

COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 23 July 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. A.P. VENKATESWARAN (India)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. M. MATI
Mr. A. HELLAL

Argentina: Mr. J.C. CARASALES
Mr. J.F. GOMEZSORO

Australia: Mr. R. STEELE

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

Brazil: Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA
Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

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

Burma: U SAW HLAING
U NGWE WIN
U THAN HTUN

Canada: Mr. G.R. SKINNER

China: Mr. YU Mengjia
Mr. LI Changhe
Mr. SA Benwang

Cuba: Mr. F.O. RODRIGUEZ

Czechoslovakia: Mr. P. LUKEŠ
Mr. J. FRANEK

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN

Ethiopia: Mr. F. YOHANNES

France: Mr. F. de la GORCE
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HEIDER
Mr. H. THIELICKE
Mr. M. KAULFUSS
Mrs. H. HOPPE

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. C. PFEIFFER
Mr. H. KLINGLER
Mr. W. RÖHR

Hungary: Mr. I. KÓMIVES
Mr. A. LAKATOS

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

Indonesia: Mr. M. SIDIK
Mr. HARYOMATARAM
Mr. F. QASIM
Mr. W. ACHDIAK
Mr. E. SOEPRAPTO

Iran: Mr. J. ZAHIRI

Italy: Mr. A. CIARRAPICO
Mr. B. CABRAS
Mr. M. BARENGHI
Mr. E. di GIOVANNI

Japan: Mr. Y. OKAWA
Mr. M. TAKAHASHI
Mr. K. TANAKA
Mr. K. SHIMADA

Kenya:

Mexico: Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ y REYNERO

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

Morocco: Mr. M. ARRASSEN
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS

Nigeria: Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA

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

Peru: Mr. A. THORNBERRY

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

Romania: Mr. T. MELESCANU
Mr. S. ARCADIE

Sri Lanka: Mr. T. JAYAKODDY

Sweden: Mr. C. LIDGARD
Mr. H. BERGLUND
Mr. C-M. HYLTENIUS

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN
Mr. V.M. GANJA
Mr. M.M. IPPOLITOV
Mr. V.F. PRYAKHIN
Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV
Mr. V.E. BELASHOV

United Kingdom: Mrs. J.I. LINK
Mrs. C.A. BOOTS

United States of America:

Mr. C.C. FLOWERREE
Mr. F.P. DESIMONE
Ms. K. CRITTEMBERGER
Mr. R.F. SCOTT
Mr. W. HECKROTTE
Mr. J.E. TREFTON
Mr. S. FITZGERALD

Venezuela:

Mr. R. RODRIGUEZ HAVARRO
Mr. H. ARTEAGA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. B. BRANKOVIĆ

Zaire:

Mr. B.A. NZENGEYA

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the Committee:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

NON-MEMBERS

Finland:

Mr. P. KEISALO

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee continues today its consideration of item 6 of its agenda entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". Of course, members wishing to make statements on any other subject relevant to the work of the Committee may do so in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure.

Before turning to the list of speakers for today, I would like to inform the Committee that I had received a request from the representative of Bulgaria, Ambassador Voutov, on behalf of a group of Socialist countries, that the Committee discuss the matters referred to in documents CD/193 and CD/194 at our previous 139th plenary meeting, which was held last Tuesday.

Members of the Committee will recall that, because of the long list of speakers last Tuesday, we could not at that time take up documents CD/193 and CD/194. The matter was therefore left pending for today. Ambassador Voutov has now requested that the Committee take up those documents as the first order of business today, since he will be leaving later this morning in connection with the untimely death of Madame Lyudmila Zhivkova, daughter of the President Todor Zhivkov and Minister of Culture.

May I in this context express to Ambassador Voutov, and through him to his Government, my condolences and sympathies to the bereaved family.

In view of the special request of Ambassador Voutov we may, if there is no objection, start this plenary meeting with the consideration of documents CD/193 and CD/194. Thereafter we shall hear the statements from the speakers on the list for today. I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall therefore proceed accordingly. Members will recall that the representative of the German Democratic Republic in document CD/193 had proposed that the Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament hold consultations on the further proceeding of this Committee concerning item 2 of our agenda. I had raised this matter at one of our informal meetings and various views were expressed then; and I said that I would bear them in mind. I have subsequently held informal consultations with the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States. I found that their positions concerning item 2 had not changed. They are not in a position at present to agree to the establishment of an ad hoc working group on item 2. However, they are ready to co-operate in finding alternative ways in which to deal with item 2. For example, they have said that they may be willing to consider the setting up of a contact group to deal with the questions raised in document CD/180 presented by the Group of 21.

As members are aware, the Socialist group favours the consideration of its proposals in document CD/4 in a working group or in any other subsidiary body, but there is no consensus for it. Similarly, the proposal of the Group of 21 to establish a working group also does not have consensus.

Unfortunately I have not been able in the limited time to consult all the members of the Committee. In the circumstances, and in view of the very limited time now available for further discussion of item 2 during the rest of the current session, I am of the opinion that further consultations on this matter may be deferred till the beginning of the next annual session. Meanwhile, I would express the hope that interested delegations would informally exchange views with one another on how the Committee on Disarmament might proceed further during the next session. I trust the Committee agrees. I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: At our 138th plenary meeting, the representative of Bulgaria drew attention to document CD/194 presented by a group of Socialist countries concerning a nuclear test ban. That document favours the establishment of a working group on condition that all nuclear-weapon States take part in it. As members know, I had to put to the Committee earlier the proposal of the Group of 21 to establish a working group under item 1 and there was no consensus in favour of it. I would assume therefore that there is also absence of consensus at present for the establishment of the working group suggested in CD/194.

Document CD/194 also raises two other questions: (1) an appeal to the participants in the ~~trilateral~~ negotiations to resume their negotiations immediately, and (2) a recommendation to the tripartite negotiators that they jointly elaborate answers to the questions raised by the Group of 21 in document CD/181.

I do not know whether the participants in the tripartite negotiations are ready and willing to respond at present to the appeal for resumption of negotiations and to the recommendation that they jointly elaborate answers to the questions raised by the Group of 21.

I see no reaction from the trilateral negotiators. Does any delegation wish to comment on what I have said just now on these papers?

Mr. VOUTOV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, first of all, I should like to express our deep gratitude to you for having today informed the Committee of the death of Madame Zhivkova and for expressing condolences to the President of the Republic and to our people on this very sad news.

Madame Zhivkova was not only Minister of Culture, but she was a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party and was very well known for her activities in dealing with international matters, especially those concerning problems in the United Nations, where she was Head of the Bulgarian delegation in the General Assembly. She was also one of the organizers and, in fact, the Chairman of the international body which organized the United Nations International Year of the Child, under the auspices of the Secretary-General and UNESCO, which took place in 1979, as well as this year. A very big monument was built in Bulgaria on this occasion, representing the fight for peace, disarmament and security, creating an atmosphere of security for our children. This international monument was raised in my country, and now symbolically shows that many countries, 56 or 60, have sent a small bell from their nations. These bells are to remind children and their elders that they want peace and disarmament. The death of Madame Zhivkova is therefore a great loss to the movement for peace, disarmament and security.

Further, I should also like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, for agreeing to my request -- as I will unfortunately be unable to stay for the whole of the meeting today -- for a discussion on the questions which I have raised recently on two occasions, concerning documents CD/193 and CD/194. I should like to express our gratitude for the information in the statement you made and for the endeavours you have made in respect of our request. You mentioned document CD/4, which we consider as a basis, although wide and, I would emphasize, flexible, which could however be widened and deepened to form a basis for any proposals on ways and means of starting negotiations on the two main problems -- i.e. nuclear disarmament and a comprehensive test ban.

The Socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and others, are, as I am sure all of you are, eager to start negotiations as soon as possible on these

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two very important matters. It was in this connection that we mentioned these two documents, one circulated by the German Democratic Republic and the other on behalf of the Socialist delegations present here.

I would just add that we are ready for discussions at any time -- either during the session, at the end of the session, during the recess, during the General Assembly or, as you have proposed, Mr. Chairman, at the beginning of the next session. We have both shown and proved this. As you said, Mr. Chairman, that you are doing everything possible in this field, I should like to emphasize that the Socialist countries -- our Governments, our people and Parties -- are looking for ways and means to find a basis for negotiations on this most important and urgent priority. That is why we will accept any proposal, even for a future date, although we are ready to continue at this moment.

On this occasion I would especially wish to appeal to the five countries possessing nuclear weapons. I have already said that I am speaking on behalf of the Soviet delegation and would emphasize that at the last meeting the Head of the Soviet delegation, Ambassador Issraelyan, said that his delegation is in the forefront and ready not only to answer any questions, but to participate in any negotiations in this very important field.

Mr. de SOUZA e SILVA (Brazil): My delegation deeply regrets that the Committee on Disarmament finds itself in the awkward position of being unable to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the United Nations -- namely, to negotiate on the priority questions of disarmament. The efforts of many delegations, especially those in the Group of 21, to find an acceptable procedural framework in which to conduct multilateral negotiations on the nuclear test ban and on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament have unfortunately failed because of the intransigent attitude of some delegations.

