Powers, of the commitments embodied in article VI. Clearly, the expression of the commitment to nuclear disarmament on the part of the nuclear-weapon Powers needs to be reinforced at the legal level. The proposed convention on the prohibition of radiological weapons affords the Committee on Disarmament, and the international community at large, a new opportunity to achieve that purpose.

The question of the peaceful uses of radioactive materials and sources of radiation is also of paramount importance for the Brazilian delegation. We are firmly convinced that the proposed convention could serve a very useful purpose if it were to further and promote international co-operation in that field. While

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

preventing the possibility that radioactive material could ever, even in the remote future, be utilized in warfare by those that have the technological means to envisage such a possibility, the convention would have quite a constructive impact if it were to facilitate and enhance the peaceful applications of such materials in the present. My delegation has already made its views known, in the Working Group, on this subject, and I do not have to repeat them here in detail. Suffice it to say that we prefer a positive formulation for the corresponding article of the instrument, rather than simply stating in a negative way that the provisions of the convention will not hinder or prejudice the use of radioactive material for peaceful purposes; mention should also be made of the need for promoting international co-operation, including co-operation in the field of transfer of technology. The delegation of Romania last year made some interesting proposals to this effect, and also introduced, this year, a constructive amendment to article V of the draft convention. The suggestion embodied in working paper CD/RW/WP.4, submitted last year by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, is in our opinion also very positive. We further believe that every nation has an inalienable right to carry out national programmes for the peaceful use of nuclear energy in all its forms. The recognition of this right by the parties to an eventual instrument should, thus, not be limited to the parties themselves; we are dealing here with a general principle that should be stated in a general, non-discriminatory manner.

Discrimination may also arise from formulations which tend to confer a privileged status on some of the parties to the proposed convention, as would be the case if the complaints procedure made use of the Security Council of the United Nations. We fail to see the merit of establishing a procedure that can easily be blocked by a handful of nations, among which, incidentally, are included those that possess the technological means to contemplate the production of radiological weapons. My delegation would be unable to agree with a mechanism for the lodging of complaints that does not take into account the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Procedures designed to solve problems that may arise in the application of the provisions of international agreements cannot contain any elements of discrimination among States parties.

These are the main views of the Brazilian delegation on the question of a convention to ensure that, in the future, radiological weapons will not be added to the arsenals of States. The low priority of this question, as compared to the urgent need for other measures contained in the Committee's agenda, should not, of course, prevent the Committee from proceeding with its efforts for the negotiation of a convention, and my delegation stands ready to continue making its contribution to the discussion. According to the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the completion of the examination of the main elements of the future treaty will provide substantive material for the next phase of the task.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. DARUSMAN (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, speaking for the first time in a meeting under your chairmanship, may I say how glad I am to see you in the Chair. The many and useful contributions you have made in the past to the Committee make you eminently suited to this difficult task and we are convinced that under your wise guidance this spring session of the Committee on Disarmament will certainly close with positive results. My delegation for its part pledges its full co-operation to you in the discharge of your duties. I also wish to express the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Herder for the further constructive stages that were achieved in the work of the Committee when he chaired it last month.

The Indonesian delegation will on another occasion put forward its position on certain aspects of item 5 of the agenda, which is now before the Committee.

Today I would like to say a few words on some aspects relating to item 3 of our agenda, i.e. on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

When the question of security assurances was discussed in 1973 by the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Indonesian delegation, in its statement on 1 November, stated that "the most effective guarantee is, of course, the cessation of all forms of nuclear-weapon testing in all environments, the prohibition of the manufacture of additional nuclear weapons, followed by the destruction of existing stockpiles". My delegation continues to hold this view. However, as we all realize that such an absolute guarantee can hardly be achieved in the foreseeable future, my delegation believes it imperative for the international community at least to develop at this stage effective measures to ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons from any quarter.

The Committee on Disarmament, which has been entrusted with the task of negotiating with a view to reaching agreement on and concluding effective international arrangements on security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, is still faced with some difficulties. My delegation is, however, optimistic that these difficulties can be overcome.

During the discussions in the relevant Ad Hoc Working Group some questions have been raised on which my delegation would like to comment briefly.

