

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY SECOND PLENARY MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 26 August 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. C. Gatere Maina

(Kenya)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria: Mr. TAFFAR

Argentina: Mr. N. NASCIMBENE

Australia: Mr. T. FINDLAY  
Miss S. BOYD

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

Brazil: Mr. A. de SOUZA E SILVA  
Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria: Mr. TELLALOV  
Mr. SOTIROV  
Mr. DEYANOV  
Mr. PRAMOV

Burma: U MAUNG MAUNG GYI  
U TIN KYAW HLAING  
U THAN TUN

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

China: Mr. TIAN JIN  
Mr. YU MENGJIA  
Mrs. WANG ZHIYUN  
Mr. SUO KAIMING

Cuba: Mr. P. NUÑEZ MOSQUERA

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. VEJVODA  
Mr. L. STAVINOHA  
Mr. J. JIRUSEK

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN

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

France: Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE  
Mr. d'ABOVILLE

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HEIDER  
Mr. G. THIELICKE  
Mr. F. SAYATZ  
Mr. R. TRAPP

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. H. WEGENER  
Mr. N. KLINGLER  
Mr. W. ROHR

Hungary: Mr. I. KOMIVES  
Mr. G. GAJDA

India: Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia: Mr. HARYONATARAM  
Mr. KARYONO  
Mr. N. SUTRESNA  
Mr. DAMANIK  
Mr. HILDAYAT

Iran: Mr. J. ZAHIRNIA

Italy: Mr. M. ALESSI  
Mr. C.M. OLIVA  
Mr. E. DI GIOVANNI

Japan: Mr. Y. OKAWA  
Mr. T. TAKAHASHI  
Mr. T. KAWAKITA

Kenya: Mr. C. GATERE MAINA  
Mr. D.D. DON NANJIRA  
Mr. J.M. KIBOI  
Mr. G.N. MUNIU

Mexico: Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia: Mr. S. BOLD

Morocco: Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands: Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS

Nigeria: Mr. G.O. IJEWERE  
Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA  
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI  
Mr. A.U. ABUBAKAR  
Mr. A.A. ADEPOJU  
Miss I.E.C. UKEJE

Pakistan: Mr. M. AHMAD

Peru: Mr. P. CANNOCK  
Mr. J. BENAVIDES DE LA SOTTA

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

Romania: Mr. DATCU  
Mr. T. MELESCANU  
Mr. T. PANAIT  
Mr. M.S. DOGARU

Sri Lanka: Mr. JAYAKODDY

Sweden: Mr. C.M. HYLTIENIUS  
Mr. H. BERGLUND  
Mr. G. EKHOLM  
Mr. U. ERICSSON  
Mrs. JONÄNG

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: Mr. V.L. ISSRAELIAN  
Mr. R.M. TIMERBAEV  
Mr. V.F. PRIACHIN  
Mr. V.L. GAI

United Kingdom:

Mr. D.M. SUMMERHAYES

Mrs. J.I. LINK

Miss J.E.F. WRIGHT

United States of America:

Mr. L.G. FIELDS

Mr. M.D. BUSBY

Mr. M. WINSTON

Mr. R. SCOTT

Venezuela:

Mr. J.A. ZARRAGA

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIĆ

Zaire:

Mrs. E. EKANGA KABEYA

## NON-MEMBER REPRESENTATIVES

Ireland:

Mr. F.M. HAYES

Mr. P. McDONAGH

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

Mr. R. JAIPAL

Deputy Secretary of the  
Committee on Disarmament:

Mr. V. BERASATEGUI

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the 182nd plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Committee continues today its consideration of item 1 of its agenda, "Nuclear test ban". However, members wishing to make statements on any other subject relevant to the work of the Committee may do so.

At the outset, may I recall that at our last plenary meeting the delegate of Japan submitted document CD/319 concerning a request addressed to the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization in connection with the utilization of the Global Telecommunications System. As I announced on that occasion I have requested the secretariat to circulate, for the Committee's consideration and decision, a draft communication to the Secretary-General of WMO in connection with that matter. That draft is contained in Working Paper No. 73. We will take up the working paper at our next plenary meeting together with the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Belgium, China, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States of America and Ireland.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia, His Excellency Ambassador Vejvoda.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): Mr. Chairman, first of all allow me to express my regrets that we are losing another colleague, Ambassador Vrhunec of Yugoslavia, a good and old personal friend of mine and delegate of a socialist country that Czechoslovakia has very good relations with. We say goodbye with regret and wish Ambassador Vrhunec all the best in his future activities.

Item 1 of our agenda, on a nuclear test ban, is indeed a question of the highest priority, being in the focus of attention not only of this main international body for multilateral disarmament negotiations but also of the whole international community. Its importance has been emphasized by numerous United Nations General Assembly resolutions including such an important international document as the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the validity of which has been reaffirmed by the General Assembly at its second special session.

The so-called Moscow Treaty of 1963, banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, which became a useful instrument in curbing nuclear weapon developments as well as a necessary step aimed at the protection of the environment, does not encompass underground nuclear-weapon testing. Moreover, two nuclear-weapon Powers until now have not found it necessary to join this Treaty. It is therefore quite understandable why the peoples of the world and the majority of States have been for many years striving to reach an unconditional prohibition of all nuclear-weapon tests. It is hardly necessary to explain in this forum that the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests would represent an important step towards curbing the arms race, create a barrier to further improvements of nuclear weapons and reduce the danger of nuclear war. Its conclusion would also strengthen the principles of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons by not giving States aiming at acquiring nuclear weapons the possibility of carrying out nuclear explosions, which represent an indispensable stage in their production.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia pays special attention to the cessation of nuclear weapon tests. Its representatives already in 1958 took part in the first conference of experts at which the feasibility of detecting violations of a possible ban on nuclear explosions was discussed. Already then the experts came to the conclusion that it is possible to create a practical and effective system in this regard.

Both in the Committee on Disarmament and in its preceding bodies we have fully supported all proposals aimed at the early elaboration and adoption of a treaty prohibiting nuclear-weapon tests for all time in all spheres and with the participation of all States, including, of course, all nuclear-weapon States. We have always added our voice to that of those who have called for the initiation of business-like negotiations in this respect and for the creation of a working group on this subject.