In those circumstances, it seems that for the current session the Committee has exhausted the possibilities for arriving at an agreement on how to organize meaningful negotiations on items 1 and 2 of its agenda. For us, nothing remains to be said on this issue. We can only hope that the Governments concerned will live up to the commitments they have entered into before the international community.

The views expressed by the majority of members of this Committee on the negotiation of the priority items should be duly taken into account when the representatives of the nuclear weapon Powers come back to Geneva for the next session of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Brazilian delegation considers that the security perceptions of the nuclear-weapon Powers, especially the two Superpowers, lie at the root of the present situation in the multilateral negotiating body. It is our view that the international community, represented at the United Nations General Assembly, should be made aware of the difficulties encountered by the Committee on Disarmament. Both at the next General Assembly and in the deliberative body -- the United Nations Disarmament Commission -- we should explore all available possibilities to break the current deadlock so as to enable the machinery created by the consensus will of all nations to fulfil the expectations that were placed on it. We are convinced that the United Nations system still offers the best possible alternative to policies based on great Power rivalry.

Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, may I also avail myself of this opportunity to express our heartfelt condolences to the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on the untimely death of Comrade Lyudmila Zhivkova, who worked so energetically for the good of her country.

With regard to the two drafts we have before us, I should like to express our deep regret that the Committee seems not to be in a position to take up one of the most important items of our agenda, an item of utmost priority, the question of halting the nuclear arms race, and the question of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests. We are deeply concerned by the attitude of certain countries -- States which bear the highest responsibility for the solution of the task the Committee is facing but are not in a position to present any concrete alternatives on how to deal with this question.

Your suggestion to defer this matter until the next session means that the nuclear arms race will continue, without the Committee on Disarmament -- the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament -- even considering this question.

I should therefore like to appeal once again to all members of the Committee, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to change their attitude and to show political responsibility and political will in submitting concrete alternatives on how to tackle this matter. I think the role of the Chairman of this Committee could be a very important one in organizing and selecting the possible views on that question, so that this matter could be taken up in a more structured manner.

The CHAIRMAN: Members will recall that, at our last plenary meeting, the representative of Finland was unable to speak, as the list of speakers was a long one. I am convinced that the Committee members will agree with me that it would be only proper and in the tradition of hospitality to call, first of all, on our guest speaker. I see no objection. Therefore, in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee at its 104th plenary meeting, I call on the representative of Finland, Minister Keisalo.

Mr. KEISALO (Finland): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I wish to thank you and the members of the Committee for giving me the possibility of taking the floor as the first speaker, because I have seen from the list that, had I been the last speaker, I would not have been able to speak today either.

I wish to speak on the item "Comprehensive programme of disarmament" and, at the same time to present some views concerning the work of the Committee on Disarmament.

The present situation is marked by a virtual standstill in disarmament negotiations. In the course of the years following the first special session devoted to disarmament some limited progress has been achieved but efforts to halt and reverse the arms race have not succeeded. On the contrary, the arms race is accelerating and assuming new dimensions geographically, technologically and conceptually. Scarce resources that should be available for economic and social development continue to be diverted to military ends on a massive scale.

(Mr. Keisalo, Finland)

The tense international situation and the stagnation of disarmament negotiations only add to the significance of the second special session devoted to disarmament next year. Its function is to review the existing situation as well as to strengthen and broaden the foundations of an international disarmament strategy for future years. The comprehensive programme of disarmament will have an integral role in that strategy.

Consideration and approval of the comprehensive programme of disarmament will be a central task of the second special session devoted to disarmament. It is therefore of extreme importance that the Committee on Disarmament, and its Working Group under the efficient Chairmanship of Ambassador García Robles, make every effort to ensure that the draft programme they are producing is based on a consensus which takes account of different views expressed. That is why we have asked this opportunity to put forward our ideas at this stage.

As has been noted, there are a number of agreed documents on which the comprehensive programme of disarmament can draw. These documents contain a consensus concerning the priorities according to which the international community has decided to chart its way towards the ultimate goal of all disarmament endeavours. The function of the comprehensive programme of disarmament could be characterized as providing a frame of reference for the work of the disarmament machinery and of its component bodies. The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament enumerates the specific tasks to be undertaken over the coming years and it should therefore be, to the greatest extent possible, the basis for a comprehensive programme of disarmament. While the programme should contain specific concrete targets, rigid deadlines for the completion of negotiations would hardly be a fruitful approach, as the dynamics of negotiations are contingent on political and other developments that do not lend themselves to accurate advance appraisal. The lack of dates or deadlines would not diminish the urgency of agreed priorities. Neither would it lessen the authoritative and comprehensive character of the programme; rather, on the contrary.

As has been suggested, subsequent special sessions or other meetings, as agreed, could provide the international community with a forum for reviewing the implementation of agreed targets.

Nuclear disarmament is obviously the most urgent task. Nevertheless, the conventional arms race, both qualitative and quantitative, which constitutes the bulk of military expenditure in the world and a major burden to national economies, is at the regional level a most immediate threat to security. Consequently, both must have their place in the comprehensive programme of disarmament in a balanced way. That would be in keeping with the principle that disarmament measures should ensure, in an equitable and balanced manner, the right of all States to security, and that all States and groups should obtain equal advantage at every stage.

While the nuclear-weapon States, and especially the two with the greatest nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility for achieving nuclear disarmament,

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nuclear weapons pose a threat to the security of all nations. We believe that the question of a comprehensive test ban treaty should be treated with more urgency and in the way most conducive to the desired results. At present a good many types of nuclear weapons are not subject to negotiation. Arms technology is rapidly advancing, producing arms of increased sophistication and destructive power and thus creating new problems for regional stability and global security. It is necessary to bring also these weapons within reach of active arms control and disarmament efforts.

Pending nuclear disarmament, effective international arrangements should be devised to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The best solution would be an international convention through which the nuclear-weapon States would bind themselves unconditionally not to use or threaten to use these weapons against the non-nuclear-weapon States. If a convention at this time were to be an unrealistic target, we would at least expect that this undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States could be recorded in an appropriate Security Council resolution.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has already proved its viability. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are a contribution to the security of the zonal States and to international peace and security in general. They should be based on arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and should involve commitments by the nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the States of the zone and to respect the status of the zone. The consideration of the establishment of such zones should continue to benefit from the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, the United Nations study completed in 1975.

Finland has supported the idea of nuclear-weapon-free zones and has in 1963 proposed the establishment of such a zone in the Nordic area. In 1978, developing the proposal further and suggesting the elaboration of a Nordic arms control arrangement, the President of Finland emphasized inter alia that the initiative for negotiations must come from the States in the region, that they must themselves conduct the negotiations in good faith without coercion or pressure, that they alone were qualified to interpret their respective security needs and that the necessary arrangements could be made within the framework of the existing security policy solutions. In the view of my Government, a major element of stability in the Nordic region is the absence of nuclear weapons in the Nordic countries. The value of this has been repeatedly stressed by all Nordic Governments.

The possibility of the spread of nuclear weapons to more countries poses a great danger to the security of all States. We believe that there should be no new owners of nuclear weapons, no new types of nuclear weapons should be developed and no new deployment or introduction of nuclear weapons should be undertaken in areas where they so far have not existed. The comprehensive programme of disarmament should support and strengthen the non-proliferation régime, thus

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contributing to the elimination of impediments to a wider international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The comprehensive programme of disarmament should in addition give more impetus to the negotiations on the prohibition of other weapons of mass destruction. A treaty on chemical weapons is already overdue. The discussions in the CW Working Group demonstrate that all elements of the treaty have already been fully explored and that the Group should be authorized to move to the next stage in its work, as its Chairman, whose performance we greatly admire, has proposed.

Similarly, we regret that the treaty on radiological weapons is still on the negotiating table. In this connection, my delegation would like to commend and support the Swedish proposal for banning military attacks on civilian nuclear facilities, which proposal deserves the most careful consideration. Moreover, the emergence and development of new types of weapons of mass destruction based on new scientific principles and achievements should be prevented and appropriate arrangements should be sought for this purpose.

In concluding, I would like to say some words about the regional approach. Arms limitation and disarmament measures of both nuclear and conventional arms at a regional level should to our mind be sought where such an approach is viable. This has been tested and found successful in the case of nuclear-weapon-free zones and demilitarized zones and areas. There are negotiations under way at a regional level and a number of proposals are under consideration. Further evidence supporting this view can be found in the report on the study of all aspects of regional disarmament, carried out by a group of Governmental experts (document A/35/416). For our part, we welcome this constructive and objective study which provides for a wide range of measures for States of a region wishing to promote regional disarmament.

The possibilities for outlining broad-based efforts for regional measures in each region should be examined on the basis of the initiative and co-operation of the States in the region and taking into account conditions prevailing there. In this connection I would like to recall the Finnish initiative made in 1979 on a special disarmament programme for Europe. This initiative aims at outlining a comprehensive framework for disarmament negotiations concerning Europe, or parts of Europe, on the basis of all relevant initiatives and suggestions and through appropriate consultations and negotiations.

This short statement obviously does not cover the whole subject of the comprehensive programme of disarmament. But these were the issues we consider as the most important.

May I, Mr. Chairman, avail myself of this opportunity to thank the many speakers who have commented favourably on the CW workshop organized recently by Finland.