Firstly, concerning the proposal on the issuance of declarations by the nuclear-weapon States that are identical in substance, my delegation has stated its satisfaction at the unilateral declarations of assurance of non-use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States against non-nuclear-weapon States. We feel, however, that to be effective, such unilateral declarations should be put into a binding international instrument. We are therefore pleased to note that the Committee has in principle already recognized this need. As the distinguished

(Mr. Darusman, Indonesia)

delegate of Pakistan has pointed out, undertaking such a declaration is a prerogative right of the individual nuclear-weapon States themselves. It will, however, be difficult for my delegation to accept this idea as a precondition for our further negotiations. The absence of such declarations, which are identical in substance, should not prevent us from initiating negotiation on an international agreement on this subject.

Secondly, with regard to the non-stationing of nuclear-weapons on the territories of States where there are no such weapons at present, this question should, in the opinion of the Indonesian delegation, be part of the obligation to be undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States. It is pertinent to note in this context that the obligation of non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT, to which Indonesia belongs, is quite clear. The non-stationing of nuclear weapons in the territories of those States constitutes a further measure to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. My delegation feels that in view of the particular geophysical configuration of a country like Indonesia, the concept of the non-stationing of nuclear weapons should be broadened so as to cover also their transportation through lands and seas falling within the jurisdiction of non-nuclear-weapon States where there are no nuclear weapons at present. Without such an expanded concept, any eventual international agreement agreed upon would not give adequate security assurances to an archipelagic State like Indonesia, consisting of thousands of islands surrounded by waters with innumerable straits and sea-lanes. Moreover, its strategic location between two oceans makes Indonesia very vulnerable, and my delegation therefore considers transit through or deployment of nuclear weapons in its waters undesirable. In the event of a military confrontation between major Powers, the transportation of such weapons through Indonesian waters might very well become necessary from the point of view of the warring parties. This in turn would give reason for the belligerents to attack the enemy craft that carry them, in which case, Indonesia as a non-party to either belligerents could not possibly escape the harmful effects of nuclear weapons so damaged or destroyed. From the foregoing it is clear that, based on those considerations, ways and means should be explored to make an eventual agreement cover all aspects of the security interests of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Thirdly, concerning the inherent right of self-defence, we are all aware that security assurances would be meaningless if nuclear weapons were used as a means to settle political and military conflicts. In this connection my delegation would like to associate itself with the views expressed by other delegations that, in the exercise of the right of self-defence, due account must be taken of the international community, namely, to save mankind from total annihilation.

Fourthly, regarding the Pakistani proposal as contained in document CD/161, my delegation would like to express its appreciation to the distinguished representative of Pakistan for his unceasing efforts to come up with alternative proposals with a view to reaching a common agreement. After having studied it carefully, my delegation feels that alternative B might preferably be used as a point of departure. This alternative is included in stage two of the working paper of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group, contained in document CD/SA/WP.5. While this alternative may not be the one and only way to facilitate our work, it is my delegation's considered opinion that the Ad Hoc Working Group should start its endeavours forthwith from the less controversial one. My delegation is flexible as to the approach that will be taken later on.

Mr. LIDGARD (Sweden): First, Mr. Chairman, I want to convey to you our congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship for this month. Needless to say, we are confident that the Committee will fare well in your experienced hands. Further, the Swedish delegation will continue to make all efforts in order to contribute to this effect. I should also like to address myself to your distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Herder, and to say again how we appreciated the skilful and impartial way in which he accomplished his task in the month of March.

Radiological weapons are on our work programme for this week and I am going to focus on this item in my intervention today. I should first like to express my great appreciation of the way in which Ambassador Kónives of Hungary is conducting the Working Group on Radiological Weapons. He has shown his full devotion to his task, which he is accomplishing with the greatest skill and energy. We shall continue to give him our full support till the work has been concluded, which we hope will be at the end of this session.

However, we see danger in the argument which some delegations have put forward, namely, that the CD must prove its capacity to negotiate disarmament agreements through rapidly approving the draft elements of a convention on radiological weapons that have been submitted to the Committee. We agree that it is in our own as well as in the general interest that the CD should prove its efficiency in the negotiation process. This may imply a further intensification of our work. It may also imply a more critical look at our priorities, and it is in this context that I should like to express our deeply felt concern.

