

FINAL RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING  
held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 30 March 1982, at 10 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. Mario ALESSI

(Italy)

## PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Algeria:

Mr. A. SALAH-BEY  
Mr. M. MATI  
Mr. MAACHI  
Mr. A. TAFFAR

Argentina:

Mr. J.C. CARSALES  
Miss N. NASCIBENE  
Mr. V. ESPECHE GIL

Australia:

Mr. D.M. SADLEIR  
Mr. R.W. STEELE  
Mr. T. FINDLAY

Belgium:

Mr. A. ONKELINX  
Mr. J.M. NOIRFALISSE  
Miss DE CLERQ  
Miss G. VAN DEN BERGH

Brazil:

Mr. C.A. de SOUZA E SILVA  
Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. B. GRINBERG  
Mr. I. SOTIROV  
Mr. P. POPCHEV

Burma:

U MAUNG MAUNG GYI  
U THAN TUN

Canada:

Mr. D.S. McPHAIL  
Mr. J. GAUDREAU

China:

Mr. TIAN JIN  
Mr. YU MENGJIA  
Mr. FENG ZHENYAO  
Mr. LI WEIMIN

Cuba: Mr. L. SOLÁ VILA

Czechoslovakia: Mr. M. VEJVODA  
Mr. J. STRUCKA  
Mr. A. CIMA  
Mr. J. JIRUSEK  
Mr. J. FRANEK

Egypt: Mr. I.A. HASSAN  
Mr. M.N. FAHMY  
Miss W. BASSIM

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

France: Mr. F. de LA GORCE  
Mr. J. DE BEAUSSE  
Miss L. GHAZERIAN  
Mr. M. COUTHURES

German Democratic Republic: Mr. G. HERDER  
Mr. H. THIELICKS  
Mr. M. KAULFUSS  
Mr. J. MOEPERT

Germany, Federal Republic of: Mr. H. WEGENER  
Mr. W.E. VON DEM HAGEN  
Mr. W. ROHR

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

India: Mr. S. SARAN

Indonesia: Mr. N. SUTRESNA  
Mr. B. MAUNA  
Mr. I. DAMANIK  
Mr. HARYOMATARAM  
Mr. B. SIMANJUNTAK

Iran:Italy:

Mr. M. ALESSI  
Mr. B. CARRAS  
Mr. C.M. OLIVA  
Mr. R. Di CARLO

Japan:

Mr. Y. OKAWA  
Mr. M. TAKAHASHI  
Mr. K. TANAKA  
Mr. T. ARAI

Kenya:

Mr. D.D. DON NANJIRA  
Mr. J. MURIU KIBOI

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES  
Mrs. Z. GONZALEZ Y REYNERO

Mongolia:

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

Morocco:

Mr. A. SKALLI  
Mr. S.M. RAHALLI  
Mr. M. CHRAIBI

Netherlands:

Mr. F. VAN DONGEN  
Mr. H. WAGENMAKERS  
Mr. R.J. AKKERMAN

Nigeria:

Mr. W.O. AKINSANYA  
Mr. T. AGUIYI-IRONSI

Pakistan:

Mr. M. AKRAM  
Mr. T. ALTAJ

Peru:

Mr. J. BENAVIDES DE LA SOTTA

Poland:

Mr. B. SUJKA  
Mr. B. RUSSIN  
Mr. J. CIALOWICZ  
Mr. T. STROJWAS

Romania:

Mr. T. MELESCANU

Sri Lanka:

Mr. A.J. JAYAKODDY

Mr. H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA

Sweden:

Mr. C. LIDGARD

Mr. C.M. HYLTFENIUS

Mr. G. ANDERSSON

Mr. S. ERICSON

Mrs. G. JONÅNG

Mr. H. BERGLUND

Mr. J. LUNDIN

Mr. G. EKHOLM

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

Mr. V.L. ISSRAELYAN

Mr. B.P. PROKOFIEV

Mr. M.M. IPPOLITOV

Mr. Y.V. KOSTENKO

Mr. S.B. BATSANOV

United Kingdom:

Mr. L.J. MIDDLETON

Mrs. J.I. LINK

Miss J.E.F. WRIGHT

Mr. H.E. SWIFT

United States of America:

Mr. B. BUSBY

Miss K. CRITTENBERGER

Mr. J. MISKEL

Mr. R.F. SCOTT

Venezuela:

Mr. R.R. NAVARRO

Mr. O. AGUILAR PARDO

Yugoslavia:

Mr. M. MIHAJLOVIC

Zaire:

Mr. B.A. NZENGEYA

Ms. ESAKI EKANGA KABEYA

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 (translated from French): I declare open the 167th plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

The Committee begins today its consideration of item 6 of its agenda, "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, members wishing to make statements on any other subject relevant to the work of the Committee are free to do so.

In this connection, members of the Committee will recall that at the 164th plenary meeting the Committee began examining document CD/260 entitled, "Progress report to the Committee on Disarmament on the thirteenth session of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events", and that at our informal meeting on Friday last I informed them that I would invite the Committee to adopt the recommendations contained in that document at the end of our plenary meeting today.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Kenya, Argentina, China, Venezuela, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Sweden, Morocco and Belgium.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of Kenya, Mr. Don Nanjira.

Mr. DON NANJIRA (Kenya): I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the floor.

If I had made my current intervention as originally planned on 25 March, I would have limited my remarks to the important question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Since, however, I am taking the floor at a very critical stage in the work of the Committee's current session, with only two to three weeks still left at its disposal before the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, I should first like to take the liberty of making a few observations on the state of the current negotiations -- I use the term "negotiations" for lack of a more appropriate expression to describe what has been happening since the Committee convened here on 2 February last, for indeed there has been less negotiation than I would have liked to see on the substantive issues before the Committee and on the international agenda for disarmament which we unanimously adopted last month for substantive examination by the Committee at this spring session. Looking back on the deliberations of the Committee in the past eight weeks, I conclude that there are two broad chapters in the Committee's activities which not only deserve our full recognition and reaffirmation but also require priority treatment at this point in time of the Committee's work. These points pertain to the common features and fundamental characteristics of the mandate of the Committee on Disarmament and of each of its subsidiary bodies and the problem areas requiring the Committee's closest attention at this juncture of our deliberations and indeed on this eve of the second special session of the General Assembly on Disarmament. The negotiating mandate of the Committee on Disarmament on all disarmament issues seems to be highly questionable indeed amongst some States represented herein; but there is no question that the said mandate must be strictly observed by all of us, if the Committee is not to be rendered impotent in the execution of its responsibilities. The same applies to all the subsidiary organs of the Committee on Disarmament. To refuse, therefore, to recognize the duty and right of the Committee to negotiate multilaterally on every question and on all issues of disarmament would be to incapacitate the Committee and deny it its rightful responsibility of dealing with and finding lasting solutions to disarmament questions through mutually acceptable formulations and language.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

There is no way we ourselves and the 40 States we represent which, although admittedly not sovereignly equal are none the less and unquestionably equally sovereign, can deserve the high honour and carry out with complete dignity the heavy responsibility bestowed upon us by the world community -- namely, to undertake to continue substantive negotiations, I repeat, substantive negotiations, on the priority questions of disarmament on the Committee's agenda, as agreed both in the Final Document and in the General Assembly's relevant decisions and resolutions, some of which I had occasion to cite in my observation of last week -- unless we recognize the over-all negotiating capacity of the Committee in the field of disarmament, and facilitate the Committee's exercise of authority in this regard.

The expression "negotiate" is the key; it is the operative, the fundamental characteristic in the terms of reference of the Committee on Disarmament. I am aware, Mr. Chairman, as you yourself are, and as are many of the other distinguished delegations seated around this table, of the unacceptable quality and unpalatable nature which have been attributed to the concept of "negotiation" in more recent months by some delegations. But as far as I am concerned, negotiation for the purposes of the Committee on Disarmament means discussion of substantive issues of disarmament on which the various delegations hold divergent views and positions but make every effort, bona fide, to find just and fair resolutions to their differences through the employment of a mutually acceptable language. The absence, then, of any of these five elements in the negotiating process can only result in empty rhetoric, politicking and even mere intellectual exchanges which, no matter how gratifying they may be, should have no place in this Committee because they would be invaders and strangers in the midst of the Committee's terms of reference.

The next common or fundamental feature of the Committee on Disarmament is that its negotiating character, which emanates from paragraph 120 of the Final Document and resolution 36/92 F of the General Assembly, among other sources of the Committee's negotiating nature, extends to every subsidiary organ which may be created within the Committee to help the latter expedite its work. Therefore, every subsidiary body established within the Committee must be entrusted with a mandate to negotiate each and every aspect of disarmament which falls directly within the sphere of competence of the subsidiary body, as agreed in the Final Document and in all the other relevant documents, resolutions and decisions of the United Nations General Assembly.

In this respect, the mandate of each of the ad hoc working groups on security assurances, chemical weapons and radiological weapons includes provisions for the elaboration of a multilateral convention or conventions in their respective fields of disarmament. Thus, on security assurances, for instance, there are provisions to that effect not only in the Final Document (for example its paragraph 59) but also in such General Assembly resolutions as 36/94 and 36/95. On chemical weapons paragraph 75 of the Final Document together with General Assembly resolutions 36/96 A and B are particularly relevant. On radiological weapons we have, for example, paragraph 76 of the Final Document and General Assembly resolution 36/97 B.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

In the area of new types and new systems of weapons of mass destruction, paragraph 77 of the Final Document and General Assembly resolution 36/89 clearly and earnestly call for the prevention and prohibition through multilateral treaties of any emergence and/or development and manufacture of new generation weapons of mass destruction. The stipulations regarding the nuclear test ban have clearly been inscribed in General Assembly resolutions 36/84 and 36/85 and the only reason, Mr. Chairman, why I am referring to these resolutions and paragraphs is because they all point to the fundamental negotiating nature of the Committee on Disarmament which, needless to say and as I have indicated above, does not seem to be totally acceptable in some quarters of the Committee.

We also need, at this juncture of our work, to pay close attention to the fact that the Committee is obligated at this session to make specific recommendations to the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament on the work of the Committee since the first special session. General Assembly resolutions 36/81 A, 36/84, 36/85, 36/92 F, 36/96 A and 36/97 B, which I have already referred to above, do, in some of their operative paragraphs, expressis verbis request the Committee to make a positive contribution to the preparatory process for the second special session. It is also noteworthy that General Assembly resolutions 36/96 A and B on chemical weapons and 36/97 B on radiological weapons, like the Final Document itself, call for an elaboration of a multilateral convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of these weapons and on their destruction.

In the light of the foregoing observations, and bearing in mind both the very short period of time still left at our disposal before the conclusion of this session of the Committee, and the duty and necessity for it to present the results of its current work to the Preparatory Committee for the second special session, which, as we all know, will convene its last session in New York almost immediately following the closure of our current session, I firmly believe that the time has indeed arrived for us to begin examining the items on our agenda primarily in the context of the second special session. We should now look more closely at those problem areas which, in our opinion, require the Committee's closest attention before the said special session, as well as our formulation of concrete and specific recommendations for the consideration of and ultimate adoption by the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament.

Obviously, the field of priority issues of disarmament is as broad and complex as disarmament itself, but in my judgement the following should be among the primary questions which, on the eve of the special session, deserve and ought to receive our highest attention at this point in time of the Committee's work:-

- (1) The Committee's special report to the General Assembly at its second special session as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 36/92 F

On this we should receive as soon as possible the skeleton of the special report in the light of the views exchanged herein and the guidelines given herefrom to the Secretary of the Committee, and as agreed. Once the draft is received, we should hold informal meetings on it without any delay, in the normal manner.



(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

(2) Creation of an ad hoc working group on a CTB

This is another extremely significant item. Sir, we are aware of your efforts to create such a body, and my delegation, like the majority of delegations assembled here, would not welcome the creation of such a body with half a mandate. Agreement must therefore be reached quickly on a subsidiary body of the Committee on Disarmament which shall undertake substantive consideration of a nuclear test ban. Once we agree, in principle, that the terms of reference of such a body will not be limited to the discussion and negotiation of some items, but that it will, rather, consider and reach agreement on all fundamental issues of the CTB, then the newly created working group could start negotiations on any of the fundamental issues of CTB -- verification and compliance, for instance.