Mr. ARRASSEN (Morocco) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all on behalf of the Moroccan delegation, to express my sincere condolences to Ambassador Voutov in connection with the tragic event which has just struck Bulgaria, a country that is a friend of Morocco. I should also like to add, with regard to the International Year of the Child organized on the initiative of Bulgaria, that the Moroccan delegation made a proposal at the United Nations Conference on Conventional Weapons for increasing the protection of children against the effects of hostilities and of mines and booby traps -- a proposal that was adopted unanimously by the Conference.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I should now like to make a statement on chemical weapons.

With the exception of hypothetical techniques for modifying the environment for military purposes, chemical and bacteriological weapons have since 1925, when the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of Asphyxiating Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare was adopted, been the only weapons of mass destruction for which specific regulations exist.

Biological and chemical weapons, or biochemical weapons, which are closely linked from the legal standpoint, in State practice and doctrine, in the relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and by the International Conferences of the Red Cross, in the military training manuals of most countries, in the draft disarmament treaties proposed prior to 1971, and also in the minds of the public and the awareness of peoples, form a special category among existing means of warfare.

The link between them is based on the fact that they have a large number of points in common with respect both to the technical and military characteristics of their production and use, and to their mode of action: they can be disseminated by the same delivery systems. Protection against these two categories of weapons is impossible or illusory; and their effects, which are exercised exclusively on living matter -- pathogenic effects in the case of B weapons, and toxic and physiological effects in the case of C weapons -- are unforeseeable and the civilian population is even more vulnerable to them than the military.

After adopting the Convention on the prohibition of the production and possession of biological weapons in 1971, the Geneva Committee is now preparing to do the same for chemical weapons. The creation by the Committee on Disarmament in 1980 of an Ad hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons is a decisive step towards the conclusion of an agreement on effective measures to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of this category of weapons.

However, the efforts made by the international community over more than half a century to improve the regulation of unconventional weapons have, so to speak, focused above all on their "qualitative" aspects, and B and C weapons, which are still the only two types of mass destruction weapons to have been regulated, are henceforth to be the subject of an additional legal régime. The prohibition on their use under the existing rules of international law applicable in armed conflicts (I) is to be supplemented by disarmament measures relating to the prohibition of their production and possession (II).

(Mr. Arrassen, Morocco)

I - Biochemical weapons and rules of international law applicable in armed conflicts

Of the various instruments of international law which are applicable in times of armed conflict and regulate the use of biochemical weapons, the 1925 Geneva Protocol was the first and the only one to contain a clear cut prohibition of any use of B and C weapons in war. Thanks to that Protocol, the international community has never again experienced the horrors of the chemical warfare of 1914-1918, even if it must at the same time be acknowledged that the prohibition in the Protocol has been disregarded on numerous occasions. The Geneva Protocol plays this outstandingly positive role of preventing biochemical warfare of any kind, despite the imprecise nature of the content of the prohibition it affirms (A) and the uncertainty regarding the exact scope of the prohibition (B).

A. Content

In the preamble, it is stated that the prohibition of the use of the weapons which are the subject of the Protocol is derived from two sources. The material source is referred to in the first and last preambular paragraphs, which mention respectively "the general opinion of the civilized world" and "the conscience and the practice of nations".

The formal source is described as follows, without further details in the second preambular paragraph "treaties to which the majority of Powers of the world are Parties". The treaties particularly concerned are the 1868 Declaration of St. Petersburg prohibiting "the use of weapons which uselessly aggravate the sufferings of men put hors de combat, or render their death inevitable", the 1899 Declaration of The Hague prohibiting "the use of projectiles the only object of which is the diffusion of asphyxiating or deleterious gases", the Peace Treaty with Germany (article 171) signed at Versailles on 28 June 1919, and the unratified Treaty of Washington dated 6 February 1922, concerning the use of submarines and asphyxiating gases in war-time (article 5).

The wording of the Protocol was in fact copied from that of article 5 of the above-mentioned Treaty of Washington, with some important changes in substance and form.

Paragraphs 1 and 2 (first sentence) were used as a basis for drafting the preamble to the Protocol, and the two remaining sentences for drafting its operative part, in which they provide the context for the provision containing the prohibition of bacteriological weapons.

Lastly, in order to take account of the changes which had occurred in the international community, the plenipotentiaries replaced the expressions in the above-mentioned article 5 which appeared to be out of date, narrow in meaning or rather too strong. For example, the word "general" was substituted for "universal" in the phrase "universal opinion of the civilized world"; the expression "civilized Powers", was replaced by "Powers of the world", and the words "civilized nations" were replaced by "States".

(Mr. Arrassen, Morocco)

The result of this series of changes was that article 5 was converted from the status of a single and particular treaty provision into that of a genuine and independent legal instrument of general scope.

However, the plenipotentiaries who drafted the Protocol, were concerned with the formal promotion of this instrument which was to prohibit absolutely the use of biochemical weapons as a means of warfare, whatever the method of use, in a cloud, or by projectile or in any other way; and with their eyes fixed on the 1914-18 war, they were far from suspecting the difficulties which the few imperfections in their text -- imperfections inherent, moreover, in any codification exercise -- would subsequently cause in the application of the Protocol.

B. Validity and scope of the Protocol

The provisions of the Geneva Protocol were respected during the last World War, but much less so during the Viet Nam conflict which was the scene of the greatest chemical war in history and the first ecological war of all time. Fortunately, the victims on that occasion were not human beings but above all forests and crops.

The risk of such situations occurring again will persist until such time as a convention prohibiting the production and stockpiling of chemical weapons puts an end to the controversies which have arisen from the contradictory interpretations of the essential provisions of the Protocol (1) and removes the grounds for the reservations (expressed by some 40 States when they acceded to the legal régime established by the Protocol.

(1) Controversies regarding the interpretation of the Protocol

There are serious differences of opinion regarding the scope of the terms used in the preamble to the Geneva Protocol for prohibiting the use in war of "asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices" and concerning the scope of the provision extending that prohibition to the use of "bacteriological methods of warfare". In view of the use in recent conflicts of chemical herbicides and also lacrymogenic and other harassing agents, ("tear gas", "riot-control agents"), this problem of interpretation assumes particular importance.

The drafters of the Convention on biological weapons, by placing the word in brackets "biological" immediately after the word "bacteriological", clearly established that the Protocol was indeed referring to biological methods of warfare considered as a whole, when it used the unfortunate expression "bacteriological methods of warfare".

All controversy concerning biological weapons has thus been removed: but the many difficulties arising from the existence of two contradictory views concerning the scope of the prohibition of chemical weapons still remain.

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In general, some consider that the prohibition in the Protocol is absolute and covers all chemical weapons and agents, even those which are not toxic: this is an extensive interpretation (a) based on the English title of the Protocol. Others maintain, however, that it is lawful to use gases -- such as police gases -- whose sole purpose is to incapacitate military personnel or put them temporarily hors de combat, without causing death or lasting damage to physical integrity or health; this is the restrictive interpretation (b), based on the French text.

The supporters of each of these two interpretations advance and develop numerous and varied arguments in support of their respective views.

(a) Extensive interpretation

The supporters of the first view consider that the Protocol should be understood as covering all gases without exception by virtue of the wording -- intentionally very comprehensive -- of the prohibition in the Protocol.

When the States signatories concluded the Protocol, they were already aware of the existence of non-toxic gases, such as tear gases, and could have explicitly excluded them from the prohibition. If they did not do so, it was because they wished to give the prohibition as wide a scope as possible, bearing in mind all the dangers of abuse which might arise if the smallest loophole were left open.

In their explanation of the text of the Protocol, the supporters of this view point out that the addition of the words "ou similaires" makes sense only if it is intended to extend the enumeration of products prohibited by the Protocol to include those which are not asphyxiating or toxic. It is clear from the English text -- which is equally authentic -- that such was indeed the intention of those who drafted the phrase, in which the French words "ou similaires" are rendered as "other gases". The addition of these latter two words is designed to cover any chemical product used as a weapon, which in normal circumstances is unlikely to be harmful to health or to cause death.

The supporters of the extensive interpretation then proceed to invoke the existence of a customary rule based upon a universal consensus prohibiting the use in war of "asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices". For them, there is no doubt at all that this customary rule, whose existence has been recognized on three very important occasions (at Versailles in 1919, at Washington in 1922 and at Geneva in 1925), also prohibits the use of incapacitating gases, tear gas and harassing gases.

In support of their arguments they also quote many resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in which the existence of a rule of customary international law prohibiting the use of all biochemical weapons in war is recognized.

In this field, the United Nations is simply, in effect, following in the footsteps of the League of Nations whose Assembly, as long ago as 1938, adopted a resolution affirming that the use of chemical or bacteriological means of warfare was contrary to international law.

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Instruments and declarations by States are also quoted when they support an extensive interpretation of the Protocol. Thus, in the first instance, the note from the French Government -- depositary of the Protocol and the first to ratify it -- and the United Kingdom memorandum submitted to the 1932 Disarmament Conference deserve special attention. It is quite clear from those two documents that, in the opinion of France and of the United Kingdom, the Geneva Protocol applies to the use of all gases, including tear gas and harassing gases.