We welcome the fact that the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban has started its deliberations. However, it is the considered view of our delegation that the mandate of the Group is not wide enough. And we note that this view is widely shared in this room. We believe that it would not be wise to unduly restrict our discussions and to focus only on some particular aspects of the given problem. An approach to the mandate of the Working Group whereby other vitally important aspects than those of verification and compliance would be completely ignored could become a serious obstacle to our work. It seems rather obvious that verification and compliance cannot be discussed in isolation from other related aspects, in particular the scope of the prohibition. Our approach to the activity of the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban is based on the assumption that anything the Group will deal with must contribute to the early elaboration of a draft agreement on a nuclear test ban. It would be highly useful if the Committee on Disarmament could adopt measures which would ensure the elaboration of such an agreement in all its aspects

Our opinion as to the orientation of the Ad Hoc Working Group's activities under its existing mandate is expressed in the document of the group of socialist countries introduced on 16 August of this year by the delegation of the German Democratic Republic. We consider that the seven items proposed, namely:

National technical means of verification;

International exchange of seismic data;

Committee of experts;

Procedures for consultation;

On-site inspection;

Procedures for complaints, and

Possible relevance of arrangements between two or more parties,

create a logical and complete structure which could serve as the basis for effective and fruitful negotiations.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

For several years the Ad Hoc Working Group of Scientific Experts has been dealing with technical aspects of international co-operative measures to detect and identify seismic events. Our experts have been taking part in the work of this Group from the very beginning. The experts have done a lot of useful work for the effective solution of the problem of the identification of seismic events by national means. The detailed reports in documents CCD/558 of 1978 and CD/43 of 1979, containing instructions for the exchange of seismic data, testify to the fact that there are no basic, insurmountable difficulties for the elaboration of a realistic system, based on existing possibilities of seismological practice.

Permit me in this connection to make a few remarks on the relation of a possible test ban to the technical assurance of verification. We all agree that seismological detection and identification would be an effective instrument of the verification system of a future nuclear test ban. However, from the purely technical point of view it is quite clear that 100 per cent reliability of detection is not attainable. Hence, all debates about the so-called threshold of detection and efforts to define it with maximum precision might be interesting but at the same time they do not serve the purpose. One cannot avoid taking into account that seismological methods do not represent the only way of verification and that verification and compliance will be ensured through a set of various procedures. We also proceed from the understanding that the verification of a nuclear test ban should be carried out by national technical means. An international exchange of seismic data should also be ensured in such a way that each member State would have access to seismic data, while the identification of events would be undertaken by member States through their own national means. International data centres will have to be built in order to ensure the smooth, reliable and prompt exchange of seismic events data. The functions of these data centres are now under detailed discussion.

The results achieved so far by the Group of Experts demonstrate that the system of international exchange of seismic data obtained through national means has reached a high level of reliability with some of its aspects being tested on the basis of international experiments. These results also support the opinion that each verification system must be in accordance with the technical capabilities of all States parties to the future treaty with the equal rights and obligations of all ensured. We consider this a very important aspect if we are to create a realistic and effective system. And let it also be noted that even where some technical problems persist, it is always possible to overcome them provided that all parties concerned exert good will and readiness to find an acceptable solution.

Present developments lead unequivocally to the conclusion that the technical aspects of verification must be subject to an overall concept of the future agreement in all its aspects. We cannot decide on verification before we know what the scope of the agreement will be, without knowing whether it will be unlimited in duration or whether all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, will participate in it. The needs of verification and compliance can only be derived from a thorough consideration of the future agreement in all its aspects. Even if we wish to abide strictly by the present mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group it is hardly possible to discuss verification and compliance with any seriousness in isolation from other basic provisions of the future ban.



(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Two years ago, after we studied the tripartite report to the Committee on Disarmament (document CD/130) we were able to note the progress achieved at the tripartite negotiations between the USSR, the United States and the United Kingdom on a nuclear test ban. We were also able to take into account with satisfaction that the tripartite negotiators were "determined to exert their best efforts and necessary will and persistence to bring the negotiations to an early and successful conclusion" (paragraph 25 of the tripartite report).

Recently, however, we have witnessed a dangerous shift in the United States approach to this priority question. It deeply concerns us, since what is at stake is either the continuation of the nuclear arms race or its effective curbing, the strengthening of international peace or its further undermining. The decision of the United States President Reagan not to resume the trilateral negotiations, the refusal to ratify the agreements on the limitation of underground nuclear-weapon tests and on peaceful underground explosions signed in 1974 and 1976 respectively, efforts by the United States to continue an extensive programme of nuclear-weapon tests exceeding the agreed limit of 150 kilotons and other concrete measures contrary to the demands of the peoples of the world for the prevention of the danger of nuclear war can hardly assure anybody that the United States is considering seriously the possibility of the conclusion of a nuclear test-ban treaty, be it now or later.

It is thus not very encouraging to note that out of all the nuclear-weapon States there is just one expressing the political will and readiness to take part actively in the elaboration of a nuclear test ban both within the multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament and by resuming the trilateral negotiations. We regret that the United States and the United Kingdom are prepared to tackle only verification and compliance aspects. We also deem it highly regrettable that two nuclear-weapon States, China and France, do not find it necessary to take part in the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group, the creation of which had been sought by the majority of member States for quite some time. Whatever their own assessment of the present situation, all States represented in this body should exert maximum efforts to contribute to the adoption of measures aimed at curbing the arms race, especially in the nuclear field. We can therefore fully agree with Ambassador van Dongen of the Netherlands who stated on 17 August that "danger of nuclear weapons is such that we have difficulty in accepting the thesis that for some States further testing to enhance their nuclear capability remains necessary before a halt can be considered".

In conclusion I would like to express the conviction that the Committee on Disarmament with all five nuclear-weapon States represented in it can undoubtedly play an important role in solving the problems with respect to the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests. However, the political will of all States, and primarily of the nuclear-weapon States, to take an active part in this exercise is an indispensable prerequisite for success.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, I am today going to make a statement on the question of a nuclear test ban in my capacity as acting head of the Swedish delegation.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The achievement of a nuclear test ban treaty would be one of the most important steps in halting and reversing the nuclear arms race. It has for many years been Sweden's persistent policy to do everything within its capacity to promote this goal. To us a comprehensive nuclear test ban retains its full importance both as a means to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and as a demonstration of the interest of the nuclear-weapon Powers finally to enter into an era of mutual nuclear restraint.

As part of its efforts to achieve such a treaty, Sweden in 1977 tabled a draft CTBT (CCD/526/Rev.1). It is the intention of the Swedish delegation to submit a revised version of this draft, hopefully during the spring session of 1983. In reviewing our existing CTBT draft we will take into account the developments that have occurred since 1977. One of the politically important factors is the conduct of trilateral negotiations on this matter. Sweden deeply regrets the recent decision by one of the parties not to resume these negotiations.