At this session also, a specific recommendation should be made with regard to the establishment of an ad hoc working group on nuclear disarmament -- which is item 2 of our agenda. The Committee could formally create such a body at its 1982 summer session. And sufficient documentation exists for the creation of such working groups, including document CD/181 and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

(3) Elaboration of a CPD

While not pretending that a clean text of a comprehensive programme of disarmament can be agreed upon at the current session of the Committee, I would none the less call for more flexibility in the positions of some delegations and groups of delegations, in the negotiations currently being carried out under the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, to whom I would once more like to extend the gratitude of the Kenyan delegation for the tireless efforts he has been exerting over the months in the negotiations conducted within the CPD Working Group. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to request the Ambassador of Mexico, H.E. Alfonso García Robles, to reveal to me the secret of manufacturing new and renewable sources of energy which give him all the stamina and discipline and tenacity and toughness par excellence which he possesses, and yet enable him at the same time to remain so agreeable, likeable and most respectable. Such a revelation would no doubt be a confidence-building measure to newcomers to the Disarmament Committee like myself.

The search for mutual understanding, flexibility and co-operation on CPD negotiations must be continued. We must continue to look for a common language and a meeting of minds on the main basis of the three documents submitted by the various groups of delegations on a CPD, that is, CD/223, CD/205 and CD/245. We should now attempt to minimize the brackets in a consolidated text and thereby facilitate the work of the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament.

(4) Elaboration of draft provisions for a multilateral convention on chemical weapons

Here too, my delegation is appreciative of the efforts and patience of the distinguished Ambassador Sujka of Poland, who is currently the Chairman of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons. This is a very complex area of the Committee's activity, but we must continue to look for compromise and accommodation on the main basis of document CD/220, but of course full justice should and will be given to the numerous other papers presented to the Group for negotiation.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

The same applies to

(5) Elaboration of draft provisions for a multilateral convention on radiological weapons

The Working Group on this subject is currently chaired by the distinguished Ambassador Wegener of the Federal Republic of Germany, to whom also I am grateful for the manner in which he has been guiding the deliberations of the Group. A consensus seems to be emerging in that Group on some of the various formulations that are being derived from the numerous papers before the Committee. This is an encouraging trend, the ultimate fruition of which we shall impatiently await.

(6) Elaboration of drafting provisions for a multilateral convention on security assurances

Here, too, there are some encouraging signs, thanks to the efforts of the distinguished Ambassador Ahmad of Pakistan. Obviously, many difficulties remain to be overcome in all the aforementioned working groups, and questions have repeatedly been asked as to how to proceed henceforth with the work in the Groups, now that the second special session is just around the corner. Well, it seems to me that care must be taken not to let the proliferation of proposals and counterproposals overwhelm us or subdue and overtake the capacity of the Committee to examine and manage them. These papers should be thoroughly examined, consolidated and negotiated against the background of the existing basic documents. Common elements in the various texts should be identified and restructured in logical sequences. We should avoid proliferating brackets and duplicating formulations. One way of minimizing brackets is to maintain them only around formulations where fundamental differences still exist. Similarly, it would not be advisable to reproduce all the past and present views and comments expressed by delegations on all the items, and a unanimous decision could and should be taken to that effect before the closure of the Committee's current session. The consolidated texts could be used as bases for further future negotiations and the secretariat could prepare them appropriately as draft reports which could, for instance, be divided into three broad categories or sections. In category A, for instance, would be placed all the provisions or elements on which a meeting of minds has been achieved. In category B would be placed provisions or elements on which there is still no complete consensus but where the differences are not all that deep or fundamental. And category C would comprise provisions or elements on which fundamental differences still exist, and this section of the report would be allotted the highest concentration of negotiation in the future. Each of the three sections could then be concluded by the substantive reactions and comments of the various delegations, but again only those comments whose elimination could not be agreed upon. Attempts to remove the differences and brackets would be continued through the remaining preparatory process for and during the General Assembly special session itself in New York.

In this endeavour, my delegation stands ready and indeed eager to participate as effectively and constructively as possible, despite our very limited human resources, and finally, but not least among the highest priority issues for the second special session is the question of strengthening the negotiating capacity of the Committee on Disarmament and the problem of a review of the Committee's membership. I realize that you yourself, Mr. Chairman, have started conducting informal consultations on this issue, and my delegation reiterates its full support

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

for that approach. We hope that the Committee can reach agreement soon on how to treat this matter. Our main wish is that the Committee should retain its fundamental characteristic as the single multilateral negotiating body on all matters of disarmament. Its other fundamental characteristics of efficiency, effectiveness and speed, must also be promoted and safeguarded. These must be stressed both now and at the special session of the General Assembly.

Distinguished delegates, permit me now to turn to the second part of my address today, the subject of which is item 3 of our agenda, namely Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The existing literature on disarmament stresses the fact that nuclear weapons constitute the greatest and gravest threat to humanity. In the context of my current intervention, paragraphs 11, 18, 32, 33 and 56 through 65 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament are particularly relevant. A good number of resolutions have also been adopted by the General Assembly on the question of security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States like my own, Kenya. Many delegations have also articulated their positions many times throughout the existence of this Committee, and in my statement of 23 February, I expressed the serious concern of my delegation, and we are not alone in this respect, at the lack of progress in the deliberations on the Committee's highest priority items, i.e., items 1 and 2 of our agenda. During that address, I emphasized a few points to which my delegation attaches great importance -- for instance, that the maintenance and strengthening of the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States would depend to a very large extent upon the behaviour of nuclear-weapon States, and that the theory and practice of nuclear deterrence was unacceptable to many delegations because it is a very bad and dangerous paradox. I cannot help but reiterate our earnest call to the nuclear-weapon Powers to re-examine their declared policies and positions relating to arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is as closely connected with the issue of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban as is the NPT with the CTBT, which the world community has been seeking for a good number of years already. Obviously, patience is a great virtue, but it has its own limits, and as for the non-nuclear-weapon States, they have exercised and will no doubt continue to exercise their legitimate right to demand that the nuclear-weapon States provide immediately concrete and legally binding undertakings regarding a substantial and accelerated progress toward nuclear disarmament and the ultimate conclusion of a legally binding convention on general and complete disarmament under strict, adequate and effective international control.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

As indicated in paragraph 32 of the Final Document, the unilateral declarations of the nuclear-weapon States as presented in 1980 are unacceptable to the Group of 21 and to many other delegations because not only do the said declarations lack the firm commitment of their authors necessary to implement the legitimate demands of the non-nuclear-weapon States, but worse still, and ironically, the declarations seek to protect the nuclear-weapon Powers themselves against non-nuclear-weapon States. My delegation fully subscribes to and reiterates the position of the Group of 21 which states that security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States must be universal and unconditional. I note, therefore, with appreciation the repeatedly and unilaterally declared assurance first made in 1964 by the People's Republic of China that "at no time and in no circumstances would it be the first to use nuclear weapons". We note also with interest the proposals of China on the question of security assurances contained in document CD/207 of 6 August 1981. That document deserves close examination, and we hope that the other nuclear-weapon Powers can come up with revised positions which could also be subjected to scrutiny by the Committee on Disarmament. Such a move would indeed be in line with paragraph 59 of the Final Document, which in essence necessitates the making of urgent efforts by the nuclear-weapon Powers to conclude effective and unconditional arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In this regard, my delegation reiterates the need fully and strictly to observe the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was signed on 1 July 1968 and entered into force on 5 March 1970. This Treaty serves the security interests of all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear alike. Pending, therefore, the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the conclusion of an international convention on general and complete disarmament under effective international control, it is evident that action must be taken by the international community along the following lines, inter alia:

1. There is an imperative need to accelerate, within the Committee on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Assurances, the process of elaborating a convention valid for all time on the question of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States;
2. Nuclear Powers should urgently extend effective and adequate arrangements to all non-nuclear-weapon States without any limitations or conditions;
3. The testing of nuclear weapons should be halted at once;
4. A complete and prompt prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons should be effected.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

5. Effective and adequate international arrangements should be established against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against nuclear-weapon-free zones;

6. An urgent adoption of an international treaty to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be effected; and

7. It is essential urgently and fully to implement the decisions and recommendations of the international community adopted at the global or regional levels in the field of disarmament, for example, resolutions Nos. 28/72-P and 29/12-P, respectively on Strengthening the Security of Non-nuclear States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, and the Establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, which were adopted by the Twelfth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in Baghdad, Iraq, from 1 to 6 June 1981.

Security assurances must thus be extended not only to non-nuclear-weapon States, but also to nuclear-weapon-free zones, and here also, the behaviour of nuclear-weapon States will be a significant determining factor, especially at this point in time when we are experiencing the most sophisticated and rapid technological advances. Similarly, non-nuclear-weapon States must be protected both from attacks and threats of attack with nuclear weapons in all environments, including outer space.

In conclusion, then, I must say that the ball is in the court of the nuclear-weapon Powers, but the Committee on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Working Group on Security Assurances should now build up on the areas of convergence and concentrate their efforts on those specific issues and problems encountered in the various proposals, where major disagreements still exist between the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States. In short, then, the search for a "common approach" acceptable to all delegations should be intensified, and the mandate of the said Ad Hoc Working Group should be renewed promptly at the beginning of each year of the Committee's work, in order to enable the Working Group to continue negotiating, with a view to reaching agreement, as recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/46 of 3 December 1980.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to state that the Kenya delegation is indeed satisfied with the manner in which informal contacts and consultations are being held, particularly on items 1 and 2 of our agenda, under your able and competent chairmanship. The consultations are proving to be very useful, and I hope that the momentum and willingness to discuss candidly the differences among the various delegations and groups of delegations will be maintained and intensified in order to reach an early agreement on both the procedural and the substantive problems before us for resolution.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Kenya for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, His Excellency Ambassador Carasales.

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I have already had an opportunity to express the satisfaction of my delegation, Mr. Chairman, at seeing you presiding over the work of this Committee, as also of expressing our appreciation of the very efficient work done by your predecessor as Chairman of the Committee, the Ambassador of Iran. Allow me, then, on this occasion, Sir, simply to express my delegation's pleasure upon the arrival in this Committee of two new representatives, the Ambassadors of the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia, and also my personal regret at the departure of Ambassador Malitza of Romania my friendship with whom dates back 20 years and with whom it was a pleasure to work in this Committee. I should like to ask the Romanian delegation kindly to convey to Ambassador Malitza the best wishes of my delegation and of myself personally for his success in the new duties with which his Government has entrusted him.

Today I should like to speak about the agenda item that was the subject of our discussion last week, when I was originally to have spoken, namely, item 4 of the Committee's agenda, on "Chemical weapons".

First of all, I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction at the agreement which allowed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group to be broadened -- a change long sought and which we are well aware was not an easy one. It is to be hoped that the new mandate will give a fresh impetus to the efforts that were so ably guided in previous years by Ambassadors Okawa and Lidgard, and that are now being conducted with the same enthusiasm by Ambassador Sujka.

It is unnecessary to stress the importance of a convention on chemical weapons in the general context of disarmament. Agreement on such a convention in the near future would meet the deep desire of the international community which has so far remained unfulfilled, despite the bilateral negotiations which took place between the United States of America and the Soviet Union and the many years of multilateral discussions in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and in this Committee.

It is true that, owing to the very nature of chemical substances, their prohibition gives rise to a number of technical problems. There is little divergency with regard to super-toxic lethal chemicals since their high level of toxicity means that they cannot be used in peaceful activities or for research purposes, except in minute quantities.

The picture is not so clear, however, with regard to the lethal and harmful chemical substances which, because of their dual nature, the constant development of the chemicals industry and ceaseless research, are indispensable in medicine, agriculture and other peaceful fields.

Precursors and the appearance of "binary weapons" have added new and difficult problems to the formulation of a precise and correct definition of the chemical weapons which are to be prohibited by the convention.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

In this connection my delegation, as it declared earlier, in its statement of 21 July 1981, considers that the definition of "chemical weapons" should include an express reference to "binary weapons".