This interpretation was supported by many States and encountered no opposition, except that the United States of America expressed an oral reservation concerning the use of tear gas for police purposes. In the report of the Special Committee to the 1932 Conference, which was adopted unanimously, the prohibition was defined as including lacrymogenic, harassing and blistering substances, and as applying not only to substances harmful to human beings but also to chemical substances in general.

More recently, various States have, in connection with certain recent armed conflicts, declared that they energetically condemned the use of toxic substances in general. Also, in the discussions in the General Assembly on the many abovementioned resolutions concerning biochemical weapons, several States have made similar declarations.

Again, in the United Nations framework, we may add in support of the first argument that, the Secretary-General, in his foreword to the expert report on chemical and bacteriological weapons, requested the members of the United Nations to "make a clear affirmation that the prohibition contained in the Geneva Protocol applies to the use in war of all chemical, bacteriological and biological agents (including tear gas and other harassing agents) which now exist or which may be developed in the future".

(b) Restrictive interpretation

The supporters of the second theory take quite a different view -- namely, that the use in war of tear gases and other harassing agents, as well as herbicides, is not covered by the prohibition in the Protocol. Furthermore, they go so far as to ask whether the use against the enemy of means of chemical warfare which do not involve any serious danger for health might not in fact be more humanitarian than the use of many other methods. Furthermore, they say they cannot see why it is necessary to prohibit the use of means such as police gases (tear gas and other gases) against enemy combatants when the use of such methods against nationals at home is perfectly acceptable.

Basing themselves next on the practice of States, where they find their best arguments, the defenders of the restrictive view point out, on the one hand, that a very large number of Governments have for long permitted, within their frontiers, the use of tear gas for civilian riot-control or of herbicides for economic purposes and, on the other hand, that these two latter categories of chemical agents were extensively used by the United States in Indo-China. The United States has since ended its 50 years of legal "dissent", and has acceded to the Protocol, but with certain reservations concerning chemical agents used for civilian riot-control (tear

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gases and mild incapacitants) and herbicides. In this matter the United States has at least been consistent with itself throughout. In its view, there is no doubt that, since 1925, States have recognized the ambiguity of the Protocol concerning the prohibition of the use of means of riot-control. The history of international negotiations up to and including the signature of the Protocol convinced it that such means were not covered by the Protocol. Moreover, herbicides, which were unknown in 1925, could not have been envisaged therein.

Lastly, the volte-face by the United Kingdom Government -- which, after long supporting the extensive interpretation of the Protocol, has had to revise its position -- is likely to provide grist to the mill for those who support the restrictive view. The following statement illustrates this cautious move of the United Kingdom from the first to the second interpretation: "Modern technology has developed CS smoke, which, unlike the tear gases available in 1930, is considered to be not significantly harmful to man in other than wholly exceptional circumstances; and we regard CS and other such gases accordingly as being outside the scope of the Geneva Protocol. CS is in fact less toxic than the screening smokes which the 1930 statement explicitly excluded".

This statement is quoted from Parliamentary Debates (House of Commons), vol. 795 (1970), col. 18 (Written answers to questions).

In the light of all these elements, the supporters of this view proclaim that only those means of chemical warfare which are already covered by the customary prohibition of poisons may be considered as unequivocally prohibited by the Protocol. Consequently, incapacitating and harassing agents to which should be added plant poisons, do not fall within the scope of this prohibition; those who drafted the Protocol never had any intention of prohibiting the latter, for the simple reason that they did not constitute a real problem at the time when the instrument was adopted.

For our part, we have serious reservations regarding the various arguments set forth above in favour of a restrictive interpretation of the prohibition in the Protocol, in spite of their coherence.

Tear gas and harassing gases are, of course, used as riot-control weapons at the national level. That fact, however, does not constitute any argument whatsoever in favour of legitimizing their use in an armed conflict of an international character, even if it is true that considerable efforts have been made in recent years to develop chemical agents whose purpose is not to kill but to weaken a man's capacity to fight.

In addition, in an armed conflict, where the circumstances are considerably different from those in which police gases are used in the case of domestic riots, it is not possible to distinguish easily between what is toxic and what is not.

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In view of the danger of abuse, and the risk of using gases likely to cause serious damage to the human body, is it not necessary to exercise extreme caution in this field? Is it not true in fact that, while an attack by means of a particular lethal agent will not have fatal consequences for all people, an attack with incapacitating agents may, when these are used in high concentrations, kill a large number of people who are weakened by malnutrition, disease or wounds? This is quite contrary to the spirit of the Geneva Conventions which provide that special respect should be given to the victims of armed conflicts, not to mention the fact that in one case as in another, as soon as such agents begin to be used, a serious danger of escalation will exist, not only in the use of the same type of weapons, but also in the number of different categories of weapons used, not excluding the use of increasingly toxic chemical means.

This demonstrates how dangerous it would be to introduce distinctions in the use of chemical weapons -- distinctions which were certainly never envisaged by the plenipotentiaries who met at Geneva when they solemnly decided to condemn the use in war of "asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of all analogous liquids, materials or devices".

What can be done in these circumstances to reconcile, or to transcend, the two contradictory interpretations of the prohibition in the Protocol? Convene a diplomatic conference to review the Protocol? Or take the opportunity offered by the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament to elaborate a convention on chemical weapons which would include a general and total prohibition of the use of all chemical weapons? These are the two possibilities which appear, at first sight, to offer prospects of solving the problem under discussion.

The first alternative, even if it constitutes the ideal solution for finally removing all the uncertainties and ambiguities in the Protocol, is impractical for at least two reasons. First, the Protocol makes no provision for a review procedure; and secondly, and most important, there is a very real risk that the fruits of more than 50 years of efforts to achieve a total prohibition of the use of chemical weapons might be destroyed.

The practical advantages of the second solution are so obvious that it is unnecessary to elaborate on them. Nevertheless, it is to be feared that those members of the Committee on Disarmament who make a veritable dogma of the distinction between international law applicable in armed conflicts and disarmament law may not support the inclusion of the provision envisaged above.

In any case, the essential aspect of the matter is that, in one case as in the other, it must be realized that, in order to eliminate the risk of a chemical war, it is essential to have a precise definition of chemical weapons which will stand the test of time.

Countless draft definitions have been submitted, both in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and in the Committee on Disarmament, since the United Nations first took up the question of chemical weapons.

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But none of the definitions proposed seems wide enough to cover the anti-ecological effects, as well as the military characteristics and anti-personnel effects, of this category of weapons of mass destruction.

In order to remedy this shortcoming and to introduce greater precision in the future definition of chemical weapons, the Moroccan delegation in the Committee on Disarmament put forward its own definition in 1980, as follows:

"'Chemical weapons' means systems of weapons based on solid, liquid or gaseous components designed or likely to cause:

"Death, serious injury or physical or mental illness to people;

"Extensive, lasting and serious damage to the natural environment".

The Moroccan definition covers, as can be seen, all means of chemical warfare, including phytotoxic means (herbicides and defoliants). But, at the same time, it displays flexibility by meeting the concerns of certain States which have explicitly stated that they will not be the first to use chemical herbicides but have nevertheless reserved the right to use them for peaceful purposes in order to control vegetation inside the military bases and installations of their armed forces and around their immediate defensive perimeters.

Whatever wording is finally adopted for the definition of chemical weapons, it will be incomplete without a definition of the chemical agents themselves and their precursors, based upon indisputable and universally recognized scientific criteria.

The double definition envisaged --- which might, if necessary, be based on a list of chemical agents, prohibited or authorized --- would enable the Committee on Disarmament to put an end to a controversy as old as the Geneva Protocol itself and, at the same time, to remove the grounds for the reservations which seriously undermine the authority of the sole instrument of international law applicable in armed conflicts prohibiting the use of two categories of weapons of mass destruction.

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(2) Reservations to the Protocol

When on 9 May 1926 France, as the depositary State, became the first country to ratify the Geneva Protocol, it expressed the following reservations:

"1. The said Protocol is only binding on the Government of the French Republic as regards States which have signed or ratified it or which may accede to it.

"2. The said Protocol shall ipso facto cease to be binding on the Government of the French Republic in regard to any enemy State whose armed forces or whose Allies fail to respect the prohibitions laid down in the Protocol".

The French formulation has been taken as a model by other States that have expressed reservations -- i.e. about 40 out of the 100 or so States (1), including Morocco (2), which have acceded to the Protocol.

I should like to say in this respect that, according to information supplied by the French Government, there are at present more than a hundred States Parties to this Protocol. That is the first point. The second point I should like to mention is that the Kingdom of Morocco did not make any reservation when it acceded to the Geneva Protocol; that is clear from Dahir No. 1-70-107 of 23 Junada I 1390, year of the Hegira, which corresponds to 27 July 1970. All details are to be found in the Bulletin Officiel, p. 1236.

The above-mentioned reservations are tantamount to adding a reciprocity clause to the provisions of the Protocol and limiting the scope of the prohibition contained in it.

The need for the first clause is not obvious since it duplicates the terms of the operative part of the Protocol. Although they were perfectly aware of its superfluous nature, the States which expressed reservations insisted, nevertheless, on including it in order to stress clearly the relative nature of their legal commitment.

