

STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR MANSUR AHMAD, CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC
WORKING GROUP ON SECURITY ASSURANCES, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
SUBMISSION OF THE SPECIAL REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP TO
THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

It is my honour to present to the Committee on Disarmament the special report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear-Weapon States Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons contained in document CD/285.

In accordance with the Committee's decision, the special report contains a reference to the origin of negotiations on this item and covers the work done during the previous three sessions of the Committee on Disarmament, besides describing the present state of negotiations on the subject and outlining certain conclusions and recommendations.

The subject of "negative security assurances" has a fairly long history which includes the unilateral declarations made by the nuclear-weapon States in 1978 and the consensus reached at the first special session to conclude effective arrangements on the question. At its first session in 1979, the Working Group agreed that negotiations on the subject would need to cover both the form and the substance of the arrangements. At its sessions in 1980 and 1981, the Working Group concentrated mainly on the examination of the substance of the subject, on the understanding that an agreement on the substance could facilitate an agreement on the form. During the final stages of its work, last year, the Working Group concentrated its efforts on evolving a "common formula" for security assurances containing such elements as may be raised in the negotiations and agreed upon by all concerned or a "common formula" which could reconcile the elements contained in the existing unilateral undertakings of the nuclear-weapon States.

At the beginning of its work during the present session, the Working Group decided to continue these efforts taking into account inter alia previous recommendations as well as resolutions 36/94 and 36/95 of the General Assembly. The general positions of delegations remained unchanged, although some new ideas and suggestions were advanced. Apart from hearing the reiterations of such general positions, the Working Group further considered proposals submitted to it for a possible "common formula" or "common approach" which could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character. As in the past, there was once again no objection in principle, to the idea of an international convention; however, the difficulties involved were also pointed out. Subsequently, the Working Group considered proposals for interim measures, particularly a possible resolution of the Security Council on the subject. Furthermore, other courses of action which could be taken in the context of the forthcoming second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament were also examined. Some nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed that their declarations were credible and responsive to the security concerns of the non-nuclear-weapon States while some other delegations suggested that these should be appropriately reviewed and revised at the forthcoming special session.

The conclusions of the Working Group speak for themselves. There is consensus that non-nuclear-weapon States should be effectively assured against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and that agreement on this item should be reached urgently. However, the evident divergence in the perceptions of nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States continue to persist. And, although many of the issues involved have been clarified, the Working Group has been unable to fulfil its mandate. The Working Group was able to recommend, in the context of the forthcoming second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that ways and means should be explored to overcome the difficulties encountered in the negotiations on this item.

On a personal note, I am constrained to express my disappointment and concern at the failure of the Committee on Disarmament to make any substantive progress towards evolving an agreement on this question which is satisfactory to all concerned and particularly to the non-nuclear-weapon States. May I take this occasion to appeal to all States, in particular, to the nuclear-weapon States, to demonstrate the political will necessary to reach an agreement on this question. I hope that this political will shall be evident at the forthcoming second special session.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Working Group for their co-operation which was indispensable for the work of the Group. I would also like on behalf of the Ad Hoc Working Group, to express our deep appreciation for the very able assistance provided to the Working Group by Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, the Secretary of the Working Group, as well as the entire secretariat staff, throughout the session and particularly in preparing this special report.