We do not believe that we shall be responding to the expectations of the nations of the world, which are eagerly waiting for disarmament measures, if what we submit to them after years of bleak results are measures of a very limited importance, which some may even state to be no real disarmament measures at all but only sham arms limitation. The CD should be very careful in order to avoid such criticism. We must refrain from submitting disarmament agreements to the United Nations which we cannot honestly state to be of any importance.

It is in this light that we have scrutinized the draft elements on radiological weapons. We think that here we are placed in front of some very important and difficult decisions, and I grant that they may be particularly painful for the two delegations which have submitted the draft elements to the Committee.

As I stated in my intervention in this Committee on 26 February last year, quoting from a Dutch working paper from 1970 (CCD/291), "judging by the available information, possibilities for radiological warfare do exist theoretically but do not seem to be of much or even of any practical significance".

Studies which have been undertaken by the competent scientific and technical institutions in Sweden since the early 1950s, and which have now again been carefully examined, show that the development of specific radiological weapons, as defined by the drafters, is a very remote possibility. They could hardly become practical weapons of mass destruction or have any effective use in the battlefield. A radiological weapon of sufficient strength for denying an enemy access to significant areas of terrain would be almost impossible to fabricate, handle or deliver.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

To produce the necessary amounts of radioactive substances, large nuclear power reactors or large special production reactors would be needed. If, for instance, an ordinary electrical generating station of 1,000 MW electric output is shut down at the saturation level for many of its most energetic waste products; if, then, all its fuel elements are taken out and grained to powder after a cooling period of one month, and if, finally, the resulting matter is spread out to cause a dose rate of 1,000 rad/hour, i.e. denying access to the contaminated area, only 4 km² would be covered. It should be noted that the fuel inventory of such a reactor has a weight of some 150 tons, and the enormous radioactivity of some 1,000 MCuries. The shielding necessary to protect personnel from this amount of radiation would come to several hundred tons of material.

It is obvious that such a bulk of deadly dangerous material could not be handled for dissemination without killing one's own personnel long before the material could have an impact on an enemy.

We have repeatedly asked the drafters to substantiate why they consider radiological weapons a possibility in warfare, but we have never obtained any specific answer. Only once has an effort been made to give technical data in order to support the conception of radiological weapons as something real and threatening. The delegation which came forward in that endeavour, mentioned that one ton of the isotope scandium 46, if disseminated, would effectively bar access to about 1,000 km². That is true.

However, it is also true that handling such an amount of that nuclide (34,000 MCuries) would be even more impossible than handling the reactor fuel waste I have just mentioned. Moreover, its production would require the use of all at present installed reactors in the world. The same analysis would apply to other nuclides of potential interest for radiological weapons.

Such weapons, as defined by the author of the draft elements, are as a matter of fact impossible to realize physically. New means of handling protection, which could make them more realistic in the future, do not seem possible. There is one obvious way to cover areas with radioactive substances in sufficient amounts and with sufficient flexibility to make them generally useful to the military. That is the production of these substances at the target by means of surface explosions of nuclear weapons. That case is exempted from the prohibition in the draft convention.

It was argued last year that low dose contamination of wide areas, while having no immediate somatic effects, would be a weapon of mass destruction, because a very large number of people could be affected. However, those effects would appear only after a long delay -- 10-20 years -- and they would therefore have no military meaning.

In expressing our doubts about the feasibility of radiological weapons I have tried to be more explicit and specific than diplomatic. Not all delegations here have the means to carry out studies of the kind I have referred to. We are strongly convinced that honesty requires a clear and straight presentation of facts behind the problems we deal with. We consider the reputation of the CD to be at stake.

Therefore, we think it is the obligation of those who state radiological weapons to be a threatening reality to substantiate their arguments in scientific and technical terms. We must have an open discussion of this very fundamental question.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

There exists, on the other hand, a very real risk of mass destruction from the dissemination of radioactive substances in war, apart from nuclear explosions. That is the case of military attacks on nuclear power industry installations, where very large amounts of radioactive materials are present. In this case the main obstacles to the use of radiological weapons are bypassed, namely, the production and delivery problems.