In July 1980, the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom presented their latest report from the tripartite negotiations. Even if that report gives us some interesting information, we feel that a more comprehensive account of these discussions could provide the Committee on Disarmament with valuable background material for negotiations within this body on a nuclear test-ban treaty. Sweden therefore urges the trilateral parties to present to the Committee on Disarmament as soon as possible a full account of what was achieved and of the remaining obstacles.

The questions of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons concern all countries of the world. If a test ban is to be effective, it must be designed to attract universal adherence. Agreement in this Committee on a future treaty will offer a reasonable chance of attracting such adherence. The Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body is indeed the proper forum for negotiations on a nuclear test ban.

Like many other countries, Sweden sincerely regrets that China and France do not participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. We hope that they will reconsider their position on this matter.

As to the scope of a future test-ban treaty, our goal is to achieve a comprehensive treaty that prohibits all nuclear test explosions in all environments for all time. This goal might be achieved in one step or in several steps. As to nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, the necessity of achieving a CTBT must, in the opinion of the Swedish delegation, take precedence over possible future benefits of such explosions. My delegation is prepared to consider all serious proposals in this connection.

It is a source of satisfaction to my delegation that consensus was at long last reached in this Committee on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban. The mandate is, in the view of the Swedish delegation and many other delegations, clearly unsatisfactory for the purpose of genuine negotiations on a comprehensive test ban and should, therefore, be improved. For

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

the time being, however, it offers the only possibility within reach for at least initiating a negotiating process. A determined effort should be made to examine substantially the aspects of verification of and compliance with a nuclear test ban, as outlined in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group. It is our hope that it will prove possible to cover some ground in the Group in preparation for real negotiations on a nuclear test ban.

In his intervention in plenary on 12 August, after having accepted the chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Working Group, Ambassador Lidgard said, among other things, the following: "I want to emphasize that we have accepted this task on the specific condition that the two major nuclear-weapon powers will co-operate in earnest to achieve what can be achieved within our mandate". I hardly need to underline further the importance of this assumption. It is only with the active co-operation of all participants, and in particular the leading nuclear-weapon Powers, that it will be possible to make progress in the Working Group.

Some countries have repeatedly claimed that the lack of adequate verification methods is the main obstacle to a comprehensive test-ban treaty. This is the time and place to start resolving these important verification issues in a multilateral context. My delegation therefore expects that all countries are now willing to undertake sincere discussions of these matters.

I should now like to dwell upon some important aspects of the questions regarding verification of compliance with a nuclear test ban, which in the view of my delegation should be dealt with under the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

One of the matters of verification to which my country attaches great importance is the question of an international verification system. It is the right and duty of all parties to participate in the verification of a nuclear test-ban treaty. Countries might, however, owing to their geographical locations, available technical means and other circumstances, have quite different technical possibilities to monitor a treaty by national means alone.

The purpose of an international verification system is to even out such differences and to assist all parties in the monitoring of a treaty. By providing easy and rapid access to compiled and pre-analysed data and to recordings obtained on a global basis, an international verification system gives all parties essentially the same possibilities of monitoring a treaty. To fulfil these general requirements an international verification system must have a capability of providing information, data and recordings sufficient as a basis for verifying the treaty. An international verification system should, therefore, be an advanced and modern system having technical equipment and capabilities which are not inferior to those available to individual countries. The international verification system must also have a capacity to provide information and data in a form which is useful to all parties.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Most global verification systems are likely to produce such a large amount of basic data that, for most countries, the handling and analysis of all such basic data would be an unreasonably heavy and expensive task. There are, further, no political or technical reasons why these basic and standardized analyses — necessary in any case — should not be carried out at international data centres (IDCs). A few such centres will be needed in order to give all countries a fair chance to monitor a nuclear test ban. The analyses at IDCs, therefore, have to take advantage of the most recent technical and scientific developments and be based on all data produced and made available within the international verification system. Any limitation of the data to be used at IDCs would considerably reduce the efficiency of the international verification system. For those countries which are dependent on the services of IDCs such discrimination within the international verification system would hardly be acceptable.

On several occasions the Swedish Government has stated its readiness to establish, operate and finance an international data centre in Sweden. As part of the national research work in Sweden on test-ban verification, an experimental data centre has been established with the aim of further developing methods and procedures to be used at IDCs. Detailed presentation of the results of this work has been given to the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts.

Co-operative seismic measures to be part of an international verification system have been considered in depth by the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts. In the view of the Swedish delegation, the work of the expert group will provide a good basis for the design of the seismological part of an international verification system. It is, however, most important that recent scientific and technological developments and results be taken fully into account in all the components of the global system. A further modernization of the global seismological system is thus an important task for the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts within its present mandate.

Last spring Sweden raised the question of whether an international verification system should include also a network for the global detection of airborne radioactivity, supplementary to seismological means, to look for clandestine nuclear explosions in the lower atmosphere (CD/257). Such explosions, which are prohibited under the partial test-ban treaty of 1963, have so far been monitored by national technical means alone.

Sampling atmospheric radioactivity is the obvious method for detecting nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, and it is also a method which should very much benefit from international co-operation, as it is difficult for any nation to establish by itself a network with sufficient, global coverage. The Swedish delegation, therefore, feels that the possibilities of establishing a global network for the detection of airborne radioactivity, similar to that for seismological detection, should be explored. Such a network would give all parties essentially the same capability of detecting radioactivity in the atmosphere from nuclear explosions.

Other technical means can provide additional valuable information for test-ban monitoring, for example, recordings of low-frequency sound and gravitational waves in the atmosphere, electromagnetic measurements similar to those conducted to record strokes of lightning, and hydroacoustic measurements of soundwaves in the deep oceans. Such hydroacoustic recordings might also improve the capability to monitor underground explosions in oceanic areas where few seismological stations exist.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

The introduction of verification measures in addition to the generally recognized seismological means should not be looked upon as an attempt to prolong the verification discussion or to make the verification issues more difficult to resolve. The purpose is merely to explore potential benefits from all technical means of verification and to make such means, if deemed useful, available to all parties to a future test-ban treaty and not only to a limited number of well-equipped countries.

Finally, I would like to briefly touch upon some institutional aspects of verification and compliance.

In the implementation of a treaty, a number of political and technical issues will arise, and it is, therefore, important to have a mechanism that can handle such issues at appropriate levels of authority and competence. In addition to arrangements for bilateral and multilateral consultations between parties, two committees with a common secretariat should, in the Swedish view, be established.

One of the committees would be a technical committee entrusted with the task of overseeing the operation of the international verification system and of solving any technical problem that might arise in the operation of that system. It should also follow the scientific and technical developments within fields of relevance to the international verification system. Further, it should be entrusted to propose the technical modernization of that system. Another task would be to provide a forum for technical discussions of observed events, about which countries might seek further clarification. The Committee could also be responsible for the technical conduct of on-site inspections.