On the contrary, the effects of the second clause are much more fraught with consequences: it constitutes an open door to every kind of abuse. It enables the State Party invoking it to circumvent at any time the legal régime instituted by the Protocol. For this purpose, it is sufficient to prove that the armed forces of an enemy State or those of its allies have not respected the prohibitions contained in the Protocol, and then one can oneself resort to the use of the same biochemical means, regardless of any obligation under the Protocol.

This riposte is not, as in the case of reprisals, "a prohibited act authorized in exceptional circumstances" but simply an act which has ceased to be prohibited by the Protocol from the moment the reservation is invoked.

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The second reservation therefore goes further than the right of reprisal -- which authorizes the commission of an act contrary to the law in retaliation for a first illicit act though the law itself of course remains valid -- but it does not go as far as the "si omnes" clause which simply suspends the application of a treaty as soon as a State not party to the treaty appears among the belligerents.

In an extreme case, strict application of the second reservation could result in an anomalous situation: a State which had expressed the reservation might, for example, use biochemical means prohibited by the Protocol against a State not party to the Protocol and might consider itself released from any obligation under the Protocol vis-à-vis all its enemies -- including those which had acceded to the Protocol -- if that State responded with identical means.

The confusion concerning the legal régime applicable to the use of chemical weapons will be ended only with the adoption of the convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

In any case, when this happens, it will then be proven that, for the more effective application of the rules of international law applicable in armed conflicts (rules regarding limitations on the use of means of warfare, i.e. weapons), these rules must sometimes be supplemented by disarmament law.

II - Biochemical weapons and disarmament

Contrary to the aspirations of the great majority of States and the positions adopted by the General Assembly, biochemical disarmament, which is the first important step towards general and complete disarmament under effective international control, has not been accomplished in a single stage.

The representatives of the Western group in the Geneva Committee, referring to the great difficulties which would be raised by a global prohibition of biochemical weapons, maintained and finally succeeded in imposing the view that it was more practical to prohibit biological weapons first.

With the adoption in 1971 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and Toxins and on their Destruction, disarmament had its first success and moved from the era of speeches to that of actual achievements.

Despite its title, the afore-mentioned Convention refers also to chemical weapons. One of the preambular paragraphs recognizes that the agreement on B weapons represents the first possible stage towards the achievement of agreement on effective measures also for the prohibition of chemical weapons.

Also, under article IX of the Convention, each State Party undertakes to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to achieving an early and complete prohibition of chemical weapons.

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Obviously, the indissociable links between biological disarmament (A) and chemical disarmament (B) could not be more clearly or more solemnly re-affirmed.

A. Biological disarmament

Drafted by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament after long years of negotiation, the Convention on biological weapons is an instrument in which the Contracting Parties have juridically committed themselves to taking a number of precise measures of biological disarmament.

To dispel once for all time the spectre of a terrifying war by eradicating biological weapons -- this is the ambitious objective which the Convention on biological weapons aims to achieve through its preambular paragraphs and the 15 articles of its operative part.

For lack of time, we shall not here enumerate and analyse these provisions, which the Committee on Disarmament apparently wishes to take as a basis for the formulation of the future convention on C weapons. However, in order to protect ourselves in our role as assistants of the international legislator against a possible recurrence of the mistakes made in the drafting of the above-mentioned instrument, we believe it is essential to consider the Final Document of the first Review Conference on the afore-mentioned Convention, held at Geneva in 1980.

The States Parties to the Convention on B weapons met at Geneva from 3 to 21 March 1980, in accordance with article XII, to review the operation of the Convention, with a view to assuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Convention were being realized.

At the end of that Conference, at which all the provisions of the Convention were reviewed, the participants adopted a final declaration in which they reaffirmed their strong determination, for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins being used as weapons. In addition, they reaffirmed their strong support for the Convention, their continued dedication to its principles and objectives, and their commitment to implement effectively its provisions.

But we must not deceive ourselves. All those fine phrases are designed solely to mask the profound differences which dominated the discussions at that Conference. Apart from the gulf which exists between two schools of thought, there is the whole problem of the role that such conferences should play. It seems that, in every instrument of international law applicable in armed conflicts or disarmament law, provision for such conferences is henceforward to be made in a formal clause. There is therefore the whole problem, the whole question, of these conferences and the role they should play. Should they be regarded as an effective method of ascertaining first whether the treaty under consideration is responding properly to changes in the international situation and in the concerns and interests of the different parties, and then of introducing the necessary additional details, or remedying omissions in the light of the raison d'être and purpose of the instrument?

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Or should they be regarded as a mere ritual in which the representatives of the States Parties can at regular intervals engage in learned discussions of the various aspects of the instrument, and then depart after reaching agreement on the only decision which is likely to command a consensus in such a case -- namely the fixing of the date of the next meeting?

The discussions on article VI, more than those on any other provision, show how a mockery can be made of an institution of this kind, and at the same time how a "machine" as well oiled as an international conference held under the auspices of the United Nations can, as happened here, be forced to keep running in neutral without ever moving forward.

At the outset, it must indeed be recognized that the above-mentioned provision carried within it the seeds of discord, by reason of its discriminatory and unfair nature: it leaves all decisions to the permanent members of the Security Council -- those States which in another organ created in another age, an organ whose journal de marche is very frequently drafted with rocketheads, have an arbitrary right of veto.

To put an end to this shocking inequality of treatment institutionalized by article VI, Sweden, with the support of several other non-aligned and Western delegations, proposed an amendment designed to improve the existing complaints procedure. According to this amendment, the existing procedure was to be preceded by a preliminary collection of factual data, in order to save unnecessary political confrontations.

Under the terms of the proposal, the task would have been entrusted to a consultative committee, duly mandated and having the necessary means to carry out an effective enquiry with the mandatory assistance of all parties. And it was only when all those remedies were exhausted that the case would be brought before the Security Council. In that way, the verification procedure would have been made less discriminatory since a very clear distinction would have been established between the material facts and the political decision of the Council.

Not surprisingly, the Swedish proposal raised a veritable outcry from the three Depositaries who, anxious above all to maintain the status quo, and supported by their respective allies, strongly opposed any change in the Convention on the grounds that the introduction of any amendment whatsoever, far from strengthening the Convention, might on the contrary undermine its very foundations.

Systematic opposition by the depositary States to the introduction of the smallest change, and also the lack of imagination and combativity of the representatives of the non-aligned and neutral countries, were the reasons for the insignificant results attained by the Conference. A single decision on a purely procedural question -- namely, the convening of a second Review Conference between 1985 and 1990 -- and the few recommendations mentioned below which are devoid of any practical significance: such are the meagre results of the first Review Conference on the Convention on biological weapons.

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In the first recommendation, the Conference "invites the States Parties which have found it necessary to enact specific legislation or to take other regulatory measures" relevant to article IV to make them available to the United Nations Centre for Disarmament, for the purposes of consultation.

The striking feature of this recommendation is the vagueness with which it was drafted. The use of the words "found it necessary to enact" -- when it is known quite well that article IV specifies without the least ambiguity that each Party "shall take" in accordance with its constitutional processes appropriate internal measures to prohibit any production or stock-piling of biological agents, weapons and systems -- was clearly an attempt to introduce doubt and confusion where none existed. It was also, indirectly, an attempt to deprive of its substance a fundamental rule for the total elimination of biological weapons. The manoeuvre is so crude that it must be vigorously denounced here.

In its second recommendation the Conference, after noting "the concerns and differing views expressed on the adequacy of article V, believes that this question should be further considered at an appropriate time", without any further details.

In a third recommendation, the Conference urges all the members of the Committee on Disarmament to contribute towards the fulfilment of the mandate of the Ad hoc Working Group, established in 1980 -- namely, the preparation of a Convention on chemical weapons.

In its fourth recommendation, the Conference requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to include information on the implementation of article X (international co-operation for the use of biological agents for peaceful purposes) in the background material to be prepared for the second Review Conference.

Finally, in its last recommendation, the Conference invites the United Nations Centre for Disarmament to communicate regularly to the signatories information relating to new scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention supplied by States Parties which have carried out such developments.

Because of its lack of strength, the medicine prescribed by the Conference cannot of itself cure the ills of the Convention on biological weapons, ills which only the depositaries and some of their allies persist in regarding as imaginary. No-one can overlook the absence of any definition of biological weapons or the lack of a reference to any sanction which might be incurred by a State contravening the obligations under the Convention, particularly those deriving from the first three articles.

All these issues, and also the question of the complaints procedure, will be on the agenda of the second Review Conference unless, taking due advantage of the technical and legal links between B and C weapons, we seize the opportunity offered by the Committee on Disarmament's negotiations on chemical disarmament for solving some of these issues.

(Mr. Arrassen, Morocco)

B. Chemical disarmament

Ever since chemical weapons have existed, countless voices have been raised to denounce the evils thereof and countless draft texts have advocated their elimination pure and simple. But, like the Arlésienne, chemical weapons have so far obstinately refused to come to the rendezvous -- but not for much longer because, with the establishment of an Ad hoc Working Group on chemical weapons, the countdown to the adoption of a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and on their destruction has well and truly begun.

This development, whose very great importance must be stressed, will have incalculable effects on the course of future negotiations on other major problems of disarmament, especially if -- as is planned -- the current negotiations culminate in the conclusion of a treaty in good and due form.