The "general purpose" criterion will permit a broad distinction to be made between prohibited and permitted chemical substances, but it must be complemented by other criteria such as those of "toxicity", "chemical structure" and "quantity".

The complementarity of different criteria is particularly important in the matter of verification of compliance with the convention. The subjective nature of the so-called "general purpose" criterion and the difficulty of applying it, whether actively or passively, makes it necessary to have recourse to other means of establishing whether or not the production, stockpiling or transfer of a given substance in a given quantity constitutes a violation of the convention.

We believe that international records of the production, consumption, import and export of specific chemicals could be extremely useful in this connection.

The Argentine delegation, together with other delegations, has constantly advocated a complete prohibition of chemical weapons, the scope of which should include their "use".

Arguments have been put forward against this proposal which, with all due respect for the positions of the delegations concerned, my delegation has found very unconvincing.

It has been argued that the Geneva Protocol of 1925 comprehensively prohibits the use of chemical substances in warfare, that to restate this prohibition would raise doubts as to the recognized value of the Protocol and that the inclusion of verification machinery would give rise to ambiguities.

We do not believe this to be so, for the following reasons:

In the first place, the proponents of the express prohibition of the "use" of chemical weapons have in no way sought to discredit the 1925 Protocol. On the contrary, its validity could be clearly reaffirmed in the text of the convention, both in the preamble and in its operative part.

The existence of international treaties which mutually reaffirm and complement each other is a normal occurrence in the constant evolution of international instruments. Examples of this are the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 concerning the protection of victims of international armed conflicts, which were adopted in 1977. These Protocols first, in their preambles, reaffirm the validity of the Conventions of 1949 and then set forth a series of provisions complementing and developing those of the Conventions.

Secondly, the Protocol of 1925 was drafted at a certain stage in the history of international law, which has since undergone changes and progress. In the past, "war", the only term used in the Protocol, was clearly distinguished from other types of "armed conflict". The specific character of its conditions and protagonists gave rise to legal consequences which did not apply to other types of conflict.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

War was prohibited, first of all partially under the 1919 League of Nations Covenant and then wholly under the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, but other armed conflicts whose characteristics did not qualify them to be described as casus belli, remained outside that prohibition. The Charter of the United Nations did away with that distinction, ruling out any resort to force.

From then on, the traditional term "war" was replaced by other expressions such as "armed conflict" or "hostilities", which broadened the concept as regards both the situations covered and the protagonists involved.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 are a good example of the foregoing. Article 2 (1), common to the four Conventions, refers to "international armed conflicts", which includes both war and other armed conflicts between States, whatever their intensity. The Additional Protocols of 1977 continue that development by adding new elements to the concept.

The evolution of concepts can also be seen in the convention on chemical weapons we are discussing.

Element II of the draft contained in the report of the Working Group submitted in 1981 speaks of "hostile purposes", while element III refers to the prohibition of the transfer of chemical weapons to "anyone", a broad term which covers not only States but also any organization, group or person.

The limited nature of the provisions of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 is thus obvious, and the inclusion of the word "use" among the prohibitions of the new convention is therefore, in our view, essential.

Thirdly, the definition of the substances and devices prohibited under the Geneva Protocol is vague and gives rise to serious doubts as to whether it covers all the chemical weapons which the development of the chemical industry has made possible, including binary weapons.

And fourthly, in the course of the last 50 years many allegations have been made of the use of chemical weapons and we may assume from our experience of international realities that the same will happen in the future.

This situation of uncertainty, in which charges are made but there is no way of either establishing their truth or disproving them, is the result of the fact that the 1925 Protocol prohibited the "use" of chemical weapons but did not establish a procedure for the verification of compliance with that prohibition, and it can only be corrected if "use" is included within the general framework of the prohibition of a genuinely comprehensive convention embodying a satisfactory system of verification.

It is precisely to that other important aspect of the convention, verification, that I would like to refer now.

The problem of verification involves not only technical questions but also political decisions.

Argentina favours a flexible system of verification combining national and international mechanisms.



(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

We believe that international verification, including on-site inspections carried out on a non-discriminatory basis, is the only effective system for developing countries which do not have access to sophisticated technologies enabling them to ensure that other States parties are complying with the convention.

Some States are opposed to international verification, invoking arguments of sovereignty and claiming that it would constitute interference in their countries' industrial activities.

However, if international verification is carried out through a body representative of the States parties to the convention, established on the basis of a fair geographical distribution, which uses universally accepted methods and verifies compliance with the convention by all States parties equally, the interests of each country would be duly safeguarded.

In this sphere, discrimination is the element which affects the rights of States. And discrimination should not exist in a convention drafted within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament, the first truly multilateral negotiating body; if the Committee's rule of consensus is applied to the conclusion of an agreement, that should guarantee its universal acceptance.

As it has already stated on previous occasions, my delegation considers it essential that a consultative committee made up of not too large a number of States parties and having at its disposal a group of experts appointed by those States, should be recognized as the body responsible for the control and verification of compliance with and implementation of the convention on chemical weapons.

This consultative committee should receive allegations of possible violations and be responsible for confirming or disproving them.

On the other hand, we are not in favour of including the United Nations Security Council in any stage of the procedure.

The present voting system in that body makes it unsuitable for playing a positive and impartial role in the sphere of verification.

In addition to considerations of a political nature, as I said earlier, there are the technical issues. Many documents have been submitted to the Working Group and to this Committee, describing possible methods of verification for each of the elements of the convention.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

I shall not go into the details of these suggestions but shall confine myself to pointing out that however much technological and scientific progress allows us to approach the ideal of complete and exhaustive verification, there will always be a margin for doubt, and the possibility of deception or concealment.

Will it ever be possible to be sure that a State has really destroyed all its stocks of chemical weapons? Or that it has not omitted to mention, in its declaration, certain of its storage places? What kind of verification could be established to prevent scientists and engineers from divulging key information that would allow others to manufacture chemical weapons?

Ambassador Okawa, speaking at the plenary meeting on 23 February last with reference to item 1 of our agenda, said the following:

"The effective functioning of a reliable verification system is of fundamental importance to any disarmament or arms control measure. However, the quest for absolute perfection in the verification mechanism, an infallible verification method, may result in no agreement at all. A reasonable balance has to be struck between the value of having a positive if not complete disarmament agreement, on the one hand, and the risk that certain violations may be theoretically possible in spite of the verification mechanism that has been agreed upon, on the other. Perhaps the adequacy of any verification system is ultimately a matter of political judgement and mutual trust."

We believe that the words of the Ambassador of Japan are just as pertinent in connection with the convention on chemical weapons.

Every treaty must be based on a certain amount of trust between the parties.

If a choice is to be made between having a convention with an adequate — and I stress the word "adequate" — system of national and international verification, even though this system may not be perfect for each and every one of its provisions, and having no convention at all, we prefer the former.

My delegation will continue to contribute to the search for a system acceptable to all, so that it may be possible with the goodwill and co-operation of all the members of the Committee, to draft a convention on chemical weapons, the adoption of which is becoming increasingly necessary and urgent.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Argentina for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of China, His Excellency Minister Tian Jin.

Mr. TIAN JIN (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, since the establishment of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons by the Committee on Disarmament in 1980, under the energetic guidance of Ambassador Okawa of Japan and Ambassador Lidgard of Sweden, detailed and in-depth discussions have been held in the Group on questions relating to a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons. Through the discussions on "the elements of a chemical weapons convention" in particular, many substantive issues have been clarified. We are pleased to see that this year the Committee has made a correct decision to enlarge the mandate of the Working Group, so that its work has proceeded to the important stage of elaborating the convention. It is our hope that under the chairmanship of Ambassador Sujka of Poland and with the efforts of all the delegations, the Working Group will fulfil the important task entrusted to it by the Committee.

Notwithstanding the fact that certain progress has been made in our work, the road leading to an agreement is not smooth and there is no ground for optimism about its prospects. Some events which have occurred over the past couple of years in particular have caused our deep concern. I am referring first of all to the charges about the use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan, Laos and Kampuchea. An increasing number of reports and evidence have already aroused the close attention of world public opinion. It is only natural that people should demand that fair investigations be carried out to bring the truth to light. The United Nations has adopted resolutions to this effect and established investigation groups. However, the States concerned, while flatly denying their use of chemical weapons, have obstructed the investigation work. Under these circumstances, one may ask: how can the "confidence" they glibly talk about be established? If the existing international treaties cannot be proved to have been complied with, how can the effectiveness of the future convention be guaranteed? Such a state of affairs will inevitably cast a shadow over the ongoing negotiations. In addition, one Superpower has asserted that in order to offset the superiority of the other Superpower in chemical weapons, it has decided to produce binary chemical weapons. This decision is bound in its turn to lead to a further expansion of the chemical weapons arsenal of the other Superpower. We all know that to both Superpowers the technology of producing binary chemical weapons is nothing secret, and they both have the capability to produce such weapons in large quantities. The adoption of such technology would turn the production of chemical warfare agents into that of ordinary chemicals. As a result, the preparations for chemical warfare will become more covert and easier. This will further increase the danger of chemical warfare. The people of all countries are faced with the situation in which the arms race between the two States with the largest nuclear and conventional arsenals has entered a new field and their development and use of chemical weapons is reaching a new stage. If this Working Group fails to make rapid progress in its negotiations and fails to conclude at an early date a convention on a general prohibition and the total destruction of chemical weapons, then the arms race between the Superpowers in the field of chemical weapons will further escalate and chemical weapons will probably be used more frequently and on a larger scale in wars and armed conflicts. This is something the people of the world are resolutely opposed to. The Committee on Disarmament has the responsibility to prevent the emergence of such a situation and to reach an agreement on the conclusion of a convention on chemical weapons as soon as possible.

(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

The Working Group on Chemical Weapons is in the process of formulating the specific provisions of the future convention. We have consistently maintained that the scope of prohibition of the future convention should cover the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. The reason underlying this has been repeatedly explained by our delegation at plenary meetings of the Committee on Disarmament and at meetings of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons. A provision on the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons was proposed in document CD/CW/CRP.24 of 3 March 1982, co-sponsored by Argentina, Australia, Indonesia, Pakistan and China. Here, I shall not repeat the reasons why the future convention will be complementary instead of contradictory to the Geneva Protocol of 1925, since they have been stated before. I simply want to confine myself to the following point, namely, that the Geneva Protocol lacks complaints procedures and verification clauses, which has resulted in failure to take the necessary actions to deal with and prevent acts of violation in the ensuing years. If the scope of prohibition of the future convention does not cover a prohibition of use, the measures of verification, no matter how detailed they may be, cannot apply to the use of chemical weapons, thus leaving a serious loophole. We hope that delegations present here, aware of the urgent need to prevent the use of chemical weapons, will take this proposal into serious consideration.

The Working Group has concretely discussed the question of verification. It is the consistent view of the Chinese delegation that a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons must provide for strict and effective international control and measures of verification. Without these, there can be no really meaningful disarmament agreement. The Chinese delegation has made it clear in its working paper CD/102, submitted in 1980, that there should be stringent and effective measures for international control and supervision to ensure the strict implementation of the provisions of the convention. An appropriate organ of international control should be set up for this purpose, charged with the responsibility of verifying the destruction of the stockpiles of chemical weapons and the dismantling of facilities for their production. Such an organ should also be empowered to initiate prompt and necessary investigations in the event of a complaint concerning the use of chemical weapons or other violations, and to take appropriate measures to deal with such a violation when the complaint has been verified. In this regard, document CD/244 submitted by the delegation of the United Kingdom recently offers a comparatively comprehensive proposal in the form of provisions for the future convention. We appreciate this contribution on the part of the United Kingdom delegation.