As shown by numerous studies in many countries, including my own, nuclear reactor catastrophes caused, for instance, by a military attack, would have lethal consequences for man over an area of the order of 100 km², depending, of course, on the meteorological conditions at the time. It means that in densely populated regions with a developed nuclear power industry, large populations would be involved. This is so today in the industrialized countries, but in the future many densely populated developing countries with emerging nuclear energy production may come under the same threat.

The radioactive effects of an attack on an ordinary power reactor could cause immediate effects comparable to the fall-out from a 20 kT nuclear-weapon surface explosion, while the long-term radioactive effects could be in orders of magnitude more severe than those for a nuclear explosion. It should be noted in this connection that the production rate of radioactive substances in a 1,000 MW nuclear electrical generating station is equal to that of one 60 kT atomic bomb every day. After some time of operation, the core of such a reactor is very dangerous indeed, if brought into the open. The radioactive material would in this case not have "cooled off" most of its radiation as in manufacturing a radiological weapon.

In my country we have made an extensive study of the catastrophe risks concerning the reactors at Barsebäck in southern Sweden. These reactors have an aggregate electric power output of 1,160 MW and, if damaged, the risk zone for lethal radioactivity spreadout would include about 3,000 km² where about one million people live. It would not be difficult for me to mention, on the basis of this study, which populations would live in similar risk zones around reactors situated in Central Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States of America. Some of these risk zones would extend into neighbouring countries. The data are easily available. The reactors are all listed by IAEA.

In addition to the zone of killing-dose rates, large areas of the order of 1,000 km² would be covered by radioactive substances in lower concentrations, that would not kill people at once but would make it necessary to keep those areas evacuated for a long time.

The draft elements exempt the most effective method of radiological warfare, namely, that of using nuclear weapons. If our proposal for banning military attacks on nuclear power stations is not accepted, the second most effective method would also be exempted. Only the impossible method of using special radiological weapons will be forbidden.

The Swedish delegation has elaborated its proposal in a working paper (CD/RW/WP.19) which was submitted to the Working Group on 16 March 1981. The discussion of the proposal is proceeding in the Working Group and I shall therefore limit myself to three points.

First, it has been stated that the Swedish proposal is a rule of war and therefore does not belong to a convention on radiological weapons. To this I should like to respond that actually article III in the draft elements also is a rule of war,

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

since it contains an explicit undertaking to refrain from a specific action of warfare, namely, the deliberate employment, by its dissemination, of radioactive material to cause destruction, damage or injury. Our proposal can be conceptually placed within this framework.

It should be added that disarmament or arms limitation agreements sometimes also encompass rules of war. In this case it seems so much more appropriate, since the specific weapon that the agreement would prohibit is of such remote possibility, if not altogether unfeasible.

Secondly, it has been stated that the Swedish proposal has already been taken care of in the 1977 Additional Protocols (I:56, II:15) to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. As we have already stated in our working paper, these provisions are limited in two respects. They cover only nuclear electrical generating stations and leave other installations with large amounts of radioactive materials uncovered. Further, their purpose is limited to providing protection for the civilian population in the vicinity of these installations, but permit military considerations to take priority over the humanitarian ones and thus provide for exceptions from the protective provisions. A general prohibition of radiological warfare should cover all important risks and have no loopholes.

Thirdly, the question has been raised how not to place military installations under protection. In our working paper the approach was to show that there are scarcely any military installations on land with a high radiation intensity and that therefore no important military option would be sacrificed if preponderance were given to the prevention of the possible mass destruction effects. Nuclear weapons, stocks of fissionable material for such weapons and means of production for them would, of course, not be protected. We see, however, no difficulty in explicitly limiting the protection to civilian nuclear energy facilities. As I just said, IAEA publishes extensive data about such facilities, so they are well known, but if it would be considered necessary, it could also be envisaged that the States parties, in order to obtain protection for their civilian nuclear energy facilities would have to notify the depositary about them and their location and also mark them in the way stipulated in the 1977 Additional Protocol for nuclear electrical generating stations.