Although modest, the results achieved to date by the Ad hoc Group on Chemical Weapons augur fairly well for further negotiations on the issue. In that connection, the adoption of the detailed plan for a convention on chemical weapons, with which the Group started work on its mandate, may be regarded as a point of no return on the way towards the preparation of the future instrument. Before it is elaborated, the negotiators will have to solve the main difficulties involved in the prohibition of this category of weapons -- namely the question of the scope of the prohibition (a) and the verification and control measures (b) necessary for proper application of and compliance with the instrument.

(a) Scope of the prohibition

In the light of the existing provisions in the Convention on biological weapons, it should not be very difficult for the members of the Committee on Disarmament to reach agreement on the activities and means of chemical warfare to be prohibited.

The main categories of activity to be prohibited are research, development, production, and stockpiling, and also acquisition, transfer and assistance. To these could be added the planning and organization of a "chemical warfare capability" and also the training of troops for offensive purposes.

With regard to the means of chemical warfare, the prohibition must cover chemical weapons, munitions and agents, as well as to the specific appliances, equipment and delivery systems required for their use.

And, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, we wish to reaffirm once again that in our view this prohibition must be total and general -- that is to say, it must cover chemical weapons for use against human beings and also those designed to destroy plants and vegetation.

With regard to agents proper and precursors, they must be defined precisely to avoid insurmountable difficulties such as those still arising in the application of the Geneva Protocol. This definition must be based on criteria which are indisputable -- i.e., universally acceptable -- and by means of which it will be possible to establish as clear a distinction as possible between chemical warfare agents and substances unsuitable for military purposes.

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The general purpose criterion, which recently served as a basis for the prohibition of biological weapons, can in the case of chemical weapons be of value only for single-purpose agents. It therefore needs to be supplemented by one or several more technical and more precise criteria, such as the structure or chemical formula criteria, an efficiency criterion and, in particular, a toxicity criterion. The latter appears to be the most comprehensive means of defining chemical warfare agents, provided that a threshold of toxicity by inhalation and percutaneous penetration is established for each category of agent. In this connection, we note that the first results of the consultations held on issues relating to toxicity determinations, as described in working paper CD/CW/WP.22 of 13 July 1981, constitute an important step forward. We welcome that development and await with impatience the continuation of the studies, particularly those which are to deal with the harmful effects of chemical weapons on plants and vegetation.

If necessary, the definition of chemical agents could be supplemented by a non-restrictive list, based on the United Nations Environment Programme's International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals; and, with the help of international experts in chemistry -- particularly from WHO and UNEP -- and in the field of drugs, it would be possible to prepare fairly quickly a list of single-purpose and dual-purpose chemical warfare agents and a list of exempted chemicals designed for protection against chemical warfare. Clearly, these lists must be subject to periodic revision, partly because the agents enumerated therein are simply representative of large families of toxic substances, and also because modern chemical science is constantly producing new agents which, although not previously associated with chemical warfare, nevertheless have toxic properties which would make them highly suitable for that purpose.

The list of chemical warfare agents, combined with a precise definition of such agents, would considerably simplify the establishment of procedures for monitoring and verifying the correct application of, and compliance with, the provisions of the future Convention on chemical weapons.

(b) Monitoring and verification of the prohibition

The members of the Committee on Disarmament are unanimous in considering that a ban on the production and possession of chemical means of warfare, without any means of verifying the strict application of the ban, would be much more dangerous for the safety of States than no ban at all; but they are no longer unanimous when it comes to establishing and defining the procedures for such verification. Two arguments are advanced in this regard.

The first is based on the principle that only on-site inspections, effected under international control, would permit effective verification of the non-production of chemical warfare agents. The second argument rejects this "intrusive" procedure on the grounds that it might violate the sovereign rights of States Parties and lead inevitably to the disclosure of industrial, commercial and military secrets. The proponents of this view argue that, for adequate verification of compliance with obligations assumed under a convention on chemical weapons, it would be preferable to use national means of control, possibly in association with certain international machinery and procedures. This is purely and simply an invitation to copy the system of inspection -- altogether ineffective -- provided for in the Convention on biological weapons.

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In order to find a compromise between these two approaches which reflect the two principal philosophies that entirely dominate the views and discussions on disarmament matters, the negotiators will have to display much imagination, patience and adroitness. The compromise will, in any case, have to include international verification measures at least as stringent as those entrusted to IAEA under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Otherwise, with national verification measures alone, we may fall back, as in the case of biological weapons, into the rut of self-inspection machinery, which is so unreliable.

A system of international control of the application of, and compliance with, a Convention on chemical weapons must, of course, be based on appropriate structures. There is unanimous agreement among the members of the Committee on Disarmament on the idea of making provision in the future instrument for a consultative committee on the lines of the one already existing in the Convention on the Environment. All that remains is to define the concrete aspects of its organization, operation and powers.

The very complex nature of chemical weapons, the particularly wide range of agents which can be used to produce them, and also the great variety of the activities to be monitored -- research, development, production, stockpiling, elimination, closing down or reconversion of plant -- might induce the Committee on Disarmament to have big ideas and envisage the establishment of an international agency for disarmament control which might later be entrusted with the monitoring of subsequent disarmament measures, in addition to the ban on chemical weapons.

In elaborating effective and economically unharmed international measures for monitoring and verifying a prohibition on the production of chemical weapons, the Committee on Disarmament would find it very useful, the Moroccan delegation believes, to draw upon the experience of the Federal Republic of Germany which is bound by the Agreements of 23 October 1954 to refrain from producing chemical weapons and to submit to controls by the Agency of the Western European Union established to verify compliance with that obligation.

The controls consist of an assessment of written information supplied on request, and also of visits and on-site inspections on the initiative of the Agency itself. During these inspections, the international inspectors of the Agency obtain information on the organization, operation and production programme of a chemical plant, but visit only the sector in which the decisive phase of the reaction occurs -- the phase which, during the full production process, immediately precedes the completion of the end-item. Thus, the inspections do not cover entire plants, but rather particular "characteristic substances" that are considered to be initial or key products without which prohibited warfare agents cannot be manufactured.

This does not prevent the inspectors from giving special attention to safety precautions which are always visible and, together with the lack of special equipment which is also difficult to conceal, provide the clearest possible indication that no chemical warfare agents are being produced in the plant. Also, by comparing data obtained by built-in measuring instruments with the figures entered in the records of the production unit, the inspectors can check the quantity of precursors used in the production of a substance or end-item. Lastly, in some cases, they may even resort to sampling in order to identify particular substances and to determine whether they are in fact prohibited agents.

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The Federal Republic of Germany made an even more valuable contribution to the work of the Committee on Disarmament on chemical weapons by organizing an international workshop from 12 to 14 March 1979, following the invitation which the West German Chancellor had addressed to all States Members of the United Nations in May 1978 at the General Assembly's special session devoted to disarmament. In the framework of what must indeed be regarded as a genuine première in the field of negotiations on chemical disarmament, the Federal Republic of Germany was able, by means of practical examples, to demonstrate to an international audience of chemical experts the experience it had acquired from the inspections carried out by WEU -- experience which the members of the Committee on Disarmament, and particularly those who are opposed to the introduction of a system of on-site international inspections into a Convention on chemical weapons, might do well to reflect upon, even if it is derived only from a single disarmament measure limited in space and also imposed on a defeated country.

This exercise, which gave participants an opportunity to get acquainted with the practice of international on-site inspections, was designed principally to demonstrate that:

In the absence of safety precautions, no super-toxic compounds can be manufactured in the production plants at present available to the chemical industry;

The absence of such safety precautions is perceivable in the course of a plant inspection and thus can provide proof of the non-production of warfare agents;

A rapid conversion of available production plants into plants producing warfare agents is not technically possible.

In addition, the exercise amply demonstrated that there was no basis for "the objection occasionally raised to on-site inspections as a means of controlling current production in civilian chemical plants", -- namely, that such inspections "would be intrusive and liable to harm the legitimate interests of producers, since they would involve the disclosure of classified information of a technical and economic nature". Better still, "it is possible for on-site inspections to prove, without disclosing any classified information on the production process", and without interfering with the process, "that chemical warfare agents are not being produced."

Thus, it has been fully demonstrated that on-site inspections -- periodic or unscheduled -- on request, or following a complaint from a State Party or an international organization -- and effected by an international control authority, are the only means of guaranteeing compliance with a ban on the production of chemical weapons.

Inspections of this type are also irreplaceable for monitoring national activities such as the destruction of existing stocks, "moth-balling", reconversion or demolition of plant producing chemical weapons, research and development activities for peaceful and defensive (protection) purposes, and the monitoring of plants producing agents closely related to the organophosphorus compounds (pesticides), not to mention the monitoring of the non-production of new chemical weapons.

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As a concession to those for whom on-site inspections arouse fears of disclosure of industrial, commercial or military secrets, their degree of "intrusiveness" can be modified during the very early years of operation of the international control system by reducing them simply to summary and superficial visits designed solely to ascertain the absence of safety precautions and devices.