With regard to the composition, task and working procedures of the international verification mechanism, there are some concrete proposals and suggestions in working paper CD/220. What I would like to point out is that in respect of the verification task of the future international monitoring and control mechanism, the said paper and other working papers do not have a clear provision for effective on-site inspection of the use of chemical weapons. We deem such on-site verification not only necessary but also more pressing than ever before in view of the international incidents which have taken place in recent years. As a matter of fact, there has been an almost continuous flow of complaints about the use of chemical weapons ever since signature of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. For this reason, we are of the opinion that not only should the scope of prohibition in the future convention cover the use of chemical weapons, but the verification measures should also apply to the use of such weapons. In this way, the Geneva Protocol would be strengthened and the future convention would become more comprehensive and effective.

(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

The consultations of experts held not long ago adopted standardized methods for determining lethal toxicity through subcutaneous injection and inhalation, and suggested that an inventory be drawn up listing the key precursors of chemical warfare agents and other harmful chemicals, whose toxicity criteria are difficult to formulate. These concrete results of a technical nature can undoubtedly be helpful to the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament. We welcome these positive results. The Chinese expert has also presented a working paper, contained in document CD/CW/CTC/3. It is our hope that the Committee will conduct more consultations on the technical problems during future sessions, taking advantage of the presence in Geneva of experts from various countries, in order to promote the progress of our negotiations. Of course we are fully aware that the negotiation on the prohibition of chemical weapons is mainly a political matter rather than a technical issue. In this respect, the two Superpowers which possess chemical weapons should undoubtedly have major responsibilities. If they could halt their chemical weapons arms race and demonstrate the sincerity that is required, the process of negotiations for the conclusion of a convention prohibiting chemical weapons would be greatly accelerated.

Mr. NAVARRO (Venezuela) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, before I begin to explain Venezuela's position with regard to the different items on our agenda, I would like to congratulate you upon your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament. Our country enjoys particularly good relations with the country you represent.

I should also like to express the gratitude of my delegation to the Ambassador of Iran for the very efficient way in which he presided over the meetings of this Committee during the month of February.

Last year, I was warmly welcomed on my arrival here to represent my country in this the only multilateral negotiating forum, and it is now my pleasure to welcome in turn the representatives of the Netherlands and Czechoslovakia, whose contributions will undoubtedly be of great benefit to the Committee in its work.

I also wish to bid farewell to my good friend Ambassador Halitza of Romania and to express my delegation's appreciation and very best wishes for his outstanding success in the new and important functions he has been called upon to discharge.

The second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will take place very soon, and the most important document to be adopted at that session, the comprehensive programme of disarmament, while it may not now be in an embryonic state, is nevertheless still far from completion. Understandably, we are finding it very difficult to formulate the measures making up the programme.

The measures included in the programme should be very specific and subject to completion within a time-frame which, although flexible, ought not to be so flexible as to defeat its own purpose. We would stress that the comprehensive programme of disarmament ought to be adopted by consensus at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament since otherwise we shall lose sight of the primary objective of the programme, which is to unite the will of all the peoples of the world in a process directed towards general and complete disarmament.

This meeting of wills cannot be a mere compromise between ideas about disarmament. This is no longer possible. We do not all agree on how to bring about disarmament, but there will be no disarmament if we do not reach an agreement on how to achieve it. We

(Mr. Navarro, Venezuela)

need to "create disarmament". Ideas must combine to create a new substance composed of elements that should be inseparable, for otherwise a process which ought essentially to be universal will go on being distorted in order to satisfy the most egotistical interests.

The words of the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Venezuela, Dr. José Alberto Zambrano Velasco, are more valid than ever, at this time of negotiation: "The moment of truth can be expressed in the following terms. It is the moment at which we clearly perceive that the new international order cannot be achieved by temporary adjustments, which would only prolong the current agony, but by a change in the fundamental conception of the world in which we are living."

The world is suffering more and more from a contagious disease which, as it spreads, is creating areas of tension and an unwarranted arms build-up that could well put an end to its very existence. The greatest danger to humanity is the one which is threatening its existence: atomic weapons.

The world could destroy itself many times over with the existing nuclear arsenal, but it seems that that is not enough; there are those who are not convinced that three tons of dynamite per person are enough to protect their security.

I could refer to studies like the one circulated in this Committee at the request of our delegation (document CD/233), which was prepared by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences at the request of Pope John Paul II in order to help persuade the leaders of the great powers of the world of the need for disarmament. I could also quote frightening paragraphs from the Comprehensive study on nuclear weapons and make your ears ring with the unbelievable figures of the money that is thus squandered, at the expense of the development of the peoples; but the great Powers' terror of insecurity makes them deaf to the most basic humanitarian demands of those who have nothing to do with but are rather the object of their policies of domination and expansionism, policies which, we repeat, are simply a reflection of their own insecurity, both internal and external.

We are pleased that negotiations are taking place in Geneva between the United States of America and the Soviet Union on the reduction of medium-range missiles in Europe, but we still ask that negotiations should be started on the cessation of the arms race and nuclear disarmament, as the Group of 21 requested in its documents CD/130 and CD/131 of 24 April 1981.

We have a new element to consider, in order to be able to begin negotiations on a nuclear test ban. The delegation of the United States of America has proposed the establishment of a subsidiary body to discuss and to define issues relating to verification and complaints to be dealt with in the comprehensive test-ban.

Our country is prepared, as it was last year, to seek means for negotiating a nuclear test ban. It was on the initiative, originally, of our delegation that informal meetings of the Committee were held at the last session on agenda items 1 and 2.

We would like once again to state that, after those consultations, in which we had exhausted all preliminary discussion on this subject our next step was nothing other than the negotiation of a nuclear test ban.

(Mr. Navarro, Venezuela)

Venezuela is prepared to consider the various alternatives for the mandate of the proposed working group only if it is understood that the work of that group will form part of the process of the negotiation of a nuclear test-ban treaty, meaning that there must be the intention to negotiate such a treaty, which is a matter of unquestionable priority and has been demanded countless times by the international community; otherwise, the Committee's time can be spent more usefully on something else. In short, if there is no intention of negotiating, there is no intention of coming to an agreement and so we know already what the results of such discussions will be.

The tasks of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons are of great interest to our country; there is a need for a convention which will complement and reinforce the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the purpose of eradicating those atrocious weapons - chemical weapons. We believe that policies of deterrence based on chemical weapons are incompatible with the objectives of such a convention. We hope that, through this convention, doubts with regard to the scope of application of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 may be resolved and that a procedure will be established for verifying charges of the use of chemical weapons as well as an adequate system for verification of compliance with the obligations flowing from the convention, whether these imply actions or refraining from actions. The importance of this convention as a true disarmament measure will reside precisely in the system of verification.

I shall resist the temptation to go into very detailed aspects of verification, but would like to stress the principle of verification since it is not only the details but the basic concept itself that is endangering the success of this future convention, as also, of course, that of the nuclear test-ban negotiations. In the first place, verification is in no way synonymous with confidence, nor can the one term be substituted for the other. Confidence is not achieved through verification and cannot be written into documents. It is a matter of the general attitude of one State towards another or towards the international community.

Whereas verification is a mechanical act, confidence is a human act. States must more actively endeavour to win the confidence of others, and a system of verification of a mixed character with the emphasis on openness towards the world forms part of this process of becoming worthy of confidence.

The so-called negative security assurances demanded by the non-nuclear-weapon States represent a just claim on the part of those countries which do not possess nuclear weapons and even more so of those which have renounced nuclear weapons through legally binding instruments. Venezuela, since it belongs to a nuclear-weapon-free zone, is covered by those assurances from all the nuclear-weapon powers, and we offer our solution and our experience to all those who, like ourselves, wish to ensure, through a legally binding instrument, that they will not be subjected to a nuclear attack. We do not share the views of those who do not possess nuclear weapons but would be prepared to use them. It is clear to us that the only real assurance is the non-existence of nuclear weapons; however, if what we are now talking about is provisional measures, then we are satisfied at having obtained them. I said that we offered our solution to others, but we are not imposing it and what is more we uphold as a profoundly legitimate claim not only that the non-nuclear-weapon States should be assured that these weapons will not be used against them but also that nuclear weapons should never under any circumstances be used. Until such time as all nuclear weapons have disappeared, we shall continue to try to ensure that these assurances are as universal as possible, for atomic weapons neither recognize frontiers nor read documents.

This Committee has the task of elaborating a convention on radiological weapons. These so-called radiological weapons do not even exist and seem, furthermore, to be indefinable. Our delegation maintains that when the treaty is drawn up, radiological

(Mr. Navarro, Venezuela)

weapons should be defined in a positive way and that something that is not a radiological weapon should not be so termed, even for the purposes of the treaty: I am referring to radioactive material. Radioactive material is not a weapon. In fact, radioactive material could be considered a weapon but only as an a posteriori conclusion, that is, once the intention so to use it has become manifest, which would mean establishing a subjective and discretionary criterion that might prejudice the development of the peaceful uses of radioactive material and of nuclear energy in general.

At the start of the discussions in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Radiological Weapons we proposed that the focus of the treaty be changed to reflect what really represents a possible threat: the use of radioactive material for hostile purposes. Since that would cover any future radiological weapons, the problem of the definition of such weapons would have been solved, and the two objectives -- the prevention and the elimination of the threat -- would have been achieved. We have seen that it is not possible to achieve a consensus on this change of focus; we will not, therefore, insist on it, but we are still concerned about the central theme of our proposal. Accordingly, we are prepared to agree to a treaty which both prohibits the use of radioactive material for hostile purposes and prevents the appearance of radiological weapons. We are prepared to elaborate this proposal in order to dispel the doubts it engenders as regards nuclear weapons. But the success of such elaboration will depend on whether we manage to formulate the necessary positive definition of radiological weapons.

As regards the prohibition of attacks on nuclear plants and similar installations, no distinction should be made between civilian and military installations. The criterion which our delegation would propose in this connection is that the prohibition should refer to nuclear plants that are in operation.

Before emphasizing the importance which my Government attaches to the relationship between disarmament and development, I should like to take a few minutes to explain how we understand the work of this Committee with regard to the negotiation of treaties. In the first place, the title of a treaty is merely illustrative and without prejudice either to the contents of the treaty or to its actual final title. In the second place all proposals, whether applying to the complete text of a treaty, to individual articles or to certain aspects, are discussed on an equal footing and consequently no texts are to be regarded as endorsed or sanctified.

If you will allow me a comparison, the procedure in this Committee somewhat resembles the situation when a doctor puts his patient's case before a panel of physicians whom he considers to have greater authority on the subject, since otherwise he would have taken the decisions himself. Once the case has been referred, the doctor cannot assume that they will automatically endorse his diagnosis, but they may increase the patient's chances of survival.

In conclusion, I would like to refer to the approach which we consider essential for the achievement of disarmament.

It is our firm conviction that it is only through the full development of the peoples that we can achieve a stable and lasting peace, and that this development is both a factor in and a product of disarmament. To this end it is necessary not only to divert resources from armaments but to devote them to the development of all the needy peoples in the world. The words of Dr. Luis Herrera Campins, President of the Republic of Venezuela, were very eloquent on this subject, when he affirmed his belief in "... a more just and human international law, based on full and harmonious development -- a peace that is not merely an absence of wars, a justice impregnated with social solidarity between peoples of the earth and a full development that takes man as the centre and the goal of its concerns".



The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Venezuela for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Czechoslovakia, His Excellency Ambassador Vejvoda.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia): Mr. Chairman, I cannot open my first statement in my capacity as the representative of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to this Committee without an expression of sincere thanks to you and to my distinguished colleagues for the warm welcome given to me upon my arrival. This welcome reminds me of a friendly and business-like atmosphere prevailing here some years ago when I had the honour to head the Czechoslovak delegation to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. And I would like to assure you, distinguished delegates, that the Czechoslovak delegation will continue to do its utmost in order to maintain an atmosphere conducive towards overcoming difficulties and solving the complex problems of disarmament, so that our negotiations can bring about concrete and tangible results as early as possible.

Since the month of March is coming to an end and today we have our last plenary meeting under your guidance allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the successful fulfilment of your duties as the Chairman of the Committee.