The other committee, to be entitled the consultative committee, would be a political body entrusted with the task of overseeing the operation of the treaty as a whole. That committee would be a forum for political discussions of issues related to the implementation of the treaty, including its verification. It would in this respect, inter alia, receive requests for and results of on-site inspections. It would also supervise the work of the technical committee. The consultative committee could also plan and prepare for necessary review conferences.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize again that the Swedish Government will continue to make every effort in the Committee on Disarmament, its Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban and in the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to contribute to progress toward a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Sweden hopes that all countries, and especially the nuclear-weapon States, are now prepared to fulfil their responsibilities and international obligations in this regard. Time is a crucial factor. Therefore, a serious and concrete treatment of this important matter must not be further delayed, even if we, so far at least, have to operate under a less than satisfactory mandate.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): I shall devote my statement today to item 1 of our agenda, Nuclear test ban, a subject to which my Government continues to attach the highest priority.

At the inaugural meeting of the Working Group, I said how important it was for this new body to seize the opportunity offered to it of defining courses of action leading to the negotiation of a nuclear test ban. The more so despite, or perhaps because of, a number of apparently unfavourable factors, especially the interruption of the trilateral negotiations, but also the fact that certain nuclear-weapon States say that they cannot, at this stage, discuss the circumstances of their possible adherence to a test ban agreement.

The regret that might be felt in such circumstances would be vain if it were to weaken our determination to implement the Committee's decision to "facilitate progress toward negotiation of a nuclear test ban".

Similarly, the restrictive nature of the Working Group's mandate should not be an obstacle to the progress we are hoping for in this field. It would be pointless at this stage to start a discussion on the nature, interpretation or future development of this mandate.

The recent experience of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons has shown that it is possible to do useful work within the framework of a limited mandate.

In any event, a certain flexibility must prevail in our way of approaching the work of this new Group. In this connection, we are encouraged by the first statements made on this subject, in particular that of the United States delegation.

What seems to us most important, however, is that the mandate goes to the heart of the matter of a test ban, namely, the questions of verification and compliance. The solution to these problems was never more than sketched out in general terms during the trilateral talks and, whether we like it or not, they are still the key to a possible international agreement on a test ban.

The Secretary-General's report containing the study on a comprehensive nuclear test ban, which was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, rightly states that "the problems of verification of a comprehensive test ban necessarily differ in important respects from those of the partial test ban Treaty signed in 1963".

It seems to us, therefore, entirely justified that we should devote all our attention to these problems during the initial phase.

The effectiveness of our work will depend to a large extent on the basis from which we depart. For this preliminary stage, it is important that we should agree, without prejudice to the positions of States -- and I repeat, without prejudice to the positions of States -- on a working hypothesis, which can only be that of a total and complete prohibition of all nuclear tests.

This approach has the merit of credibility since it corresponds to the objective laid down in paragraph 51 of the Final Document of 1978.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

It also has the advantage of not diverting our attention to the discussion of matters that the Committee is not in a position to settle for the time being. I am thinking in particular of the subject of peaceful nuclear explosions.

Such an approach would mean setting out at once to determine the requirements for the verification of a total absence of nuclear explosions. This verification is essential since clandestine tests could give the country carrying them out an unacceptable military advantage.

I should like here to make a parenthetical comment which my colleagues will not find in the text of my statement that has been distributed. I wish to express my regret at the delay in the adoption of the Working Group's programme of work. It is a pity that all delegations could not have evinced, on a matter which ought, after all, to have been regarded as secondary, sufficient flexibility to have made it possible to embark on the substance of the discussions sooner. At least three meetings of the Working Group have been wasted, whereas adoption of the document prepared by the Swedish Chairman would in no way prejudice national positions on the various subjects under discussion, and I should like to make an appeal for negotiations, consultations, to be carried out rapidly today so that tomorrow, when the Working Group meets in the afternoon, we shall not again be obliged to waste time on a discussion which I myself consider entirely secondary. We ought as soon as possible to get down to the essence of the subject, that is, to discussing the points proposed by the Swedish delegation.

My delegation also considers that we should base our work on a political and legal approach rather than go into pseudo-technicalities which would not help us at all and would give rise to pointless discussions, for example on the acceptable level of verification. Experience has shown that, in this area, the level of verification becomes established at some intermediary position after negotiations but not before them.

The Group of Scientific Experts on the detection and identification of seismic events clearly provides the necessary technical support for our work. Relations between this expert group and the Working Group ought to be close but flexible, without any need for one group to be subordinate to the other. The participation of the Chairman of the Group of Experts in the discussions of the Working Group -- a participation which we all welcome -- should be enough to ensure the co-ordination of the two bodies' activities.

As I have already said, verification requirements for a complete ban are naturally more stringent than those for a partial ban.

The Secretary-General's report to which I have already referred states, that, in the case of a comprehensive ban, "it may not be possible to obtain, through the parties' own means alone, assurance that the prohibition is being observed. Provision for verification by both national and international means must therefore be made".

Verification by national technical means might possibly, in a given case, satisfy the nation which possesses them. But that is rather an optimistic hypothesis, as we know. Furthermore, States which did not possess such national means would then be reduced to resorting to the judgement of a third party. Lastly, the use of these national means is hardly compatible with detailed international co-ordination, since

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

each State would have the sovereign right to make such use of them as it saw fit. Generally speaking, therefore, we can confine ourselves, in an international convention, to agreeing that the parties may use national means and mutually undertake not to interfere with the use of such means. Provisions relating to access by third States to information collected by national means could also be the subject of possible agreements. But no provisions of this kind can ever replace an international system of verification. Such a system at present appears essential. For, assuming that there is a complete ban on tests, it will no longer be possible to substitute underground nuclear explosions for explosions in other environments, as was the case after the adoption of the 1963 Treaty. The latter did not in fact provide for any international system of verification, mainly because of the high cost of concealment and the risk of the detection of clandestine explosions in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. But a complete ban on explosions will have to be verified, and precise measures of international verification, including the possibility of on-site inspection, will be essential at all stages, both for routine checking and for the determination of the facts in cases of doubt or suspicion.

Obviously, seismological verification will be one of the key elements in a global system for verifying compliance with a ban on underground tests. In this connection, we attach the greatest importance to the activities of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts, of which Belgium has been a member from the outset. One of our first concerns, when Belgium became a member of the Committee on Disarmament in 1979, was to strengthen the links between the Committee and the Group of Experts. This resulted in the informal meeting of the Committee on 18 July 1980 with the participation of the members of the Group of Experts.