Concerning the military importance of this protection, I do not think that it is necessary to point out that the military objective of terminating power supply from nuclear power plants can, without much additional effort, be achieved through other means than by attack on the reactor itself. It is also only a direct hit on the reactor that creates the release of radiation of the dangerous magnitudes I have previously referred to. The same is true as regards other nuclear facilities to be protected, such as reprocessing facilities and deposits of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

To sum up, we think that the two delegations which have submitted to us the draft elements of a convention on radiological weapons owe it to us to give a precise and specific explanation why they think that this issue deserves our priority attention. I have at some length given my authorities' views why we think that radiological weapons, even without a prohibition, most probably never will come into existence. Since others, not least those outside this Committee, probably will raise the same question, I want to repeat my request for precise and clear information why the two delegations have come to a different conclusion about the technical feasibility and effectiveness of radiological weapons.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

On the other hand, we see a very obvious risk for radiological warfare through the dissemination of radioactive substances by attacks on nuclear energy installations with high radiation intensity. An effective prohibition against such warfare would be hailed as an important step forward by public opinion, not only in the industrialized countries which today have a nuclear power industry or have nuclear facilities close to their borders. It will in the future be of great interest to an increasing number of countries as further growth of the nuclear industry takes place.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Lidgard, for his statement and also for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, since I wish to speak in right of reply, I shall reserve my right to congratulate you formally and to thank your predecessor in the office of Chairman at the next meeting.

In its statements before the Committee on Disarmament the Soviet delegation has always refrained and continues to refrain from drawing the Committee into a discussion of controversial topics which might provoke a confrontation in the Committee and ultimately divert it from its tasks. Because we are interested in business-like negotiations on disarmament, that was our position last year and it is still our position. The statement of the Soviet delegation of 26 March was made in the same spirit, as you know. In that statement we touched on such general topics as the principle of non-impairment of the national security interests of the countries participating in the negotiations and various theories relating to nuclear weapons, with references to the relevant Soviet and foreign sources. Our statement, we believe, did not stray from the subjects being discussed in the Committee. Of course, it met with various responses; we heard positive reactions, and there were probably some that were not, but no one could reproach us for going beyond the problems being discussed in the Committee.

However, the United States representative today took another course, and a frankly dangerous one. In his statement he dealt repeatedly with questions which have nothing to do with the Committee's agenda. He referred to the situation in various countries of the world. He referred to the kinds of information found in the Soviet press and, in effect, to the nature of Soviet society, and so on. It would hardly promote mutual understanding and progress if the Soviet delegation should in turn start to enumerate the vices of American society to which we have been witness, especially recently. We have no such intentions and I wish to assure the Committee that we shall never do so.

We do not hide the fact that we had awaited the statement of the United States delegation with interest and I think everyone will agree that it would have been very much more useful had Ambassador Flowerree informed us, let us say, that the United States was prepared to conduct within the Committee on Disarmament, and in particular in an ad hoc working group, negotiations on nuclear disarmament or on the conclusion of a treaty on the complete and general cessation of nuclear weapon tests and on many other specific problems now under discussion.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Needless to say, too, not only the Committee's work, but also progress in the settlement of many problems in international life, would be advanced by a positive reply from the United States to the many proposals made to that country by the Soviet leadership and which in essence called for negotiation instead of confrontation. It is still our view that only dialogue, and not provocative discussion, will enable us to make progress in the Committee and save the world from a nuclear catastrophe. I do not think that the statement of Ambassador Flowerree contributed to such a dialogue, at least not in the Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. FLOWERREE (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to prolong the debate. I want simply to say that I respectfully submit that the statement made by the Soviet Union on 26 March raised questions which related to the work of this Committee at its informal sessions. I have given what to us seems to be a description of the objective situation and what I brought into the discussion were subjects that were related to that particular area of our concern. I do not want to prolong the discussion but simply to stand by all the statements that I made today.

The CHAIRMAN: As members of the Committee are aware, the Secretary-General of the United Nations will be in Geneva during this week. A number of arrangements have been made in connection with his presence in the Palais des Nations. At mid-day on Thursday the area of the Salon Czech and the Salon Français will be reserved for activities relating to the visit of the Secretary-General. Therefore, may I suggest that on that date the Committee meet earlier, at 10 a.m., to avoid any inconvenience in our own proceedings. If there is no objection, I will take it that the Committee agrees to hold its next plenary meeting on Thursday, 9 April, at 10 a.m.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.