If we are to assess the state of affairs in this important multilateral negotiating body with a sense of objectivity, we are forced to our great sorrow to admit that we can hardly achieve any spectacular breakthrough before the second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We regret this, since my country is among those which considered the occasion of the convening of the second special session devoted to disarmament an important impetus for an effort to present it with some concrete results. We still cherished some hopes in this respect when the Committee opened its deliberations early this year. However, it is rather difficult to maintain those expectations when the Committee is about to start formulating its report for the second special session. Nevertheless, all has not yet been lost.

The importance we attach to the forthcoming special session and to the urgent need to use it as a new impetus to disarmament negotiations was expressed by representatives of socialist countries, including Czechoslovakia, on numerous occasions, most recently in the joint communiqué from the meeting of the Committee of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty last December in Bucharest. The socialist countries always were and are advocating reasonable steps leading to disarmament without giving anybody advantages and without endangering the balance of powers. New proof to this approach was given by the USSR in the statement and proposals put forward by President L. Brezhnev on 16 March at the seventeenth congress of Soviet trade unions, which my country fully supports. It is an especially far-reaching unilateral initiative of the Soviet Union which should facilitate the reduction of nuclear weapons of the two sides in Europe, that simply cannot be underestimated whatever the hasty arguments raised by its opponents. It is most regrettable that no apparent progress has been achieved in the key sphere of nuclear disarmament, and that all those and other proposals put forward by the USSR were not met at least half way by other nuclear-weapon Powers. This was caused by the amazing approach of some nuclear-weapon States that obviously decided to "solve" the problem of nuclear disarmament by an enormous further build-up of their nuclear forces.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Our Committee still seems to be in a position to produce at least some results in its preparatory work for the second special session devoted to disarmament. The importance my delegation attaches to the elaboration of the comprehensive programme of disarmament and to its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly is well-known. We expressed our basic considerations in this respect in document CD/245 as well as in several statements made by our delegation on behalf of a group of socialist countries.

Recently we have been taking an active part in the work of contact groups drafting different chapters of the CPD. Let me avail myself of this opportunity to express the thanks of our delegation to the distinguished representatives of the German Democratic Republic, Brazil and France who skilfully chaired their respective contact groups.

Our thanks naturally go in the first place to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, Ambassador García Robles of Mexico, who also chaired the contact group on measures. We find the work of contact groups a useful form of negotiating a draft CPD. However, full success cannot be achieved where political will and a constructive approach are lacking. Thus, in the contact group on measures, we were amazed at the approach of some delegations to the basic aspects of nuclear disarmament. In this respect especially, the attitude of the United States delegation to the problem of a nuclear test-ban, which we consider a question of the highest priority, is rather discouraging.

The Czechoslovak delegation will continue to exert all efforts for the elaboration of a consolidated text of a draft CPD, albeit with some provisions still in brackets. It is also our understanding that the draft text of the programme remains open and should react flexibly to all new proposals and developments in the field of disarmament. In this context I would like to express the view of a group of socialist countries that the new proposals of the Soviet Union, to which I referred a while ago and which are now contained in document CD/268 submitted by the Soviet delegation, should also be appropriately reflected in the comprehensive programme of disarmament. A group of socialist countries intends to introduce relevant proposals in the respective Working Group.

It is not mere coincidence that the problem of a nuclear test-ban has been inscribed as the first item on our agenda. This undoubtedly reflects the highest priority which members of the Committee attach to this question. And justly so, since nuclear testing has been dealt with in the United Nations for more than 25 years and for almost the same period in various negotiating forums in Geneva. Moreover, from 1977 to 1980 tripartite negotiations on this matter were proceeding until they were, regrettably, unilaterally broken off by the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom. Because of the highest priority which we attach to this question, my delegation was alarmed by the approach of the United States to the necessity of banning nuclear-weapon tests which was reflected in the statement of Mr. Rostow, the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. If we are told that the achievement of the relevant agreement is not urgent and remains only an element in the full range of long-term United States arms control objectives, then we fully understand and share the discontent which has been voiced about this statement by so many delegations.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Item 1 of our agenda has been widely discussed recently in connection with the proposal of the United States delegation, supported by the delegation of the United Kingdom, to establish a subsidiary body "to discuss and define issues relating to verification and compliance which would have to be dealt with in any comprehensive test-ban agreement". As to our delegation, we have a definite idea of what this agreement should be about. Therefore the expression "any comprehensive test-ban agreement" seems, after years of negotiations on the subject matter, rather outdated. It is our understanding that this expression has been used intentionally and is precious to the United States delegation. Its use leads us to believe that its proponents are willing to discuss verification and compliance in total isolation from the concrete provisions of a future agreement.

Besides, my delegation has also serious doubts on the utility of creating one more body to deal solely with problems of verification and compliance. The right approach to this problem was chosen in 1976, when the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events was created. The results achieved so far in this expert group, with the active participation of two experts from Czechoslovakia, create a solid basis for a reliable verification system, consisting of both national and international verification procedures.

Moreover, the proposal of the United States delegation is very unclear. It escapes our understanding why a delegation suggests that a subsidiary body be created to discuss the verification and compliance aspects of an agreement the conclusion of which in the near future is excluded by this very delegation. But there is no need for me to seek all necessary clarifications since the relevant questions were raised by the distinguished representatives of the German Democratic Republic and Poland in their statements of 18 and 23 March respectively. Regrettably, the United States delegation has so far not offered any answers.

A number of delegations around this table elaborated eloquently on the dangerous consequences of the further perfectioning of nuclear weapons, should their testing continue unabated. Neutron weapons, the prohibition of which my delegation fully supports, should be a sufficient warning in this regard. And my delegation considers, that a working group with the mandate suggested by the United States delegation could not cope effectively with the problem of a nuclear test-ban. We therefore associate ourselves with the view expressed by the distinguished representative of Nigeria in his statement of 23 March in which he said: "A more serious look at the proposals and the further clarifications that we have heard so far in this Committee do not justify the orchestrated optimism that heralded those proposals".

At the same time, we fully support the creation of an ad hoc working group on item 1 of our agenda which should negotiate on a treaty prohibiting all nuclear-weapon tests. In this respect we fully support the proposal of the German Democratic Republic concerning the mandate of the relevant working group contained in document CD/259.

We were told by some delegations that the United States move concerning the creation of a working group on the verification of a nuclear test-ban was a step forward, however small a one. We still wonder whether a move which will not bring about anything concrete with respect to the desired treaty can be called a step forward.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

I am now going to refer to another issue of high priority, that of a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction.

For the last three years this issue has been dealt with predominantly in the relevant Ad Hoc Working Group. The Czechoslovak delegation acknowledges with satisfaction that the Working Group has been re-established this year with a revised mandate enabling it to start elaborating the text of the convention.

Our delegation highly appreciates the able leadership of Ambassador Sujka of Poland as the Chairman of the Group, and fully supports his intention "to translate the positions expressed in comments contained in document CD/220 into the language of alternative elements or various versions of elements".

We all know that in spite of the many years' efforts in the Committee, there continue to be significant divergences of views on a number of aspects of the principal elements of the future convention. The task of the Group will, therefore, certainly not be easy. Still, our delegation is convinced that substantial progress can be achieved, provided that the problems are approached in a business-like manner, and with good political will to co-operate and to find concrete and realistic solutions.

This is fully true also with regard to the problem of verification.

Rather too often, clamorous demands have been made for an over-all intrusive verification, according to which verification should permanently, through on-site inspection, in fact cover an unlimited range of industrial, defence and other types of activity. It seems self-evident that such one-sided and exaggerated demands, often virtually in the form of an ultimatum, cannot serve as a basis for serious international negotiations.

We are glad to note that some of the proposals submitted in the last period of our work show a greater sense of reality. With perhaps a few exceptions, the idea of an interlinked system of national and international verification measures seems to be generally accepted. It is also becoming increasingly understood not only that an atmosphere of co-operation is a prerequisite for verification, but also that all procedures relating to consultation, co-operation, national and international verification and complaints compose an integrated system assuring compliance with the convention. While national control of implementation, exchange of information, consultations and co-operation would be the main permanent procedure, the intrusive methods of verification should be reserved for selected situations. A lack of information on a substantive activity covered by the convention or a contradictory information which could not be sufficiently explained might perhaps be one such reason for suggesting the use of an intrusive international verification procedure.

We fully support the view of delegations suggesting the elaboration of concrete specific verification procedures for each relevant provision of the treaty. Such an approach will make it possible to discuss things in concrete terms and to evaluate the necessity of specific information, material, laboratory evidence, etc., with regard to all provisions of the convention.

As far as the States parties to the convention are concerned, it seems evident that they should create a national verification system. We are aware of some opinions expressed in the Committee that a national verification system may be a rather ineffective self-control of the Government concerned.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Such an approach might indicate a certain lack of information or at least a serious underestimation of the complexity of the problem.

The chemical weapons convention will have important implications not only for military activities but also for industry and research. Under present practice, no governmental organ exists covering such a broad spectrum of diverse activities.

We are not going to suggest the establishment of any obligatory national institutions controlling the implementation of the convention. This is fully for each Government to decide.

In principle, however, in any country with a developed chemical industry and a significant research basis (irrespective of the possession or non-possession of chemical weapons), there should be an organ responsible to the Government (but independent of institutions fulfilling the duties imposed by the convention), which would survey the implementation of the treaty by all institutions under the State's jurisdiction. It should have permanent access to all data relevant to the convention, and should collect, check, assess and publish them in a proper way. It should also have permanent access to all relevant activities, including the possibility of laboratory testing, etc.

In our understanding, this should be an organ to assist, in the first place, its own Government, since it is certainly the Government which is responsible for the implementation of the treaty. One can, however, assume that for routine contacts with a corresponding international organ such as the proposed consultative committee, there would be a delegation of the Government's responsibility to such an organ.

Also, for any intrusive international verification, the information gained from such a national organ would probably be the most important point of departure for any verification procedure. A close co-operation with such a national organ would also be indispensable in cases where technical assistance was needed, etc.

I have explained our views on some functions of the national verification system in more detail mainly to demonstrate that in our understanding the principle of a balanced system of national and international verification measures has quite a concrete content which opens a way for the further elaboration of specific questions.

Giving our main emphasis to positive, constructive efforts in the Committee, we cannot avoid expressing our deep concern with regard to some serious events threatening to abolish the results of all efforts made so far towards elaborating the chemical weapons convention, or at least to make our work still more complicated and difficult.

I have in mind above all the decision of the United States Government to start production of a new generation of chemical weapons, namely, binary weapons. I am certainly not going to repeat the arguments indicating how much the proliferation of binary weapons would hinder the elaboration of a convention. Our view was fully expressed in document CD/259. Our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Fields of the United States, in his last statement rejected any idea about binary weapons creating obstacles for negotiations very categorically. We would, however, be much more satisfied if in addition to strong language some more concrete evidence supporting his view could be displayed.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

In any case the American decision to start a new spiral in the arms race, with an aggressive military deterrence doctrine in the background, has a most negative implication for the international political atmosphere. Instead of concentrating all efforts on the prohibition and destruction of chemical weapons, the main attention of a great Power is focused on boosting its chemical armaments.

Trying to find arguments to justify its chemical weapons programme, the United States Government has also initiated and systematically elaborated an unprecedented propagandistic campaign of allegations, suggesting that the Soviet Union and its allies have been using chemical and even biological warfare agents in several areas of conflict.

In his last statement, the distinguished delegate of the United States once more repeated, for example, a three-years-old story concerning a so-called "highly unusual outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk". It is not a new issue; it was presented on many different occasions.

In the meantime, however, a very interesting piece of information was published in the American press: at the time of the "Sverdlovsk case", an American scientist on an official United States-Soviet exchange was working in Sverdlovsk and living with his family in the town. In his published statement he denied the American accusation fully.

Moreover, it can be documented without any difficulty that since the Second World War anthrax has been extensively studied for the purpose of biological warfare in only two large military research institutes: one of them happened to be Fort Detrick in the United States, the other one the Porton establishment in the United Kingdom.

In addition to this, it is equally easy to prove that all philosophy of modern biological warfare was born in the United States of America. As far as socialist countries are concerned, the biological weapons issue was always tackled exclusively from the point of view of defence and biological warfare was outlawed.