As regards the work of the Group of Experts, it seems to me essential that the value of international data exchanges should be verified further by experiment. We therefore hope that it will at last be possible to carry out a global data transmission experiment, with the widest possible participation by States.

The forthcoming Congress of the World Meteorological Organization ought also to provide an opportunity for clarifying the role which that organization — and particularly its global telecommunications system — could play in the matter of an international data exchange. The document submitted by the Japanese delegation that was recently circulated contains useful suggestions in this connection and we believe that the Committee should take a decision on them as soon as possible.



(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The distribution of the seismological stations which would participate in the data exchange network is another matter to which we should continue to give the utmost attention. Here, too, we have noted broad agreement in favour of the widest possible geographical representation, bearing in mind in particular the insufficiency of seismological stations in the southern hemisphere, but also the political advantages of associating a large number of States with an international verification system. We realize, however, that the attainment of this objective will pose considerable problems as regards access by States to the requisite technology, particularly in respect of the automatic extraction of seismic parameters.

The status of the exchange of waveform -- or level 2 -- data, also needs to be clarified.

Since the new techniques now available for the extraction of such data make it easier to identify the location, depth and magnitude of seismic events and thus make these data as necessary as the level 1 data, that is the basic parameters of detected seismic signals, ought we not to contemplate the routine transmission of level 2 data rather than their transmission merely "on request"?

We ought likewise to give thought to the "international" status of the national seismological stations participating in the network as well as that of the international data centres.

Document CD/95 submitted by Australia could form a useful basis for consideration in this connection.

But it is possible that seismological verification is not sufficient to meet the needs of international verification. This is something which we should try to determine.

Ought we, for example, to provide for additional methods of verification, such as surveillance of atmospheric radioactivity?

Is such surveillance capable of identifying with certainty radioactive emissions in the atmosphere resulting from underground explosions?

Would this method be effective in the event of the miniaturization of explosions?

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

Ought we perhaps to reserve this means of detection for the discouragement and verification of possible clandestine atmospheric explosions or the clearing up of doubts such as those surrounding the incident of 22 September 1979 off the coast of South Africa?

Our attempts to give a preliminary answer to questions of the kind I have just mentioned will inevitably have implications for a review of the mandate of the Group of Experts as well as for the expansion of its membership, if the use of other methods of detection in addition to the seismic method is deemed to be necessary.

Further methods could also be contemplated, if they would make verification more credible without, however, rendering the provisions of an international agreement needlessly complicated.

For example, the difficulty of distinguishing between small nuclear explosions and large chemical explosions could perhaps be overcome through a process of prior notification and verification of the latter.

On-site inspection is another essential aspect of international verification. Political attitudes in this regard seem to have evolved in recent years. The Protocol to the 1976 Soviet-American Treaty on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes marked an important development in that respect.

Other indications of this development have recently been given to us in other fields, in particular in respect of chemical weapons and the verification of the civilian part of the nuclear fuel cycle.

On-site inspection should form part both of routine control procedures and of the procedures for the determination of the facts in cases of doubt or suspicion.

Here again we shall have to specify these procedures in detail while paying heed to what appears to be a new and useful principle in respect of verification, that of the minimum necessary degree of intrusiveness.

In concluding this statement, I should like to express the hope that we shall not waste the opportunity we have created for ourselves in establishing the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban.

Our first task should be to identify the problems. Now that I have mentioned a number of them here, it seems to me that they are many and complex. We shall then have to suggest solutions, and subsequently to try to harmonize them.

It is in this way, I believe, that the Committee will be able to contribute best to the attainment of the essential objective of a nuclear test ban.

Mr. TIAN JIN (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, today, I wish to make a few observations on the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, which is of universal concern.

But first of all, in the name of the Chinese delegation, I would like to extend our warm welcome to our new colleague, Ambassador Cannock of Peru. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our colleagues who have left us or are going to leave us for their contributions to the work of this Committee, and to wish them much success in their future duties. I refer to Ambassador Venkateswaran of India, Ambassador Salah-Bey of Algeria and Ambassador Vrhunec of Yugoslavia.

In recent years, the intensification of the nuclear arms race between the Superpowers and the acceleration of their preparations for a nuclear war have placed the people of the world in the dark shadow of a grave nuclear threat. People urgently demand that the nuclear disarmament issue be dealt with on a priority basis and effective measures taken to prevent nuclear war. The large-scale, mass anti-nuclear campaigns that have taken place in some regions of the world reflect the strong desire of the people of all countries to safeguard peace and security and their strong opposition to nuclear war. Regrettably, the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which attracted world-wide attention, failed to meet public expectations. But even so, a number of reasonable proposals and recommendations on the cessation of the nuclear arms race and on nuclear disarmament put forward by many countries during the special session deserve our attention and further consideration.

Innumerable facts have demonstrated that the nuclear arms race, nuclear monopoly and the threat of nuclear war have all emanated from the rivalry for hegemony by the two Superpowers. At the second special session, some non-aligned countries proposed that the two major nuclear Powers, the USSR and the United States of America, should proclaim the immediate cessation of the testing, manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. This proposal, pinpointing the characteristic of the present state of nuclear armaments and underscoring the special responsibility the two countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should assume in nuclear disarmament, rightly demands that they immediately halt their nuclear arms race. It deserves serious consideration. In order to lessen the danger of nuclear war, the USSR and the United States should not only cease the testing, manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons but also substantially reduce their nuclear arsenals. The Chinese delegation has specifically proposed, in this regard, a reduction of 50 per cent on all categories of nuclear weapons by the USSR and the United States. Since both already possess such gigantic nuclear arsenals, such a reduction will not in the least impair their security. After they have taken action to narrow the enormous gap between them and other nuclear-weapon States, all nuclear-weapon States should then cease their testing, development and manufacture of nuclear weapons, and reduce and ultimately completely destroy them.

Some countries propose that the use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited pending nuclear disarmament. We endorse this proposal. We hold that if all nuclear-weapon States undertake an obligation not to use nuclear weapons, the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war can be reduced to some extent. However, we should

(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

not ignore the fact that, with the nuclear armaments of the Superpowers already at the dangerous level of overkill capacity, a mere prohibition of use obviously cannot eliminate the nuclear threat. Especially at a time when the Superpowers are still stepping up nuclear arms expansion and continuously updating and deploying new types of nuclear weapons, how can the small and medium-sized countries feel secure and free from apprehension?