Other forms of international control may supplement but not replace on-site inspections. They consist of a series of quasi-on-site inspections, ranging from remote detection of chemical agents in liquid or gaseous effluents from a suspect plant, using ultra-sensitive detectors installed in satellites or on the ground outside the frontiers of the country subject to the supervision, to statistical control of figures for the production and consumption of raw materials and basic chemical products, and opto-electronic sealing of plants which have stopped all production.

It must be noted that, of the various international methods of control enumerated above, all -- except on-site inspections -- have the same disadvantage: their practical efficiency has never been verified.

Moreover, the absence of positive indications of clandestine production does not provide a definite assurance of non-violation of the prohibition. Nevertheless, one can be almost certain that the mere fact of the application of such measures will have a dissuasive effect and render any attempt at evasion extremely complicated.

Conclusion

In a world in which the extraordinary developments in chemistry and biology have radically changed the basic features of economies and the daily life of individuals, in a world in which the spectacular nature of today's genetic manipulations already affords a glimpse of what biotechnology will enable us to achieve tomorrow, biochemical disarmament, -- interpreted as a refusal to accept scientific progress when its effect is to endanger the life of human beings or cause them bodily harm or diminish the quality of their natural environment -- is, in three respects, a genuine challenge.

To induce all States, large and small, to renounce once and for all the possession, and hence the use in armed conflicts, of weapons as deadly and as cheap as biological and chemical weapons -- is this not a great political endeavour?

To seek to prohibit -- within the wide range of existing biological and chemical products -- only those which are designed for military purposes without at the same time interfering with the normal production of those destined for peaceful uses, when we know quite well, on the one hand, that those products and materials are produced by exactly the same industrial processes and on the other hand that it is becoming increasingly difficult to make a very clear distinction between the civilian and military applications of any discovery, -- this is more than a scientific and technological challenge, it is a veritable "nobelization" of the entire biochemical industry that one is seeking to achieve.

Lastly, effective biochemical disarmament is the precursor of the next disarmament measures -- radiological and nuclear -- for which it may serve as an experiment and a test-bench. It is also a clear challenge to an international order of which the mad race in armaments of mass destruction is only one aspect but may nevertheless lead the world, one day or another, to a genuine catastrophe.

The CHAIRMAN: Distinguished delegates, since it is clear that all the speakers on our list cannot complete their statements today, the Chair has consulted the speakers, and I am glad to inform you that the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia, Indonesia and Mexico have kindly consented to defer their statements to the next plenary meeting.

Mr. LUKES (Czechoslovakia): Mr. Chairman, let me first of all join you most sincerely in expressing the condolences of my delegation to the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria at the untimely death of Madame Lyudmila Zhivkova. My delegation intends today to deal with our agenda items 4 and 6 and also to touch very briefly on agenda item 2.

With the approaching second special session devoted to disarmament the necessity to elaborate the draft text of the comprehensive programme of disarmament becomes more and more urgent. It is a generally shared feeling that the adoption of this document could represent rather an important result of the special session. Our Committee, as the main negotiating organ on disarmament, should therefore attribute due attention to this question. My delegation also believes that, in elaborating the draft comprehensive programme of disarmament, as much work as possible in this respect should be done within the Committee on Disarmament, so that the United Nations General Assembly could be presented next year with a solid document. For this reason the full use of the possibilities of the relevant Working Group, so skilfully presided over by the distinguished Ambassador Garcia Robles of Mexico, should be ensured.

My delegation expressed its basic views concerning the future comprehensive programme of disarmament in several statements last year and also during the spring part of this year's session, as well as in numerous documents submitted in the Working Group. Having listened carefully to the statements of other delegations on this subject, we are satisfied to note that there exists a wide convergence of views on the character of the future programme, its basic goals, principles and priorities as well as measures to be included in it. It is for instance generally required that the main principle of the programme should be the principle of equality and equal security. Thus, the implementation of the programme should at no stage prejudice the security interests of any party. It is also the generally accepted view that measures aimed at the cessation of the nuclear arms race and at nuclear disarmament should be given the highest priority. This requirement comes naturally from the objective fact that nuclear weapons today pose the gravest threat to international peace and security. For the same reason, the steps aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament should also go hand in hand with the strengthening of political and international legal guarantees of the security of States.

If we want the future programme to be comprehensive and aimed at achieving the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, it should obviously cope with many other aspects of disarmament in the nuclear as well as in the so-called conventional weapons field. There are still some differences of views with respect to certain questions. And let it be noted that those differences of views are not always differences of principle. My delegation therefore believes that patient and painstaking work in the relevant Working Group can help us overcome many of the existing divergencies; and the Committee on Disarmament will eventually find itself in a position to agree upon a solid, well-balanced draft text of the programme not later than at the end of the next year's spring session. The results of this year's negotiations in the relevant Working Group testify that progress in the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament, however slow and difficult, is still possible.

(Mr. Lukes, Czechoslovakia)

From what I have said, it is obvious that my delegation welcomes and fully supports the proposal of the Bulgarian delegation to have additional meetings of the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. Given the importance of the question, my delegation is ready to attend those meetings at any time, be it this year or in January next. However, I would like to note that from the practical point of view my delegation considers it most suitable to have several meetings of the Working Group somewhere at the end of August and in September, before the opening of the regular United Nations General Assembly session.

We approach this possibility realistically and we do not expect that a couple of extra meetings of the Group will dramatically change the situation. However, given the nature of the proceedings in the Working Group, a lot of useful drafting could be accomplished with a view to having a comprehensive draft text ready for the second special session devoted to disarmament. I would like to seize this occasion to assure the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. García Robles, that he can count on the full support and co-operation of my delegation in his noble effort to have the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament working as effectively as possible.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission I will now turn to item 4 of our agenda, chemical weapons.

First of all I wish to join other delegations in expressing our appreciation of the expert consultations on toxicity determination held at Geneva a fortnight ago, as well as the preceding workshop held in Helsinki. There is no doubt that very useful information was gained at both meetings which will be fully utilized in the future work of the Committee on Disarmament.

My delegation has been pleased to participate actively in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons, chaired so skilfully by Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden. We regret that at this stage a consensus could not be achieved with respect to the new mandate of this Working Group. On the other hand, we acknowledge with satisfaction that the Group has succeeded in making substantial progress within the present mandate, considering the basic elements of the treaty.

Only a few meetings of the Group are still to take place during this round of negotiations. It seems therefore appropriate to focus on those items which promise to give most important and definite results.

We share the opinion of delegations which are in favour of concentrating the discussion on the issues where a convergency of views is not only possible but also vitally important for further effective and systematic work in the Group. Here we have in mind especially the scope of the prohibition. There is, of course a close and reverse interrelationship between the scope and other elements, above all the verification régime. Still the clearly defined scope of prohibition is an element playing the determinative role. Also for practical reasons, it would be most useful to come to a consensus on this issue to create a solid starting point for the next round of negotiations.

Some delegations have expressed the view that the scope of the prohibition should be very broad, to cover all substances which could be eventually used as chemical weapons, and all possible activities related to such use.

In the view of my delegation, the treaty has two main goals: to provide for the destruction of existing stocks of chemical weapons, and to prohibit any possibility of their development and production in the future. While the use of chemical weapons was prohibited already by the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the treaty under

(Mr. Lukes, Czechoslovakia)

consideration should provide for the elimination of the material basis of chemical weapons. There is no need to stress that this should be achieved without any limitation of the peaceful chemical industry and without any interference with the interests of States in the field of defense (ensured by other means than chemical weapons).

Our delegation is convinced that with these two documents -- the Geneva Protocol and the chemical weapons treaty -- in force, all other issues such as "chemical warfare capability" or the military misuse of herbicides, etc., would lose all the importance they might seem to have now. The issue of the scope should be, therefore, discussed in rather concrete terms. The link between any element included in the scope, and concrete measures for its realization in practice should be considered carefully.

Among the items attracting attention with regard to the scope are the toxins. They, of course, are fully and definitely covered by the Convention prohibiting biological and toxin weapons. If some delegations tend to reconsider them again in the course of negotiations on the scope of a chemical weapons treaty, one of the reasons might well be a certain under-estimation of the very complex problem of toxins. It seems useful therefore to prepare a working paper on this problem. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like now to introduce such a working paper elaborated by the Czechoslovak delegation. The paper has already been given to the Secretariat; and, being well aware of the Secretariat's excellent ability to serve the Committee on Disarmament, we believe that it will be at the disposal of delegations soon.

The working paper contains a brief compilation of the most important data concerning the chemical and biological characteristic of toxins, which are important with regard to our current negotiations. It shows that toxins constitute a rather specific group of biological products with prominent biological activities. As a group, they cannot be characterized solely on the basis of their chemical structure which is still largely unknown. Their effects on man are often rather complex and subtle, and they should be studied by methods different from those used with regard to poisonous chemical substances.

These questions are discussed in the working paper in some detail, and our delegation believes that the paper could facilitate our work in the Working Group on Chemical Weapons.

In concluding my statement, permit me to touch very briefly on agenda item 2. It was my intention repeatedly to draw your attention to document CD/193, submitted by the delegation of the German Democratic Republic, concerning further proceedings of the Committee on Disarmament on item 2 of its agenda.