The American accusations are thus not only lacking in any substantive ground; they are also totally inconsistent with all historical facts regarding biological weapons.

The same kind of unbelievable inconsistency between confusing and contradictory evidence on the one side, and far-reaching political conclusions on the other side is also very typical for all stories we have so far heard with regard to the alleged use of toxins and (undefined) chemical weapons. It is not only our claim; statements about the unbelievable inconsistency between confusing and contradictory evidence were recently made in several articles in the American press.

The American propagandistic so-called "yellow rain" evidently has a lot of unique characteristics:

It was demonstratively coloured;

It was used in the form of a coarse-particle aerosol, which is the least effective form in which a biological agent can be applied;

People died after touching a sample contaminated with a toxin which can kill only if eaten in doses many times higher than those reportedly detected in the laboratory of Dr. Mirocha of the University of Minnesota;

Chemical weapons have allegedly been used in some regions since 1976: after six years of such chemical warfare, during which thousands of people were

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

reportedly killed by toxins, nobody, including the United Nations Commission of experts, was able to find one single case of typical intoxication.

And, what is equally striking, there is an absolute absence of medical findings of chemical exposure even among those claiming to have just suffered from "yellow rain" attacks in the areas along the Thai-Kampuchea border. It is not necessary to remind the Committee that the reports of chemical warfare in Kampuchea appear to emanate almost entirely from the Pol Pot military organization.

Compared with the terrible consequences of the first primitive use of chemical weapons in the period of the First World War, or with the lasting devastating effects on the ecology and the health of the population in Viet Nam, where chemical weapons were used by the United States army more than a decade ago, the yellow rain with its untracable effects really seems to be a most spectacular case in the history of chemical warfare.

In spite of these brainwashing attempts to make the issue of the prohibition of chemical weapons as fuzzy as possible, we still sincerely believe that the great majority of delegations in this room are vitally interested in the total and effective prohibition of chemical weapons, and they will not diminish their efforts aimed at reaching that goal as soon as possible.

Finally, I would like to offer a few comments on the informal consultations on issues relating to toxicity determination held by the Chairman of the Working Group in the week from 15 to 19 March 1982. The fact that 32 experts from 25 countries participated in the consultations only indicates the importance delegations attach to the solution of technical problems relevant to the convention. We acknowledge with satisfaction that two standard protocols for estimating toxicity were elaborated, so that screening procedures needed for the practical application of the toxicity criteria for the purpose of the convention have become available.

At the same time, two important restrictions on the application of toxicity criteria were indicated by experts: the precursors of binary chemical weapons and incapacitating agents cannot be classified for the purpose of the convention according to their toxicity levels. Hence, in addition to the general purpose criterion, other approaches should be elaborated, and the elaboration of illustrative lists of precursors and of incapacitating agents was suggested as a task for the future consultations.

Our delegation wishes to express its support for this recommendation, since the solution of both the above-mentioned questions would be very important for the elaboration of several basic elements of the convention (such as definition, scope, verification, etc.).

It is hardly necessary to recall that Czechoslovakia has always been active in all relevant meetings with the participation of experts. We value very much the qualified opinion of our experts, and we have been using their assistance as frequently as possible. There is also no need to emphasize how many serious and complex technical problems underly the chemical weapons issue.

However, I would like to express our view that all crucial questions regarding a chemical weapons convention are basically of a political nature, and that political decisions of principle are the fundamental prerequisite for the success of the negotiations on a convention. Technical procedures and suggestions, important as they undoubtedly are, play basically an auxiliary role, and there certainly can be no reason for any delay in the work on the treaty because of technical questions.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, may I assure you that the Czechoslovak delegation stands ready to contribute as much as possible to the final efforts of the Committee to find ways to contribute to a successful outcome of the forthcoming second special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Czechoslovakia for his statement. I am also grateful to him for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Italy, Mr. Cabras.

Mr. CABRAS (Italy): Mr. Chairman, I would like, on behalf of the Italian delegation, to speak about item 7 of our agenda entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Two resolutions dealing with arms control and disarmament in outer space were adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session; both requested the Committee on Disarmament to take action on that issue. Our Committee has accordingly agreed to include a new item in its annual agenda and has scheduled two informal meetings for a first airing of the subject. These are welcome developments which prompt my delegation to place on record some preliminary views on the subject.

We believe that the informal meetings and the more substantive discussion which we expect to take place during the second part of the session could serve three main purposes:

Firstly, to offer a general overview and an evaluation of what has been achieved so far in terms of stemming a military competition in outer space;

Secondly, to proceed to an assessment of the activities taking place in outer space and of scientific and technological developments liable to threaten the preservation of outer space as a peaceful environment;

Thirdly, to identify those "further measures" and "appropriate international negotiations" which, in the words of paragraph 80 of the Final Document, are to be undertaken in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Both resolution 36/97 C and resolution 36/99, adopted by a very large majority at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, refer the question of preventing an arms race in outer space to the Committee on Disarmament. It is -- in our view -- a recognition of the fact that this question cannot be treated in total isolation from the complex issues of security on Earth and the global process of disarmament. We have noted with satisfaction that delegations with a long-standing interest in the subject, like the delegation of Sweden, have indicated that the Committee on Disarmament has now the primary responsibility for efforts in this field.

It is all to the credit of the United Nations, and in particular of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the motive force in international co-operation, that progress in space sciences and technologies is being achieved in an orderly manner and benefiting mankind as a whole. These results are highly commendable, and the work of the Committee and other bodies such as the Outer Space Affairs Division remains essential. The international community has now appealed to the specific expertise and role of the Committee on Disarmament to complement that work from another angle, that of arms control and disarmament proper.



(Mr. Cobres, Italy)

My delegation understands the concern expressed by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt at the plenary meeting of 16 February not to lose sight of the goal of preserving outer space for peaceful uses only, in the interests of all peoples of the world.

This should indeed remain our common goal, in keeping with the principles set forth in resolution 1962 (XVIII) unanimously adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth session. The Committee on Disarmament should make its contribution towards the achievement of this goal in the field which is proper to this negotiating forum, concentrating on the specific objective we have set for ourselves, that is, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

My delegation feels that the problems of outer space cannot be effectively solved through an all-embracing approach of the kind devised in 1961 for the Antarctic. The earliest of the post-World War II arms limitation agreements could hardly provide, in 1982, a suitable pattern for a comparable treatment of outer space.

We share the opinion, widely supported also in the scientific community, that such an approach would result merely in the delaying of urgently needed, more limited measures which are within the bounds of feasibility and can effectively curb the most immediately threatening developments. To tackle effectively the disarmament issues relating to outer space, we have to place them in a forward-looking perspective and identify priorities. These issues are not stationary: they evolve at the pace of technology which, in the case of outer space, is particularly rapid. Some of them cannot wait for over-all progress on all fronts. Without establishing an order of priorities we may just be creating a storehouse of highly volatile problems with potentially harmful consequences for the future of our endeavours.

The two States with major space-capabilities seem to have established an order of priorities for themselves when, between 1978 and 1979, they held three rounds of bilateral talks on the limitation of anti-satellite systems. The work in the First Committee last year showed that a growing number of countries appear to be aware that the testing and deployment of physical and technical means to destroy, damage or interfere with space objects constitutes the most immediately threatening development.

A survey of specialized literature indicates that this is also a largely shared opinion among experts and scientists.

Let us dwell for a moment on this aspect.

The existence of many public sources describing in detail the activities currently performed by satellites saves my delegation from having to refer to this aspect at length, at least at the present stage. One such source is the "Study on the implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency", drawn up by a group of governmental experts and annexed to document A/AC.206/14 of 6 August 1981. It offers a very useful general survey.

(Mr. Cabras, Italy)

Even a cursory reading of this study suffices to give a good idea of the efficiency of satellites and of their extreme versatility. Their use extends to fields as diverse as meteorology, cartography, geodesy, communications, reconnaissance, navigation, early warning, etc. Reconnaissance satellites provide the most effective means of verifying compliance with certain disarmament agreements and play a stabilizing role in crisis-monitoring. The use of early warning satellites contributes to international security and confidence.

Many current and potential uses of satellites are of great importance for the economic and social development of all countries, particularly the developing countries.

The relevant technology is no longer the monopoly of two States; other nations possess a national capacity in this field, while a number of others participate in the implementation of space programmes through organs of international co-operation.

The importance of satellites and the dependence of States, of all States, on them are likely to increase: in many instances, satellites provide unique capabilities, capabilities that cannot readily be duplicated by ground-based systems; for certain other missions they are cost-effective or perform with higher efficiency.

These very characteristics, together with their vulnerability, make satellites, virtually all satellites, tempting targets. Outer space is at present a medium still mainly free from kill-mechanisms. Yet the deployment of anti-satellite systems marks the beginning of a trend that, unless checked, can introduce the arms race into this new dimension.

Without, for the time being, going into the complex details of the various anti-satellite systems, be they at the experimental stage or at the operational stage, it is sufficient to note that in this sector the ingredients for a military competition seem to be present: the importance of satellites as targets, the development of a panoply of physical and technical anti-satellite means which would give the holder a considerable advantage, the difficulties of protecting satellites by making them less vulnerable, etc. -- all these factors could set in motion the reactive cycle which characterizes an arms race.

It is easier to forecast an arms race in the anti-satellite system sector than to indicate its likely consequences. It seems clear, however, that it would be extremely costly, strategically "destabilizing", and disruptive for the orderly exploitation of outer space in the interest of all mankind. Resolution 36/97 C describes the negotiation of an agreement on the matter as "an important step" towards preventing an arms race in space and assigns priority to it. Its consideration would be an appropriate task for the Committee on Disarmament, as it would constitute a genuine disarmament measure, entailing a ban on systems which are in existence, which form part of military arsenals, which are deployed.

It would be premature to undertake even a preliminary analysis of the issues involved in the question of anti-satellite systems. It would, however, be useful to try to glimpse the complexity of some of these to demonstrate that a serious consideration of them would already constitute a formidable task in itself.

(Mr. Cabras, Italy)

Foremost among these issues is the definitional question of what constitutes an "anti-satellite system". The vulnerability of satellites to an array of weapons and techniques makes a solution particularly arduous. How broadly is the term "anti-satellite system" to be construed? Should it only encompass weapons specifically designed to damage or destroy a satellite and their components? Should it also comprise any weapon constructed and deployed for an ASAT role, or tested in an ASAT mode? Would it be possible or desirable to identify the various types of ASAT systems?

In addition, the even more difficult issue would arise of what constitutes an "anti-satellite activity". In fact, without necessarily damaging or destroying the satellite, it is possible to interfere with its functioning, for instance through electronic jamming or by blinding it with lasers or by moving it from its orbit, etc.

Adequate verification, which is an essential requirement of any arms control and disarmament agreement, would, in this case, be very difficult to achieve. Even a limited ASAT capability, acquired or retained in evasion of an ASAT ban, could be significant. For this very reason, a comprehensive consideration of the problem could not avoid the question of disarmament per se. Operational capabilities in this field are already a reality. The issue of dismantling procedures for existing ASAT systems and their components, and the related verification procedures, would be yet another very complex issue.

Any draft treaty or proposal purporting to deal with the problem of ASAT systems should be judged in the light of the whole range of issues involved in this highly sensitive area and on the basis of the answers it provides to them.

What, for instance, would be the value, in terms of arms control and disarmament, of an agreement that amounted to a "no-use" arrangement? If ASAT systems can be freely tested or deployed, would not each side anticipate that they might be used, and take appropriate measures? It can be argued that anything less than a prohibition of testing, deployment and use would be seriously flawed.

The opportunity before us is ripe, but perishable. As a result of the broad examination that we are going to commence on this item, we need to identify our real priorities, lest we disperse our energies. If we want to keep outer space free from any kind of weapons, should we not start with those weapons that already exist, that have been deployed?

We are aware that this would be only a step, a first step, in a process.

Consistent with its long-standing interest in the field, the Italian delegation stands ready to contribute further to the work of the Committee on item 7, but most of all it stands ready to listen, to learn and to give serious consideration to any suggestion or proposal which can serve to advance our common endeavour.