In view of the above-mentioned reasons, we hold that prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons should be linked with their reduction and destruction. Moreover, at the same time as nuclear disarmament is being carried out, sufficient attention should also be given to conventional disarmament. Only this can truly contribute to world peace and the security of States and to the reduction of the threat of war facing mankind.

On the question of the cessation of nuclear tests, we are of the view that this is one aspect of the over-all question of nuclear disarmament. The cessation of nuclear tests will contribute to slowing down the nuclear arms race. But only when it is carried out in conjunction with other nuclear disarmament measures can it help to reduce the threat of nuclear war. The two Superpowers have already conducted more than 1,000 nuclear tests of various kinds and possess a great number of nuclear weapons of high accuracy. They ought, in response to the demands of the people of the world, immediately to cease all nuclear tests and the nuclear arms race and to conduct negotiations on a genuine and drastic reduction of nuclear weapons so as to achieve nuclear disarmament at an early date. If they were really to act in this way, the other nuclear-weapon States would be willing to cease the testing and production of nuclear weapons and to reduce them. In addition, this would also help to dissuade those States with potential nuclear capability from developing nuclear weapons. However, reality runs counter to the wishes of the people. One Superpower has openly declared that in order to recover its lost superiority, it cannot stop nuclear testing at the present stage. The other Superpower, while paying lip service to nuclear disarmament and the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, is in fact intensifying its nuclear tests. In 1979, it set a record by conducting 29 nuclear tests within one year. This figure exceeds the total number of nuclear tests conducted by the other nuclear-weapon States combined in that year. Its nuclear tests in 1980 and 1981 also outnumbered those of other nuclear-weapon States. How can one believe that this Superpower is really sincere about the cessation of the nuclear arms race and about nuclear disarmament?

China's limited nuclear capacity is a self-defence measure necessitated by the existence of grave external threats. As a developing socialist country, China needs to accelerate its economic development, and does not wish to use its resources on nuclear weapons. However, confronted by the Superpower military threat, we cannot but maintain the necessary defence capability while engaging in construction efforts. The head of the Chinese delegation to the second special session on disarmament reiterated once again that at no time and under no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons and that China undertakes unconditionally not to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State. This testifies fully to the fact that China's very limited nuclear capacity serves the sole purpose of self defence against foreign aggression. China is also prepared to undertake

(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

the obligation of nuclear disarmament. Once the two States with the largest arsenals take the lead in ceasing the testing, improvement and manufacture of nuclear weapons and reduce their nuclear weapons by 50 per cent, China will undertake the commitment to cease the development and manufacture of nuclear weapons and will join them in the reduction and eventual total destruction of nuclear weapons. The Chinese people, like the people of other countries, hope that this day will come at an early date.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany): Mr. Chairman, I beg your indulgence if my intervention touches upon several items and does not concentrate solely on today's main subject. By contrast, it will be brief.

It is preoccupying for my delegation that the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban is still trying to agree on its work programme, and that the prospects for consensus formulations are not as good as we would wish. For our part, we welcome the new text of a work programme which has been informally discussed in various groups, on the basis of consultations and contributions by several delegations. In our view it is imperative that an agreement on this text be achieved by 27 August, in order to allow at least a minimum amount of time for an initial reading of the various topics to be discussed. If an agreement is not achieved we should clearly establish the responsibility of those who, for ulterior motives as we must then presume, withhold their consent. All delegations know that the mandate of the NTB Group is limited. To many, this is an unsatisfactory state of affairs. But however delegations feel, the only constructive way of showing the alleged deficiency of the mandate would seem to be to complete the present work assignment as quickly as possible. Once it is completed, requests for a future broader mandate would certainly become more persuasive.

At its plenary meeting of 24 August, the Committee had an occasion to discuss the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts. The report, and the supplementary information so readily provided by its competent Chairman, Dr. Ericsson, have done much to show the Committee where the Group stands in its work. My delegation, as others, is particularly indebted to Ambassador Okawa for his probing and incisive questions as to where the Group should direct its further endeavours. I would like to join many other delegations who refuse to see the work of the Group go on forever as a purely academic exercise. My delegation would encourage the experts to terminate their next progress report as early in 1983 as they can, preferably by springtime. At the present juncture, the seismic experts have accumulated a wealth of written material. They are lacking on the experimental side. Especially in view of the work the NTB Working Group is now embarking upon, this Committee should give serious thought to enlarging the mandate of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts and rendering it more precise. Such an amplified mandate should, in our view, contain such assignments as the following:

All aspects of an international seismic data exchange system should be investigated experimentally with the aid of every available scientific and technical method;

Within a time-frame to be specified, the automatic and/or interactive extraction of all Level 1 parameters over a test period of at least two weeks;

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

The transmission of this complete set of parameters via the GTS/WMO system on the basis of an official recognition of the Group of Experts by WMO;

Examination, by practical tests, of the possibility of the transmission of Level 2 data over WMO lines as well as other data channels; the elaboration of standard formats for this purpose;

The development and experimental verification of analytical procedures in data centres, using modern evaluation methods, and leading to a comparison of results of Level 1 and Level 2 data respectively.

I would like to stress that a more experimental orientation of the work of the experts would provide results which would be particularly valuable for those countries which are not seismologically equipped themselves and which could use the exchange system as a basis for their own verification efforts in the field of nuclear testing. In any event, my delegation feels that both the work of the Group of Experts during this year and our debate in plenary on 24 August have demonstrated the necessity of building into the mandate the assumption that all participating countries are politically and technically prepared to apply the most recent insights of science and technology, and make the fullest conceivable use of them.

Turning now to the field of chemical weapons, I would like to voice the satisfaction of my delegation over the mode of work which the Ad Hoc Working Group in that field has adopted. The present negotiating method of launching a number of small, spirited groups without a precise mandate has turned out to be quite successful. This is an experiment in multilateral negotiation from which we may wish to draw our lessons for other endeavours as well. We should commend Chairman Sujka for having introduced this flexible negotiation scenario; for the first time, our chemical weapons negotiators have gone beyond the mere juxtaposition of the positions of individual country perspectives. They have now started to evaluate the difference between their views and to agree, increasingly, on common positions.