In light of your statement today, Mr. Chairman, I should like to thank you for having taken this document into consideration. We can only express our regret that some delegations do not wish to approach the proposals contained in it constructively. However, my delegation still believes that this valuable document deserves not only your further attention, but also that of your successor. Let me therefore quote once again a part of this document which stipulates that:

"The Chairman of the CD hold consultations on the further proceedings of this Committee concerning item 2. Those consultations should in particular be held with the delegations of the nuclear-weapon States, individually or together. In this connection, those nuclear-weapon States rejecting the creation of an ad hoc working group on item 2 could come out with proposals they deem essential to further the work of the CD in the field of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. After these consultations, the Chairman could report its conclusions to the Committee to allow a formal decision on its further proceedings."

Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): Today I would like to dwell upon the two items on our agenda for last week and this week -- the complete prohibition of chemical weapons and a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

My delegation highly appreciates the work done by the Ad hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons last year and during this session under the able leadership of Ambassador Okawa of Japan and Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden. Valuable results could be achieved in identifying issues to be dealt with in a future convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

In this regard we would also like to thank Mr. Lundin and the toxicological experts for their great efforts to achieve effective toxicity determinations to be applied in the framework of a future convention.

Under present circumstances, when in one major country plans have been initiated to create a new dangerous generation of chemical weapons -- binary weapons -- the conclusion of a CW convention is more urgent than ever before. Therefore, we hope that the United States of America will be ready to resume without delay the bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union that were interrupted last year. A successful outcome of these negotiations would no doubt promote our work in the Committee on Disarmament, as it did last year when the very valuable report on the bilateral negotiations (CD/112) was tabled.

My delegation would like to see the Working Group on Chemical Weapons speedily proceed to actual drafting. From the beginning of this session we have therefore been in favour of revising the mandate of this Working Group. It was our conviction that in this regard a two-fold approach should be taken. While the Group could go over to drafting work in fields where a convergence of views exists, it should still further try to clarify and harmonize differing views in other fields. Unfortunately, no consensus has been reached up to now. Nevertheless, we have the impression that this approach is now being more and more widely recognized in the Committee on Disarmament. In this regard, we were very much encouraged by recent statements made, for example, by the representatives of Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany on 16 July. We fully agree with Ambassador Okawa who stated that:

"On some matters we may eventually move into the drafting phase at an early stage, while on others we must persevere in trying to narrow the divergence of views until this issue can be defined by a convergence of views."

We hope that from the very beginning of next year's session the Committee on Disarmament will be able to undertake such an approach.

Much has already been achieved in identifying the issues connected with the scope of a future convention. The draft elements tabled by the Chairman of the CW Working Group at the beginning of the second part of the session enabled us to make further headway.

On the other hand, attempts to burden a future convention with issues having no direct connection with its scope as defined in many United Nations documents are likely to complicate, if not postpone, the achievement of a convention. Here we have especially in mind the proposals to include in such a convention the prohibition

(Mr. Hender, German Democratic Republic)

of the use of chemical weapons and the concept of so-called chemical warfare capability. We share the views of the delegations of the USSR, Poland, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and many others which have advanced weighty arguments against the inclusion of these two concepts in a CW convention.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic attaches great importance to the question of verification of compliance with a CW convention. We envisage a verification system and a complaints procedure which provide each party to the Convention with the required confidence that its obligations are complied with by the other parties.

It is not my intention now to pursue the question of verification in detail. This should be done when the issues connected with the scope of the prohibition have been clarified.

It seems that for the time being two different concepts concerning verification prevail in the CW field. The first one proceeds from a balanced combination of national and international measures and means of verification. The second one especially emphasizes regular and permanent international inspections while largely neglecting the potential of domestic control measures, of national technical means of verification, and of such international procedures as, for example, verification by challenge. This concept seems to be very much influenced by the idea that the means of verification should determine the scope of prohibition. We cannot agree with such a perception which is in direct contradiction with one of the basic principles of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament. It would involve us in endless debates on detailed and highly technical aspects of verification and lead to an actual postponement, if not the prevention, of a CW convention.

I cannot but agree with Ambassador Summerhayes of the United Kingdom who stated on 16 July that we must be careful not to become too bogged down in a wealth of detail and that our aim must be a workable treaty. Given the necessary political will and a basic amount of confidence on all sides, the verification problem can be overcome. Of course, from whatever angle one may look at verification, no 100 per cent solution will be found. I think the whole complex of available and possible verification methods, ranging from national control to international inspection by challenge, provides a high degree of assurance that a violation of a CW convention could be detected. It is most doubtful that a militarily important violation could be concealed. Every would-be violator will seriously take into account the political set-backs of such a step. Here by the way, one should ask the question: is it really that certain that a State which has just signed a disarmament agreement will shortly afterwards try to break it?

Concluding my remarks on CW, I would like to thank the Finnish authorities for their persevering efforts to contribute to the solution of the verification issue. We regard as very valuable the recent workshop in Helsinki in which an expert from the German Democratic Republic participated, as well as the document entitled "Trace analysis of chemical warfare agents" tabled last week. We also highly appreciate the endeavour of the Canadian delegation to clarify verification questions. Its recent document CD/167 provides a useful analysis of the pros and cons of several verification measures. This document, in our view, shows the great capability of a system based on national means of control and international verification by challenge.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

One of the main results of the forthcoming second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament should be the comprehensive programme of disarmament. Under the able Chairmanship of Ambassador Adeniji and Ambassador García Robles our corresponding Ad hoc Working Group has made considerable progress in drafting this programme. But the bulk of the work is still to be done. Therefore, we fully support the proposal made at our last meeting by the Soviet and Bulgarian delegations that the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament should hold additional meetings after the conclusion of this session so as to ensure a thorough discussion of all sections, and to avoid last-minute efforts under the pressure of time.

The German Democratic Republic regards the comprehensive programme of disarmament as a carefully prepared package of interrelated measures in the field of disarmament confirmed by a solemn undertaking of all States to fulfil the programme. It should serve as a guideline and framework for corresponding negotiations. The measures to be envisaged in the comprehensive programme of disarmament should be specified and agreed upon in bilateral, regional and multi-lateral negotiations and implemented by appropriate international instruments. In this respect we see much merit in carefully defined stages for the implementation of the comprehensive programme. In the last consequence, these stages will gradually lead to the final objective of general and complete disarmament. To initiate this process, it should be the immediate effect of the comprehensive programme of disarmament to encourage the resumption of negotiations in the field of disarmament interrupted during the last years as well as the beginning of new negotiations. Considering the present international situation, this seems to be a very urgent and worthwhile objective. Besides, this objective -- to conduct meaningful and serious negotiations -- has already been included in various existing international instruments. Let us recall paragraph 28 of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, which states that:

"All the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations. Consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament".

The practical importance of the comprehensive programme of disarmament will depend upon how it comes to grips with the main problem of our time -- the prevention of a nuclear holocaust, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, effective measures of disarmament in the field of other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons should be provided for. This has to be accompanied by the strengthening of international political and legal guarantees for the security of States. At the same time, measures should be envisaged which aim at achieving relaxation of international tension, creating thereby an atmosphere conducive to disarmament. In this regard the dissolution of existing military alliances would be of special importance.

Such a long-lasting programme would, of course, be meaningful only if it is based on the principle of undiminished security for all States. On a reciprocal basis, it should lay down obligations for all nuclear-weapon States in the field of nuclear disarmament, whereas all States should contribute to the various stages leading to general and complete disarmament. My delegation cannot accept a selective approach requiring some States to disarm unilaterally and permitting others to pursue a unilateral arms-drive. This would entail serious dangers for international peace and security and introduce a destabilizing element in the international situation.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

Lastly, a comprehensive programme of disarmament could contain provisions on appropriate machinery for its implementation, taking into account the institutional arrangements set up by the first special session devoted to disarmament only three years ago. A special role should be accorded to the Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum.

May I express the hope of my delegation that the Working Group on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament will use the remaining time to the greatest possible extent to prepare an effective and meaningful draft programme. The Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament, as well as other relevant United Nations documents, provide a useful basis in this respect.

The CHAIRMAN: In view of the lateness of the hour, the representative of Italy has also agreed to defer his statement to the next plenary meeting. Accordingly, that concludes my list of speakers for today.

The Secretariat has circulated today, at my request, an informal paper containing a timetable for meetings to be held by the Committee on Disarmament and its subsidiary bodies during the week 27-31 July 1981. That informal paper contains basically the same allocation of time as provided for in previous weeks, with the addition of one meeting on Monday, 27 July, at 10.30 a.m. for the Ad hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. I understand that there are no difficulties with that addition, which would permit us more fully to utilize the time available. As usual, the timetable is indicative and subject to change if the need arises.

If there is no objection, I will consider that the Committee accepts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: May I note that we have now six speakers for our regular plenary meeting next Tuesday, including the five speakers who have so kindly deferred their statements from today. Any other delegations wishing to speak then are asked kindly to put their names on the list as soon as possible.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria): On behalf of the Bulgarian delegation, I wish to express our deep gratitude to the representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Morocco and Czechoslovakia for the condolences they expressed on the passing away of Madame Lyudmila Zhivkova. I wish to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the sympathy expressed at today's meeting will be conveyed to our authorities and personally to President Zhivkov.

The CHAIRMAN: The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 28 July, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.