Mr. LIDGARD (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, like most previous speakers today, I am going to focus my intervention on issues under item 4 of our agenda, namely, concerning chemical weapons.

It should be obvious to all that a chemical weapons convention is now more urgently needed than ever. It is therefore a source of great satisfaction to my delegation, as well as to me personally, that the Committee on Disarmament has this year provided its Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons with an improved mandate which enables it to embark upon genuine and serious negotiations in order to achieve agreement on such a convention. We are grateful to Ambassador Sujka for having taken upon himself the strenuous but also stimulating task of leading those negotiations this year. I am confident that with his serious resolve and diplomatic qualities the negotiations will take an important step towards the conclusion of a convention.

It has taken the Committee three years -- and I want to remind you that our predecessors dealt with this issue from 1963 -- to reach the stage where we now are in the negotiation process. In the first year we were told that the matter was not ripe for being dealt with in a Working Group. It was only the following year that a Working Group was established but regrettably only with a vague mandate. I think today nobody would contest the value of multilateral negotiations on chemical weapons. The experience we have obtained in the Working Group proves the viability of the existing machinery for such negotiations. This bodes well for our hope that the future convention will gain universal acceptance. The example of the Working Group on Chemical Weapons should also be used to dissipate the remaining reluctance about multilateral negotiations on other disarmament matters.

As regards the developments in the Working Group during the present session, Sweden welcomes the increased participation by the major powers in the work. They have more clearly than previously stated their views and presented concrete proposals. This has certainly contributed to the solution of many of the still outstanding issues. This year, as last year, many other countries also have made very interesting and valuable contributions as regards both the scope and the verification of a chemical weapons convention.

It is obvious that important differences of opinion regarding the scope of a future convention still remain. Among them could be mentioned the questions whether a convention should include a prohibition of use and whether it should include prohibitions regarding animals and plants. Another question in which my delegation has taken a particular interest is the prohibition of planning, organization and training for the utilization of the toxic properties of chemicals as weapons in combat. My delegation has submitted a working paper to the Working Group on this last issue, document CD/CW/CAT.29 dated 15 March 1982. Responding to the request of the Chairman of the Working Group, we have suggested wordings to be added to the elements included in last year's report of the Working Group. We have also responded to various questions and comments with regard to our proposal.

While no delegation has questioned our statement that in order most effectively to eliminate a chemical warfare capability it is necessary also to prohibit organization, planning and training for the purpose of such warfare, some have asserted that it would

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

be difficult to verify such provisions. One could, however, recall that other prohibitions, too, have been suggested that may be very difficult to verify, e.g. the non-existence of stockpiles of chemical weapons. No one, of course, seriously questions this prohibition. The verification measures that the Swedish delegation has suggested to accompany its proposal would to a large extent be based on an exchange of information regarding different activities.

My delegation has also pointed out that, for practical reasons, the provisions on planning, organization and training would most probably take effect only after the complete destruction of all main stockpiles. We hope that other delegations will study our suggestion and make comments, so that an appropriate solution can be found.

The other week the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons held consultations with delegations assisted by their technical experts primarily on questions concerning toxicity determinations and on their standardization. The Swedish delegation would like to express satisfaction on the results obtained in those consultations. Thus, it was most valuable that the participants were able to recommend two protocols on standardized toxicity tests to the Working Group. We express our appreciation to the Polish expert, Professor Rump, for his highly qualified work, which made this result possible.

Another development during the consultations will no doubt prove important for our future negotiations, namely, the discussions of the application of the toxicity criterion and thereby also of toxicity tests in order to relate the so-called precursors of chemical weapons to the provisions of a chemical weapons convention. This is a complicated question, although far from unsolvable. My delegation has suggested a conceptual basis for the application of the toxicity criterion in this connection. A working paper on this question will be submitted to the Committee on Disarmament in the near future. The discussion which took place on this issue during the consultations showed how difficult it is to have a purely technical discussion when political restrictions are imposed. My delegation considers, for example, that the question of the reliability of toxicity tests on chemical reaction mixtures, including those from binary weapons, is irrelevant.

It is not the toxicity of the reaction mixture as such that matters, but of the toxic chemical warfare agent formed, among other chemical reaction products.

By saying this my delegation does not want to give the impression that binary weapons do not pose a problem for our negotiations. It is, on the contrary, with great concern that my delegation learned of the preparations by the United States to start production of binary chemical weapons. This has sometimes been explained, inter alia, by the lack of willingness of the Soviet Union to provide information that would dissipate fears of an overwhelming strength as regards chemical weapons on its part. The United States decision to build up its chemical weapons arsenal is, however, more likely to lead to further escalation of the arms race than to the alleged purpose of promoting a chemical weapons convention.

This brings me to the question of verification. We have studied the working paper presented by the United Kingdom delegation on verification, document CD/244, with great interest. It is clear in its aim. We have also noted the explanation by Ambassador Summerhayes the other day that the suggestions in the working paper do not

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

imply that proposals which are not dealt with in it would not be acceptable to the United Kingdom. The Swedish delegation shares the view that the verification provisions of a chemical weapons convention should include on-site verification. We think, however, that a more balanced presentation of all the aspects relevant to an interrelated complaints and verification procedure would have been obtained if the problem had been approached within the framework of the existing elements in CD/220 rather than by presenting a new structure.

For the moment, I would only like to state that the Swedish delegation attaches great importance to an adequately functioning structure, which allows information-gathering, fact-finding and information-dissemination to serve the parties to the convention. It is our firm belief that a consultative committee -- which is necessary for many purposes -- cannot determine the respective security needs of the parties and what those needs may require as to clarifications from or on-site inspection on the territory of other parties. In this connection we note with interest the discussion on remote continual verification, the so-called RECOVER project, which highlights an interesting approach towards less intrusive verification measures. The Swedish delegation feels that this possibility should be further investigated.

My delegation noted with satisfaction the statement the other week by the Chairman of the Working Group in which he expressed confidence about the development of the negotiations on verification issues. Ambassador Herder on that same occasion gave a comprehensive and interesting review of the verification problems. A continuing constructive treatment of these questions would be most welcome, including an agreement on the necessity of adequate on-site inspection of the destruction of chemical weapons. The Federal Republic of Germany also introduced in the form of working paper CD/265 dated 24 March 1982, a considered view, inter alia, on the verification of non-production of chemical warfare agents, which my delegation will study with great interest.

In this context I should like to state that I listened with great interest to what Ambassador Rodriguez Navarro said this morning about confidence-building measures. My delegation entirely shares his evaluation of the importance of such measures. We intend to submit in due course a working paper on the subject to the Committee.

The discussions about allegations of the use of chemical weapons in various parts of the world very forcefully indicate the need to establish permanently available, flexible and objective complaints and verification mechanisms in arms limitation and disarmament agreements. They could, in the form of an international machinery, give the parties the possibility of having their cases investigated in an impartial manner. Such mechanisms would provide for investigations to be carried out without hindrance and for full access to sites and materials, which would shed light on the facts in each case. It is conceivable that the existence of such mechanisms would have been useful and of assistance to the countries involved in the present dispute.

Another lesson to be drawn from the current experience is that an effective control of disarmament agreements, including the one on chemical weapons, requires greater openness. To suggest relying on mutual trust is merely a pious hope when there is a grave dispute about compliance. When allegations of breaches of international agreements are made, co-operation between the parties will in most cases be difficult to obtain through bilateral contacts. This is but one of the factors which underline the necessity of multilateral negotiations and international solutions to problems which affect us all.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Sweden for his statement. I still have on my list of speakers for today's meeting two delegations, those of Morocco and Belgium. In view of the lateness of the hour I propose, if there are no objections, to suspend this meeting now and to resume it this afternoon at 3 o'clock. The delegations of Morocco and Belgium have been good enough to agree to take the floor on the resumption of our meeting this afternoon. So, if there are no objections, I shall now suspend the meeting and we shall meet again this afternoon at 3 o'clock.

The meeting was suspended at 12.55 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I declare reopened the 167th plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament.

I give the floor to the representative of Morocco, His Excellency Ambassador Skalli.

Mr. SKALLI (Morocco) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all to welcome Ambassador Vejvoda on the occasion of his appointment as the representative of Czechoslovakia to the Committee on Disarmament. It is gratifying to see again among us so eminent a diplomat, whom I had the pleasure of knowing and appreciating at the Conference of the Committee of Disarmament.

My delegation intends to deal today with the question of the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons tests.

The Moroccan delegation has repeatedly expressed its views as to the importance of concluding a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons tests everywhere and by everyone. It has always stressed the responsibility of the three nuclear-weapon Powers which are the depositaries of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty and of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that connection, my delegation noted with satisfaction the statement by the distinguished representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on 16 February that the signing of a comprehensive test-ban treaty by the other nuclear-weapon Powers was not essential for its entry into force.

In my intervention of 4 March, I referred to the deadlock in which the Committee has found itself since this subject was placed on its agenda as a priority item in 1979. I expressed the hope that this year that problem would be satisfactorily resolved. It seems that that hope, shared by all, is now perhaps on the way to becoming a reality.

For the present situation is indeed very different from the one that existed before the statements made by the distinguished representatives of the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 11 March 1982.

A first analysis of these two statements reveals the following facts:

First of all, unanimity thus exists today on the need to create, at this stage of our work, a subsidiary body on item 1 of our agenda. We may hope that this body would be an ad hoc working group, as the Group of 21 has always wished.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

There is also unanimity concerning the important question of the responsibility of the Committee on Disarmament in the sphere of disarmament and especially that of nuclear disarmament. The statement of the distinguished representative of the United States is clear on this point. For Ambassador Fields declared: "The United States fully shares the view expressed by many delegations that the Committee on Disarmament must effectively discharge its responsibilities". He also said: "The Committee on Disarmament should address every issue which relates to the vital security interests of all States, including the control, reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons", and that: "The Committee on Disarmament, the only disarmament body in which all five nuclear-weapon States participate, is an appropriate forum for dealing with the interest in nuclear disarmament — an interest deeply shared by all States".

The two delegations proposed that the subsidiary body should concentrate its efforts on the key issue of verification. The American delegation specified that this body would be responsible for examining and defining problems relating to verification. The comprehensive test-ban treaty should deal with these problems. As for the United Kingdom delegation, it expressed the hope that discussions in the subsidiary body would not only throw light on the nature of the problem of verification, but would indicate detailed ways in which it might be resolved.

We understand this to mean that the working group will be required to deal with a problem of a political nature and not with the technical aspects of verification, which are within the competence of the Group of Experts.

As we all know, the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts has been studying these aspects for nearly six years and the Group, which is headed by the eminent Dr. Ericsson of Sweden, has accomplished a great deal in this area.

The three essential elements we have noted in the statements of the American and British delegations may be summarized as follows:

The establishment of a working group;

Reaffirmation of the responsibility of the Committee;

Initiation of a process of a political nature.

My delegation welcomes with satisfaction the proposals put forward by the American and British delegations. It believes that a new development has occurred in the Committee, which could lead to the beginning of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. The Moroccan delegation, aware of the fact that the problem of verification of compliance with a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty is an important element of such a treaty, believes that consideration of this problem could be a starting point for negotiations on this treaty.

Although the American and British delegations have given reason to hope that the Committee may succeed in emerging from the impasse of earlier years, they have also raised many questions, particularly as regards the mandate of the proposed working group. These questions are at present being discussed in the drafting group, which is presided over by yourself, Mr. Chairman, and open to all delegations. The Moroccan delegation will do its best to help clarify these points.



(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

We believe that with the goodwill of all, the Committee could reach a consensus fairly rapidly on the mandate of the working group. It would thus be taking a step closer to negotiating a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. You will remember that the Committee was in the same situation two years ago when the Working Group on Chemical Weapons was established. Although this Group has not yet achieved tangible results, it is nevertheless currently engaged in serious negotiations with a view to the elaboration of a convention on the prohibition of these weapons.

In this connection I would like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, my very sincere thanks for your tireless efforts both during the informal consultations and in the drafting group on the mandate of the working group on item 1 of our agenda.