Earlier during this session my delegation commented upon a particularly important feature of the current negotiating session: the new language on international verification offered in New York by the Soviet delegation and reintroduced here. We have tried to move the negotiation along constructively by asking the Soviet delegation some questions on aspects which we thought would need further clarification. These questions were put forward in document CD/CW/CRP.63. In order to make our list of questions even clearer, and to

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

facilitate responses by the Soviet delegation, we joined forces a few days later with the Dutch delegation to reformulate our small questionnaire and to structure it more logically. I am grateful to Ambassador Issraelyan for having supplied some initial answers to our first series of questions in his statement on 12 August. At that juncture it was quite obviously impossible to have replies ready on all our questions. We all recognize how complex this subject matter is. Yet, reiterating the high interest of my delegation in the Soviet Union's views, I would like to state that my delegation continues to hope for a full formal response to our queries at the appropriate time. The Soviet Union has been particularly articulate in stressing the urgency of an early conclusion of a chemical weapons convention. Since it appears that the clarifications in the international verification realm which my delegation seeks would be important for rapid progress in our negotiation, we can confidently assume that early replies to our questionnaire would help to advance the course of our negotiations. I would also like to remind the distinguished Soviet delegate that my delegation was immediately ready to supply answers to similar questions in the verification field which were directed to us after the circulation of our working paper CD/265. I myself addressed these questions in a detailed statement in plenary on 15 April, and my delegation took an opportunity to elaborate our replies and elucidate additional aspects in direct contact with our Soviet colleagues. Some degree of reciprocity would certainly be welcome.

In conclusion, may I make a brief statement in my capacity as the current Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons. In response to the letter circulated at the beginning of our session on 3 August, I have received full replies from 13 delegations, and one reply from the spokesman of a regional group, purporting to speak for its eight members. That makes replies from about half the members of the Committee. I am particularly grateful to those who have responded. In the next few days I would be pleased to be available to those who prefer oral communications and to those who would like to elaborate on their written replies. I would ask those delegations to contact me at the earliest possible point. A formal meeting of the Working Group on Radiological Weapons will be held in the afternoon of 2 September. I intend during that session to report on the views expressed to me and to make suggestions for the further course of work.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I associate my delegation with the words spoken by yourself and other colleagues noting with some regret but great appreciation the work of our two departing colleagues who have left since my last intervention, the distinguished Ambassador of Yugoslavia, Dr. Marco Vrhunec and Ambassador Anisse Salah-Bey of Algeria. We wish both of these colleagues God speed and success in their new endeavours. Likewise, I wish to associate my delegation with the many kind words of welcome extended to our new Peruvian colleague, Ambassador Peter Cannock and we look forward to a pleasant, long and fruitful association; we are delighted to have colleagues from our hemisphere participate with us, and we look forward to that.

At our plenary meeting last Tuesday, this Committee was provided with two examples of statements that, unfortunately, contribute to hindering, rather than advancing, the vitally important work of the Committee. Rhetoric designed to mask rather than to illuminate the real issues we face does not serve any helpful purpose. I do not believe that statements such as these, which attempt -- through selective quotation from free statements made by free men in a free press -- to lay blame where blame clearly does not lie, advance the true cause of a more peaceful world.

The two statements to which I am referring were made by the representatives of the Soviet Union and Mexico. The Soviet statement was one to which all delegations can attribute certain motives. The second can only be understood as an attempt at creating a narrow, and biased, view of history in order to show, or attempt to show, that the position of my Government on the question of a nuclear test ban is somehow unfaithful to the true national security interests of the United States.

I should like briefly to respond. For any United States administration, the most fundamental issues it must address -- both for the American people and for the entire world -- are issues involving nuclear weapons. So long as threats to the security of the United States and its allies exist, in particular nuclear threats, the United States has no choice but to rely upon a strategy of deterrence. This strategy which holds that our strategic arsenal must be adequate to deter any deliberate attack on the United States or our allies, has been endorsed by every United States President since President Eisenhower. It is inconceivable that the United States would take unilateral steps to weaken that deterrent. But at the same time, the United States will pursue in good faith through negotiations effective measures to reduce those threats, and ultimately to eliminate them. It is clearly in our interest to do so.

Our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Garcia Robles, treated us to a highly selective history lesson. Three quotations from distinguished Americans, speaking as private citizens some 10 years ago, were used to illustrate his view of history. The distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan, has sought to use the same tactic by citing contemporary reports from the press. A quick search through the lengthy and readily available public record in the United States would yield quotations from equally distinguished Americans who held, or hold, other views.

I will not undertake counterquotes, as our time is too valuable to be used in such idle pursuits. Moreover, such an exercise would miss the point. It would obscure the realistic perspective which guides the actions of my Government. Let me say a few words about this perspective. In June 1946, the United States, then the sole nation possessing nuclear weapons, boldly took the initiative by offering to place these weapons under United Nations control. Mr. Bernard Baruch, in proposing the plan which bore his name, said poignantly, "We are here to make a choice between the quick and the dead". The Baruch plan was endorsed by a majority of the United Nations, but effectively blocked by a Member Nation which was a short



(Mr. Fields, United States)

time later to launch the nuclear arms race. The acquisition by the Soviet Union of nuclear weapons and its behaviour led to the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a regional collective defence body permitted under the terms of the United Nations Charter. This perspective embodies many patient efforts that have been made over the past quarter of a century by the United States to control nuclear weapons. These include: the limited test-ban Treaty of 1963, the outer space Treaty, the non-proliferation Treaty, the sea-bed Convention, and the strategic arms limitation agreements with the Soviet Union. This perspective embodies also the extensive efforts made by my Government to make available throughout the world the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and its support for the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency with its essential system of international safeguards. Our perspective has another side as well, and that is the record of behaviour of the Soviet Union. We recall the Berlin Wall and the Cuban missile crisis. Our perspective is coloured by Soviet acquisition of enormous quantities of nuclear and conventional weaponry in the 1970s at a time when the United States was exercising restraint during the so-called period of détente. We are also cognizant of the Soviet development of an anti-satellite weapon, and their consistent pattern of adventurism and aggression, most recently by their brutal invasion of Afghanistan.

Given this perspective, what position would any reasonable person expect the United States to take? Are we to react by disarming unilaterally? By putting our faith in the goodwill of the Soviet Union and throwing caution to the winds? No responsible American official could ever contemplate such actions.

But mutual reductions in the levels of armaments -- both nuclear and conventional -- are clearly in the interest of the United States. These reductions can free economic resources for better purposes in the world. Our economic systems -- given the opportunity -- can create great benefits for the world at large. The requirement to sustain a contest with the Soviet Union in the military arena is most certainly not a welcome one. Bullets do not feed children or build hospitals.