I would now like to deal with the question of the prohibition of radiological weapons. We wish to express our satisfaction at the fact that the Ad Hoc Working Group on this question has been able to overcome the difficulties which arose last year concerning the way it should approach all the problems relating to the scope of the prohibition of such weapons. This result was made possible thanks to the flexibility and open-mindedness shown by the various delegations, determined as they were not to limit the sphere of prohibition to radiological weapons properly so-called but to include in it attacks on peaceful nuclear installations. I would like to stress the extremely positive role played by the distinguished representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, Ambassador Wegener, in his capacity as Chairman of the Working Group, especially in bringing about a reconciliation between opposing views. We would offer him here our sincere congratulations on the way in which he is guiding this work.

My delegation which, together with others, has agreed, as a possible procedure, to the separate examination of the two aspects of the convention on radiological weapons, wishes to reaffirm its position of principle that the Convention must contain provisions prohibiting attacks on peaceful nuclear installations. The Israeli attack of June 1981 on the peaceful nuclear power station of Tammuz in Iraq provided ample justification for our views. As regards the definition of radiological weapons, positive formulations must be sought which define these weapons directly and precisely.

We continue to believe that the rapid conclusion of a convention prohibiting radiological weapons would constitute a valuable contribution to the efforts of the Committee under item 5 of our agenda.

Before concluding this statement I wish to say how much we regret the departure of our eminent colleague and friend, Ambassador Halitza of Romania.

Knowing his intellectual and human qualities we do not doubt that, as you so rightly said, Mr. Chairman, we shall very much miss them. We wish Ambassador Halitza every success in his new and important functions.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Morocco for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me in my capacity as Chairman. I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium, His Excellency Ambassador Onkelinx.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): I think I am right in saying that this is the last formal meeting of the Committee that you will be presiding over. I should therefore like to thank you for the way you have guided our work during this important month for the Committee on Disarmament. We already had an opportunity, at the beginning of the month, to praise your talents, your intelligence and your experience, but I can truthfully say that you have not disappointed us. I know that in our conversations we sometimes wondered whether you inherited your diplomatic talent from Machiavelli, Cavour or the doges of Venice, but I do not think we have time to go into that question now and I should like simply to express our gratitude to you for the very imaginative and skilful way in which you have conducted our work.

Our work during this session has been characterized by the emphasis placed on the activities of the four working groups we set up, in which we hope significant progress will be made with a view to the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

I would like to refer today to two matters other than those for which working groups already exist -- two questions on which, for various reasons, positive developments have taken place in recent weeks.

The first concerns the prohibition of nuclear tests. For the first time, the Committee on Disarmament has been able to agree on a procedural formula, namely, the establishment of a working group which should enable it in due course to lay the foundation for the negotiation of such a prohibition. The consensus which is now emerging in the Committee on the establishment of such a working group is already one of the striking features of this session. That is why, Mr. Chairman, I wish to repeat the Belgian delegation's full support for the consultations you are holding on the formulation of this working group's mandate.

We do not think that the Committee's working groups are the appropriate place for academic exchanges. On the contrary, we think that they ought to be able to deal effectively with the matters before them. Such effectiveness is necessary to the success of a process which should lead to agreements to ban the weapons concerned.

With regard to the banning of nuclear tests, my delegation believes that we should concentrate on the issues which present the greatest difficulties. This means in fact the problem of verification, for this question was the stumbling-block in the negotiations on a total nuclear test ban which were carried on in the separate talks the latest assessment of which was communicated to the Committee on Disarmament in June 1980 (document CD/130).

The verification of compliance with agreements in the sphere of arms control and disarmament is not of equal importance in every case. It depends very much on the subject-matter of the prohibition. The 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, for example, did not give rise to any particular verification problem. That is no doubt why it was possible to

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

conclude the Treaty without the inclusion of any provisions concerning its verification. This Treaty can easily be verified, principally by national technical means. However, the situation is quite different when the object of the prohibition is more ambitious, as in the case of a total nuclear test ban. Such a ban would properly constitute the field of application of the comprehensive treaty envisaged in paragraph 51 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, as my colleagues from Pakistan and Australia have already pointed out. The crux of the problem of a total nuclear test ban thus clearly resides in the question of verification.

The experience of the trilateral negotiations should constitute an important element in our work on this subject. It would also be useful if this work, which will by definition be of a political and legal nature, were to take due account of the accumulated experience of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-Operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events. A revision of that Group's mandate might be a useful contribution to the work of the Committee's working group. It could, for example, consider the necessary methods of detection — especially seismic and atmospheric — for the verification of compliance with a total nuclear test ban. It could also determine the means required for the implementation of those methods: national means and international means. In that connection it could also consider the institutional machinery needed for a verification and complaints procedure.

Echoing the remarks made earlier in this connection by my colleagues from Australia and the USSR, I too would like to stress our very great concern that this opportunity of initiating a process which might lead to a nuclear test ban should not be wasted through an excessive concern for the wording of the mandate of the working group we are on the point of setting up.

The second question I wish to refer to today is that of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are pleased that the Committee on Disarmament has placed this item on its agenda and that it has agreed to hold informal meetings on the subject in the near future.

Having said this, we recognize that not all the items on the Committee's agenda offer the same possibilities for negotiations. This question is a new item, which the Committee is taking up for the first time, and it is important because of its implications for the security of our States. It is necessary, at this initial stage, for the Committee to explore the subject.

The obligation to take up this question arises from paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly. As early as 1979, Italy proposed that the matter be taken up when it submitted document CD/9. At the last session of the General Assembly two resolutions were adopted -- neither of them gave rise to any objection, and one of them, resolution 36/97 C, was co-sponsored by Belgium -- requesting the Committee on Disarmament to take up this matter for consideration.

Our objective ought therefore to be to try gradually to fill the gaps in the existing international legislation.

At present, such legislation rests principally on the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. It would also be useful to take into account the implications for outer space of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty and the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

We ought further to consider the possible connections between the prevention of the arms race in outer space and the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, which was the subject, in particular, of General Assembly resolution 34/83 E, co-sponsored by Belgium.

We believe that initially the main aim of the Committee's work should be the question of the negotiation of an effective and verifiable agreement prohibiting anti-satellite systems. At the present stage, such systems constitute the greatest identifiable destabilizing threat.

In fact, anti-satellite weapons could seriously compromise the mechanisms designed to ensure respect for arms control and disarmament agreements.

Particular attention ought also to be given to methods of verifying such a prohibition, with reference again, to the subject of the prohibition. This would imply, among other things, a definition of the concept of arms in relation to outer space. My delegation hopes that at the informal meetings we are shortly to hold it will already be possible to clarify some of these questions.

It would also be useful, I think, if the Committee could consider, in the light of its priorities, the most appropriate procedural arrangements to enable us to begin substantive discussions in the most effective manner possible at our summer session.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of Belgium for his statement. I should like to thank him also for the kind and far too flattering remarks he addressed to me; they were undoubtedly dictated by a spirit of friendship, for which I am particularly grateful to him.

I have no more speakers on my list for today. Do any other delegations wish to take the floor? The representative of the Soviet Union, His Excellency Ambassador Issraelyan has asked for the floor. I give it to him.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have asked for the floor in order to make a slight factual correction. The Ambassador of Belgium, Mr. Onkelinx, has just said, if I correctly understood the Russian translation of his statement, that the prohibition of nuclear weapons depends on the solution of the problem of verification and compliance. I must say, as the representative of a State which participated for more than three years in the negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests that took place between the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, that that is not in accordance with the facts. I should like to refer to the authoritative opinion of the leader of the delegation of the United States of America at the negotiations on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests, Mr. Paul C. Warnke, who writes in today's issue of the International Herald Tribune: "The implementation of a freeze could logically begin with the prompt completion of the comprehensive test ban treaty that has been under negotiation with the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom since mid-1977". And even more important is what he says next: "All that now stands in the way of an agreed-on total ban on nuclear explosions is the necessary political will." I think that Mr. Warnke is correct and Mr. Onkelinx is not correct.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): I did not realize that after my statement I was going to be taken to task by my friend Ambassador Issraelyan! But it is with great pleasure that I answer him. What I could do would be to reread the relevant passage in my statement, a passage which was summed up in one sentence: it is that sentence that he has taken exception to; it was about the problem of verification. This question has been the stumbling-block in the negotiations on a complete prohibition of nuclear tests that took place through separate talks, an assessment of which was communicated to the Committee on Disarmament for the last time in June 1980. For my part I drew my information, not from a private author as Ambassador Issraelyan has just done, but from the report we received here on the trilateral negotiations, document CD/130. It was in that document that I discovered that the sphere of verification was apparently the one on which the parties to the trilateral negotiations had not succeeded in reaching agreement. And it was from that report that I drew the conclusions that I have just now presented to you.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Allow me again very briefly to quote from Mr. Warnke. He said: "All that now stands in the way of an agreed-on total ban on nuclear explosions is the necessary political will." I think Mr. Warnke is right.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): I thank the representative of the Soviet Union. If no other representatives wish to speak, I should like, as I announced at the beginning of this plenary meeting, to put before the Committee for adoption the recommendations contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, which has been circulated in document CD/260. In particular, the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts has proposed that its next session should be held from 9 to 20 August 1982 in Geneva.

If there are no objections, I shall take it that the Committee adopts these recommendations of the Ad Hoc Group.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN (translated from French): Distinguished colleagues, since this plenary meeting is the last one for the month of March, I should like to express to all of you my sincere gratitude for the spirit of co-operation you have shown, for the very effective support you have so kindly given to my chairmanship and also for the many expressions of friendship that have been addressed to myself. Thanks to the assistance and goodwill of all, it has been possible to hold very useful exchanges of views and negotiations on a considerable number of questions of substance. At the same time, the four ad hoc working groups under the able guidance of their respective chairmen, have been able to intensify their work and in some cases to make progress. But this month of March has undoubtedly been marked by the developments that have taken place in the consideration of the question which appears as item 1 of our agenda, "Nuclear test ban". Since the Committee entrusted me with the task of conducting private consultations on this subject and since it asked me to preside over the drafting group which is at present engaged in formulating a draft mandate for a possible subsidiary body, all my efforts have been directed towards the goal of securing a positive advance in the handling of this priority issue which has for so many years been the focus of attention of the international community. I think

(The Chairman)

that the intensive negotiations which have been going on since have permitted some progress to be made in the reciprocal understanding of the various positions on this subject. I sincerely hope that the continuation of these negotiations may lead as soon as possible to a positive conclusion. To that end, I should like to appeal to all delegations to spare no effort to try to reach the conclusion we all desire in the interests of the activity of the Committee on Disarmament with respect to item 1 of its agenda.

Allow me to say that one of the privileges of the Chairman is to work in close contact with the secretariat. I have thus been able to appreciate to the full the great competence and the qualities of Ambassador Jaipal, Secretary of the Committee. I should like to express to him all my gratitude, a gratitude which reflects my most sincere feelings. The advice and assistance of Mr. Berasategui have also been extremely valuable to me during this month of my chairmanship; I should like to tell him how much I have appreciated his assistance during this period. My gratitude goes also to all the staff of the secretariat as well as to the interpreters and translators whose competence and dedication I have been better able to appreciate. Lastly, I should like to offer my successor, Ambassador Okawa of Japan, my very warm good wishes for his success in the exercise of his mandate. I think it is a very happy coincidence for the Committee at such an important moment in its work that it will have as its Chairman so eminent and competent a colleague as Ambassador Okawa. I am sure that under his guidance the Committee will be able to conclude its work in the most efficient manner possible and that he will be able to submit a meaningful report to the United Nations General Assembly at its special session devoted to disarmament.

In accordance with our time-table for this week, the Committee will, immediately after this plenary meeting, hold an informal meeting on item 7 of its agenda, 'Prevention of an arms race in outer space', and we shall also be able, if we have the time, to take up again the question of the date of closure of this session as well as the problem of the composition of the Committee.

The next plenary meeting of the Committee on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 1 April 1982, at 10 a.m.

The meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.