Let there be no question about the commitment of my Government to nuclear arms control and nuclear arms reductions. No delegation in this chamber can be oblivious to the fact that two vitally important negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union are under way to achieve these ends. Let there be no question about the commitment of my Government to the achievement of a complete and verifiable ban on chemical weapons. Let there be no question about the willingness of the United States to pursue the mutual and balanced force reduction negotiations under way in Vienna. And let there be no question about the commitment of my country to its international obligations, under agreements to which it is a party, in particular the non-proliferation Treaty. In the light of the strategic arms reduction talks and the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces -- efforts for which the United States took the initiative -- I fail to see how any Government could argue that my Government somehow considers Article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty to be a dead letter, as some delegations have asserted here during our 1982 session. With regard to the issue of a nuclear test ban, we have consistently declared it as a long-range objective but one which must be considered in the broad range of nuclear arms control measures, and the over-all security interests of the United States. My delegation is prepared to participate actively in the work of the NTB Working Group, and I join our colleagues who have spoken this morning in urging early agreement on a programme of work for that body.

It is regrettable that some delegations seem to approach the work of this Committee as a game -- as political theatre where the objective is to make debating points and embarrass those who take opposite positions. My delegation certainly does not share that view. Whether popular or unpopular, this delegation will continue to take positions which are based on serious national interests and a realistic view of the world in which we live.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement.

In accordance with the decision taken by the Committee at its 176th plenary meeting, I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Ireland, His Excellency Ambassador Hayes, to whom I extend a warm welcome in the Committee.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you in particular for your kind words of welcome.

Let me begin my remarks by congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. We would wish to associate ourselves with the many -- and well-merited -- compliments that have been paid both to you and to your distinguished predecessor from the floor of this Committee.

It is a great honour for me to participate as observer in the Committee on Disarmament during its consideration of item 1 of the Committee's agenda which is before today's plenary meeting. As you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Committee are aware, Ireland is a candidate for membership of this body. If our candidature is successful, as we hope it will be, we are convinced that the particular question of a comprehensive test ban will be one of the most important questions we will have to address as a member of the Committee.

All who have followed this particular question are aware of the importance which the Irish Government attaches to a comprehensive test ban in the context of the international community's efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament. Year after year we have expressed our views at the General Assembly and have joined with other States in co-sponsoring resolutions on this question.

Looking about us we see that while efforts are made to negotiate disarmament measures in the nuclear area, all too often those efforts are unable to keep pace with the advance of technology and they thus fail to slow down the nuclear arms race. A comprehensive test ban could fulfil a vital function. It would help to curtail the qualitative competition among the nuclear-weapon Powers by limiting technological advance in nuclear weapons. While the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 and the more recent threshold ban Treaty were important psychologically, they have not been very effective in limiting the improvement of nuclear weapons. We are convinced that something much more is needed. There is no alternative to the negotiation of a comprehensive test ban of the kind to which the parties to the partial test ban of 1963 committed themselves on that occasion.

Successive Irish Governments have emphasized the need for action to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. In 1959, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland tabled a resolution on this question in the United Nations. In the years that followed, we persistently pursued our initiative, gradually obtaining increased support until the non-proliferation Treaty was finally concluded in 1967. We feel that that Treaty has made a valuable contribution to the efforts of the international community to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. The acceptance by the nuclear-weapon Powers of a complete ban on all nuclear tests would be a magnificent boost to international efforts to maintain and strengthen the non-proliferation Treaty. Ireland and others which support the Treaty argue that it

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

should be universally accepted and call on the States in a position to acquire nuclear weapons to refrain from doing so in the interests of all. Agreement now by the existing nuclear-weapon Powers to end testing would show that they, too, are willing to accept restraints and would give great encouragement to those of us who want to see a non-proliferation Treaty firmly established and accepted by all. In the words of the Palme Commission, a comprehensive test ban "would enhance the acceptability and credibility of the non-proliferation Treaty".

In view of the great importance which the Irish Government attaches to agreement on a comprehensive test ban, it is for us a matter of great regret that the prospects for reaching agreement have not improved in recent months. The trilateral talks to which we attach great importance have not resumed and recent reports are somewhat pessimistic regarding the prospects for an early resumption. However, we are confident that the last word has not been heard on this and we, for our part, continue to hope for an early resumption. It is our view that concrete discussion between the nuclear-weapon States principally involved is essential if the efforts of the Committee on Disarmament are to be crowned with success.

Those outside the Committee on Disarmament have watched your efforts within the Committee in recent years to come to grips with this most important question, including your efforts to agree on the establishment of a working group. We are, of course, aware that you did decide in April of this year to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban and that you agreed on the mandate which would be given to that Group. I must confess immediately that the mandate which was agreed on would not have been the one which we would have suggested. I would add that in our view the discussion should involve all the nuclear-weapon States.

I would recall that on 29 February 1972 the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, speaking to the CCD, the predecessor of this Committee, regarding a comprehensive test ban, stated: "I believe that all the technical and scientific aspects of the problem have been so fully explored that only a political decision is now necessary in order to achieve final agreement." The problem of verification has, of course, been closely linked over the years with discussion of a comprehensive test ban. However, it seems to my delegation that what the Secretary-General said in 1972 is certainly true today. The quest for an infallible verification method may prove to be a very long one, but the margin of error in verification is being constantly reduced by scientific developments in detection and identification. We must be prepared to seek a balanced solution. That, of course, is what the Secretary-General meant in 1972 when he expressed the view that only a political decision was now necessary in order to achieve final agreement.

From what I have said it will be clear why my delegation has had some initial reservations regarding the mandate of the new Ad Hoc Working Group. However, this does not mean that our attitude to it is a negative one. The establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group allows the Committee to start work on this most important subject. We are also encouraged by our experience of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons which originally had what we might describe as a somewhat limited mandate. In spite of that limited mandate it has been able, as we know, to do extremely useful work. We would hope that in the light of that experience the Ad Hoc Working Group which has now been established to deal with the subject of a comprehensive test ban will be able to carry out similarly useful work.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Ireland for his statement and for the kind words that he has addressed to the Chair.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

Mrs. GONZALEZ (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I have asked for the floor in order to reserve my delegation's right to exercise its right of reply to the statement made by the distinguished representative of the United States of America when my delegation has examined in detail the content of that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: The secretariat has circulated, at my request, an informal paper containing the time-table for meetings of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the coming week. As usual, the time-table is indicative and subject to change, if necessary. If there is no objection, I will take it that the Committee adopts the informal paper.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I adjourn the plenary meeting, may I recall that at our next plenary meeting, on Tuesday, I will put before the Committee for adoption the schedule of work contained in paragraph 10 of the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, as contained in document CD/318, as well as the draft communication in Working Paper No. 73.

May I also recall that the Committee will hold this afternoon at 3 p.m. an informal meeting to consider the remaining proposals submitted under items 2 and 7 of the agenda, as well as the question of the improved and effective functioning of the Committee on Disarmament.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 31 August, at 10.30 a.m.

The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.